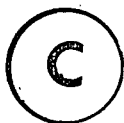PETERS ON MORAL EDUCATION

by

© SANDRA ROCHELLE BRUNEAU

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ABSTRACT

Many teaching materials and analyses of morality and moral education are available to teachers and moral education researchers. Some of these materials and research strategies are based on analyses of moral judgment and behaviour.

It is noteworthy that these teaching materials and discussions of morality and moral education do not acknowledge Richard Peters' recommendations for moral education. His discussions of morality and moral education have not yet resulted in curriculum materials; nor do individual research projects base their work on his point of view. Given Peters' esteemed place among philosophers of education, and given the comprehensiveness of his writing on moral education, this lack of attention is somewhat surprising. Are his views sound? Can they be interpreted for specific teaching practices and research strategies?

In this thesis, I have examined Peters' proposals for moral education. My aims were twofold: (1) to make clear his views on morality and moral education and to critically assess those views for their intelligibility and consistency, and (2) to indicate the sorts of educational practices and proposals for research which are at least consistent with his ideas.

To do these tasks, I give an account of Peters' criteria of 'education' and survey his views on 'morality' and 'moral education.' I give particular attention to his "facets of the moral life": worthwhile activities, social rules, roles and duties, principles as

motives, character-traits and virtues.   In addition I make clear and

assess the importance of other concepts which interest Peters: 'form,'

'content,' 'habit,' 'emotion.'   Occasionally I compare Peters' concep-

tion of morality and moral education with the conceptions of other

moral philosophers and educators;   these comparisons assist in both

explicating and criticizing Peters' work.

Finally I further condense Peters' views in order to suggest

leads to moral educators and researchers.   I do this, first, by noting

what constructive proposals come from Peters' account; second, by

detailing those areas of his account which require more conceptual and

empirical work; and third, by outlining specific projects for curriculum

builders, teachers and researchers.

JERROLD R. COOMBS,
Research Supervisor

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Primary Sources--Works by R. S. Peters

CODE	ARTICLES AND BOOKS*
AP	"The Autonomy of Prudence"
B	"Behaviourism"
CP	"Concrete Principles and the Rational Passions"
CM	The Concept of Motivation
DB	"In Defence of Bingo: A Rejoinder"
DD	"Destiny and Determinism"
DR	"The Development of Reason"
EE	Ethics and Education
EEm	"The Education of the Emotions"
EI	"Education as Initiation"
EP	"What is an Educational Process?"
EPss	"Emotions, Passivity and the Place of Freud's Theory in Psychology"
FC	"Form and Content in Moral Education"
Fr	"Freedom and the Development of the Free Man"
FT	"Freud's Theory of Moral Development in Relation to that of Piaget"
JE	"The Justification of Education"
LE	The Logic of Education
MD	"Moral Development: A Plea for Pluralism"
ME	"Motivation, Emotion and the Conceptual Schemes of Common Sense"
ML	"Moral Development and Moral Learning"

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*For the full citations, see the Bibliography.
Example: (FC142) refers to p. 142 of Peters' "Form and Content in Moral Education," in R. S. Peters (ed.). Authority, Responsibility and Education.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful to the members of my thesis committee for the assistance they have given me. My appreciation goes to Dr. Jerrold R. Coombs who supervised my work, and to Dr. Leroi B. Daniels for his helpful comments and support. It was through the work of these men that I first became interested in the field of moral education.

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To my husband Bill and to my children, Rochelle and Jon, my sincere thanks for your encouragement. Your abiding interest in my subject and your great senses of humour have sustained me during these long days of writing and revision.

Sandra Bruneau
University of British Columbia
May 1979

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

I. Moral Education and Moral Reasoning

This thesis is about moral education. In it, I examine the con-
tribution of one man, Richard Peters, whose writing on the subject is
extensive and influential. My purpose is to assess whether Peters'
account of morality and moral education is sound and whether his views
can provide a good basis for moral education programs and research.

In the last ten years, the field of study called "moral education"
has attracted the attention of teachers, school counsellors, teacher
educators and psychologists. Many hundreds of persons in North American
and British universities now refer to the subject-matter of moral educa-
tion as their primary research interest. In many secondary and post-
secondary institutions, groups of academics from many disciplines are
working together on various aspects of this subject. From individual
and cooperative efforts have come thousands of pages of research propos-
als and reports, articles, school curriculum guides and graduate theses.
There are now available to teachers in elementary and secondary schools
many different "approaches to moral education": different suggestions
about both the content and method of moral education. Compared with
other curriculum subject-areas, however, the preparation of moral educa-
tion materials is at an early stage of development.

In Canada, curriculum-planners in provincial departments of educa-
tion have expressed increasing interest in the subject of moral education

(Cochrane and Williams, 1978). This interest is frequently expressed in the stated goals and objectives of various social studies curricula. In addition to "departmental" expressions of interest in moral education, individual school districts, school principals and classroom teachers have indicated their desire to understand the subject-area and their willingness to "try out" moral education materials.

To my mind, the attention given to the subject of moral education by teachers and education department personnel places a considerable burden upon persons working in this field. Not only must these experts come up with workable programs for the schools and programs to assist teachers, they must also ensure that their contributions are based on sound views of "moral education." Teachers, principals and others who use school moral education programs should also have a good understanding of 'morality'. Only if they have this understanding will they be able to sort out programs and suggestions which are based on sound views of morality and moral education from those which are not.

The question of what is and what is not a "sound" view of moral education, of course, is an extremely complicated one to answer. The book publishing and distribution industry has seen advantages in printing saleable items for use by teachers. But many of these materials do not reflect sound views of moral education. The emphasis on Values Clarification, for example, widely received by teachers, purports to be an approach to moral education. The Clarification books (e.g., Raths, Harmin and Simon, 1966) set out materials and exercises to help the student overcome his reticence in order to state what he likes and dislikes, but they do little to introduce the student to the notion of

morality, much less help him to decide how to resolve moral conflict situations.

The values clarification approach, in fact, reflects one popularly-held view about what morality is. Many people consider that "morality" is a personal matter and that to make a moral judgment about an issue is simply to state one's likes or dislikes concerning the issue. Certainly morality is a personal matter to the extent that a person must come to understand issues and decide for himself what is right or wrong, permissible or impermissible. But the view that moral judgments simply reflect what people like or dislike about a matter reflects a faulty notion of what it is to make sound moral judgments.

Some persons view "morality" as a subject-area having only to do with sex, religion, personal habits and business practices. And while some, perhaps many, moral issues arise from decisions people have to make about sex, religion and business practices as well as their choice of personal goals and habits, to say that morality should be or is concerned only with these subjects is to unduly restrict the scope of morality. Moral issues arise, too, when people develop stereotypes of others and when they act from certain prejudices. Moral issues are debated when governments consider whether or not to legalize abortion, to force segments of the population to work in labour camps, to require persons to fight in wars, to spend or not to spend public monies in aid of the elderly, the unemployed, the physically handicapped and the mentally ill.

Deciding what is and what is not a moral issue, of course, can occupy and has occupied moral philosophers for some time. In addition,

deciding how to resolve moral conflict situations has been a chief concern of moral philosophers during this century. Much of their work has centered on getting clear what it is to reason in morals, and what it is to provide good reasons for the moral positions one can take. In this work, the question of justification—what it means to make a justified moral judgment—has been a key one.

Most of the philosophers who concentrate on the notion of reasoning in morals have made the assumption that morality is a rational enterprise. That is, they accept the view that to make a "sound" moral judgment is to base that judgment on good reasons. The notion of "evidence" for a moral belief makes some sense. Some argue that because people commonly offer what they think are good reasons for a practice, and because people evaluate others' reasons for a particular judgment as either good or bad, they, too, must accept that morality—making moral judgments—is based on reason and that this reasoning can be done well or done poorly. Working from the assumption that morality is a "rational" business, moral philosophers and moral educators have worked hard to make clear what it is to engage in moral reasoning and what it is to be disposed to act for moral reasons.

Some of the moral education materials produced for the schools reflect this emphasis on good reasoning in morals.

II. An Overview of the Thesis

Richard Peters is among those ethical theorists who believe that to be initiated into morality and moral thinking is to be initiated into a "rational" enterprise. Educating persons into "rational morality,"

he believes, involves helping them to reason well on moral matters, and this includes helping them to develop their dispositions to act on those reasons.

He does not believe that teaching persons to reason well on moral matters means introducing them to the "cold logic" of reasoning. In his view, the notions 'feeling,' 'affect,' 'sensitivities' and 'compassion' are conceptually connected with moral reasons. And, as we will see, the notions 'habits,' 'virtues,' 'motives,' and 'character' figure significantly in his view of what it is to live the "moral life."

Peters writes on a wide range of topics in moral education; this much is already clear. He not only includes some analysis of the logic of moral reasoning, but speaks with great concern of the moral development of young people. His comments on what he believes are the best home and school conditions for the moral education of youngsters are worth reading. So also are his comments on those conditions he believes do not favour the development of persons' "autonomy" in morals.

Given the extent of Peters' writing on moral education, it is rather puzzling that so little attention has been given to his view of morality and moral education by those currently engaged in curriculum work and research in moral education. There are many possible reasons, of course, for this inattention. The preparation of moral education materials for use by school personnel is, as I have said, at a very early stage of development. As well, Peters' writings are written at a level of abstraction which makes it difficult for educators to translate his views into school programs and research hypotheses.

A major task of this thesis was to make clear and evaluate Peters'

views on morality and moral education, first, by systematically presenting his views, which are dispersed throughout many papers and books; second, by assessing the arguments he gives on several key concepts; and third, by considering which of his theses are well-supported and lend themselves to the "practice" of moral education.

Some of Peters' writing on morality and moral education has not been systematically presented nor critically analyzed in this thesis. All of his major themes, however, are examined in this work. Without doubt, a more thorough source search on these themes would make my organization and analysis of Peters' views even more complete than it is.

Chapter 2 presents an overview of Peters' notion of education, and a summary of his views on morality and moral education. I examine his analyses of 'indoctrination' and 'conditioning', for he thinks that these procedures in their "purest" forms are antithetical to education. Training and instructing, however, are important processes of education. And conditioning aids are important supplements to educational processes.

Peters uses the phrase "moral education" to refer both to education, broadly conceived, and to a somewhat "narrower" enterprise of educating persons into rules and principles "of an interpersonal sort." In a section on "worthwhile activities," I present and assess five possible interpretations of Peters' claim 'initiating persons into worthwhile activities is a "moral" matter.'

Following this, I summarize his views on morality and moral education so as to suggest a rationale for the chapters that follow. In this summary, I mention those moral philosophers who Peters claims have most influenced his thought.

Chapter 3 presents a systematic account of Peters' writing on the teaching and learning of moral rules and principles, and as well, considers his distinction between the form and content of moral education. His writing on each of the five moral principles gives evidence of his uncertainty as to what these principles mean. He says that his principles are the preconditions of rational thought, but I point out that some of his principles are moral or substantive principles. One problem with his treatment of moral principles is his lack of attention to the problem of resolving conflicts of principle.

Some difficulties arise, too, with his treatment of conflicts of rule. He says that conflicts of rule are resolved by recourse to principles but he omits to say which principles would resolve which rule-conflicts and why. As well, he pays virtually no attention to his category of "local rules."

Peters relies on the notions 'habituation' and 'habit-training' to explicate the teaching and learning of moral rules. He recommends the use of 'conditioning aids' because he believes children must conform their behaviour to rules. 'Induction' or teaching is also important in getting a child to obey moral rules; he gives reasons why this must be so.

Learning principles, he says, is different from learning rules. A principle cannot really be taught; it may just be "caught." The educator's role is to stimulate the child's imagination in an effort to increase the child's sensitivities to others' suffering. These sensitivities may later become the child's principles. One of the best atmospheres for increasing children's sensitivities, Peters says, is to

provide the children with reasons for acting.

In the section on the form and content of moral education, I examine his notion of 'form' by looking at four discussions: his use of the term "formal," his objections to Kohlberg's notion of 'form,' his notion of 'form' as the evidential holding of beliefs, and his discussion of those conditions he thinks are necessary for a child's attainment of 'form' or autonomy in morals. I conclude that Peters treats the notion of 'form' in such a way that we cannot be clear about his exact meaning.

On the notion of 'content,' I point to three areas where it makes sense to talk about the content of morality, then outline Peters' contributions to these three. He uses the term 'content' in another sense as well: to refer to aspects of one's life which can be affected by "moral thinking": roles and duties, and worthwhile activities. As well, he says that the development of character-traits and motives are part of the content of morality.

In Chapter 4, I examine with some care three key concepts in the outline of Peters' views presented in the previous two chapters: 'habits,' 'motives,' and 'emotions.'

Peters believes that children must be habituated to rules before they can reason about these rules; he thinks that conditioning, training and practice are important in getting children to conform. What is rather puzzling is his additional suggestion that children can learn to follow reason from an early age: giving reasons to youngsters is the best way of inculcating "adaptable habits." His analysis of 'habit' attempts to show how this notion is compatible with reason-giving, but, as I suggest, he does not make clear how his analysis of 'habit' differs

from 'acting out of habit,' a notion he thinks is incompatible with "act-
ing for reasons."

In his treatment of the paradox of moral education, Peters does not
attempt to answer the question of what non-rational means impede the
development of a child's sense of the form of morality, but he does con-
tinue to suggest that in the moral education of children, non-rational
means are necessary supplements to the "use of rational (reason-giving)
means."

Peters believes that moral principles and rules must become
"personalized": they must become a person's own motives. In the sec-
tion on Motives, I look first at Peters' writing on the concept 'motives'
and make some comparisons with other writers. Second, I look at some
comments he makes on moral motivation, but these comments suggest little
in the way of analyses.

The notion of an 'appraisal' is an important one in Peters'
analyses of both 'motives' and 'emotions.' I examine his notion of an
'appraisal,' then look at emotion-appraisals and the role he sees for
them in the moral life. I suggest that because Peters offers little in
the way of a comprehensive moral theory, his talk of the relevance of
emotion-appraisals to moral judgment and action is not as complete as it
could be.

In Chapter 5--the last to contain the substantive moral views of
Peters--I examine his notion of 'character' and the virtues he calls the
"self-control virtues." This group of virtues is of many kinds. I
attempt some interpretation of Peters' claim that a moral agent should
have these virtues in order to do what is just.

From different senses of 'character,' Peters selects the notion of 'having character' and says that the development of persons who have character should be at least one goal of moral education. But 'having character'--consistently carrying out one's own policies and plans--is compatible with "being bad." Peters' writing on 'a person's choice of principles' gets him into a little difficulty, and his writing on moral education as character development presents a somewhat confusing picture.

In the final chapter, I condense Peters' views even further in order to suggest leads to moral educators and researchers. I point out those areas of Peters' thought which require more conceptual and empirical work. After making some general suggestions to moral educators, I outline what specific tasks might be undertaken for curriculum-development and research work. Since there are only a few teachers who can competently deal with moral issues in the classroom, I suggest that one immediate goal of moral education should be the preparation of teachers.

* * * * * *

In summary, Richard Peters' analysis of morality and moral education offers many suggestions to moral educators. If these suggestions were seriously acted on, we would soon have many more morally educated persons. Many of these persons could become competent moral educators in their school classrooms.

In spite of the fact that his writing does provide moral educators with many interesting leads, I offer here a few critical comments on Peters' writing.

One thing we can say about his writing is that he fails to analyze in any depth those concepts he sees are important to "living the moral life." Given the amount that he has written, it is puzzling that he has not gone on to explore in more detail the problem-areas which recur. He appears to have revised his views very little over the years. In writing this thesis, it was relatively easy for me to group references together (e.g., CP295; PU400; MD314) without giving much thought to the chronology of those published works.

Second, Peters' heart is still with psychology and psychological explanation, and while we are clearly beneficiaries of his impressive grasp of the literature in this field, we do not get a sense that Peters has the same grasp of the literature in moral philosophy. One person can probably not "do it all." Nevertheless, it should be said that Peters has not made use of important works in ethics written in the last twenty years to clarify or extend his own understanding of morality. The problems in his account which surround the resolution of conflicts of rule and conflicts of principle might have been clarified if he had paid attention to current debates in moral philosophy.

CHAPTER 2

Peters on Education, Morality and Moral Education

Anyone undertaking the task of moral education must understand the
concepts 'morality' and 'education.' Peters provides fruitful insights
into both concepts. In fact, Peters' writing reflects two of his major
concerns: to make clear what he believes are the logically necessary
conditions of the concept 'education,' and to lay out his understanding
of 'being morally educated.'

Peters' treatment of these two matters suggests philosophically
defensible ways of coping with the problems moral educators meet.
Advocates of moral education occasionally hear complaints that moral
education is dangerous or impossible and are often puzzled how to proceed
with their task. If moral educators are to answer these charges and get
on with their work, they must grasp the contours of the notion of moral-
ity and employ logically and practically relevant means to bring about
this comprehension in others. Specialists in other subjects confront
difficulties of this kind when they initiate students into their fields
of inquiry. But moral education differs from other subject areas in
that proponents of moral education usually insist on open discussions of
'education' and 'moral education.'

Some people may think of 'moral education,' for example, as condi-
tioning or indoctrination. They do so because of their beliefs about
'morality' and about the likely means of bringing about "desirable"
behaviours. Others consider the concepts 'conditioning' and

'indoctrination' to be antithetical to 'education.'

To complicate matters, still others consider these various notions to be interchangeable. Peters does not fit readily into either of these categories. Peters maintains that neither the concept of 'conditioning' nor the concept of 'indoctrination' is synonymous with 'education'; all three concepts, however, share some family resemblances. To be clear on 'education' and its family members, he maintains, is to go a considerable distance in understanding what it is to initiate others properly into moral thinking and behaviour. It makes good sense, therefore, to outline Peters' criteria for 'education' before considering his theses on moral education.

This chapter is, essentially, a summary of Peters' remarks on 'education,' 'morality' and 'moral education.' Except for some critical remarks I make on his notion of 'indoctrination,' 'conditioning' and 'training,' I reserve commentary of an analytical nature to Chapters 3, 4 and 5. There my concern will be to examine, in some detail, Peters' views on morality and to a lesser extent his views on education simpliciter.

Part 1 of the present chapter begins a review of Peters' 'criteria of education,' including his distinction between the 'matter' and the 'manner' of education and his use of 'task' and 'achievement' in analyzing the concept 'education.' I consider next the similarities and dissimilarities he sees between 'education' and related concepts: 'indoctrination,' 'conditioning,' 'training,' 'instructing,' and 'teaching.'

Before leaving the discussion of education, I remark on Peters'

concern with the initiation of persons into "worthwhile activities." Unlike many moral educators, he regards such initiation to be a 'moral matter.' Clearly this difference of opinion affects the tasks moral educators might include under the rubric 'moral education.' If moral educators do not view this "initiation" as part of the task of moral education, however, they may still see the importance of the issues raised by Peters for the study of moral education. I will point out the importance I believe Peters' concern has for a more restricted sense of moral education.

The summary of Peters' views on rational morality and rational moral education in Part II of this chapter selects important features of his view of the 'moral life.' Here I point to key themes in his writing which receive detailed examination in later chapters.

I. Peters on 'Education'

A. Criteria of 'Education'

Common to Peters' many discussions on the concept 'education'* is his reference to Gilbert Ryle's distinction between 'task' and 'achievement' verbs (Ryle, 1959). According to Ryle, achievement verbs like 'finding,' 'concluding,' 'hearing,' and 'winning' are indicative of the "successful outcome of tasks"; 'task' verbs, like 'hunting,' on the other hand, pick out activities or processes (EE26ff).

'Education,' says Peters, is a special kind of achievement verb. Like the examples given by Ryle, 'education' indicates the successful outcome of tasks. But unlike these examples, 'education' implies the

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*(EE; EP; LE; JE)

worthwhileness (desirability) of these outcomes; 'education' is thus a normative concept. And unlike these other examples, 'education' covers a range of tasks as well as achievements (EP6ff).

In his analysis of 'education' as an achievement verb, Peters refers frequently to 'ends' and 'desirable qualities.' He mentions concepts related to 'education'—ones like 'cure' and 'reform'—which can be analyzed similarly in terms of 'ends' and 'desirable qualities.' To distinguish these terms from each other, therefore, Peters sets out to examine the ends ("nature of the ends") peculiar to each. What emerges, however, is not so much a comparison of these ends as an account of some ends peculiar to education.

In public discussion we rarely reach agreement on the "desirable qualities," "aims" or "ends" of education. For the sake of comparison, notice that it is relatively easy to obtain agreement on what constitutes a cure. The ends associated with 'curing' and 'reform,' Peters says, are "determinate"; the ends of education "indeterminate." Curing someone "suggests that (the person) has lapsed from a standard which the cure is restoring"; reforming "suggests making persons morally better" or making persons more responsible. Educating consists in "putting people in the way of values of which they have never dreamt" (LE19).

In spite of the indeterminacy of the ends of education, there are, Peters suggests, some limitations on what can count as an end or value in education:

> 'Education' suggests not only that what develops in someone is valuable but also that it involves the development of knowledge and understanding. An educated person . . . is one who has

some understanding . . . not just know-how or knack. This under-
standing . . . should not be too narrowly specialized.

(LE19)

In this part of his analysis, Peters insists on two logically

necessary conditions of 'education': the desirability condition and the

knowledge condition, which latter includes "both depth and breadth of

understanding."

Peters acknowledges common objections to both conditions, but con-

cludes that they reveal either mis-uses or archaic uses of the terms

'knowledge,' or 'education.' In support of this conclusion, Peters

conducts a brief etymological examination of the concept 'education.'

In pre-nineteenth century times, education meant 'training' and 'having

skills.' More recently, however, 'education' became associated with a

person's moral, intellectual and spiritual development. The phrase

"an educated man" portrays the depth and breadth of a person's under-

standing, rather than the person's commitment to "any narrowly conceived

enterprise."

Still, Peters knows there are many ("perhaps a majority") who use

the word 'education' to refer to processes and desirable qualities which

have not to do with knowledge and understanding. Accordingly, he

relaxes his conditions by suggesting other concepts or "conceptions" of

education which emphasize the notions 'desirability,' or 'knowledge,'

or both:

1. a concept of education which refers to any process of bring-

    ing up or rearing, where the connection with what is desir-

    able or with what is knowledge is purely contingent.

2. a concept of education in which there is the development of

desirable states without emphasis on knowledge.

3. a concept of education in which there is emphasis on the development of knowledge without implying desirability.

4. a "specific" concept of education which links such processes with the development of states of a person, involving knowledge and understanding in depth and breadth, and also suggests that they are desirable. (LE25)

Peters clearly prefers the fourth "specific" concept of 'education'; his recommendations for educational practices are based upon it.

To the conditions he has put forward—the desirability and knowledge conditions—Peters adds a third. Education, he says, refers not only to the development of worthwhile or desirable forms of knowledge and understanding in persons (the "matter" of education). Development of this kind should not violate the "wittingness and voluntariness" of the person being educated. Peters believes this condition (the "manner" of education) rules out as 'educative,' those circumstances or activities in which forms of knowledge and understanding thought to be desirable are imposed upon a person without his (at least tacit) consent or probable comprehension: ones which do not "respect the learner as a person." He labels as "morally objectionable" those activities ruled out.

Peters turns to the notion of education in its 'task' or 'manner' sense. He examines the "family of processes" leading to depth and breadth of understanding, which respect persons being educated. He briefly touches upon those processes which can, on logical grounds, be 'educational,' and even more briefly on those which cannot be.

B. Indoctrination

Recent literature on 'indoctrination' suggests the difficulty of determining which features distinguish the notion from 'education.' The aims or intentions of the indoctrinator, the method he employs, and the content of what is passed on, are popular candidates for the necessary condition or conditions of 'indoctrination' (Snook, 1972b). As well, the notion 'indoctrination' is frequently analyzed in terms of the "state," as it were, of the indoctrinated person. Snook calls this the "upshot" sense of indoctrination (Snook, 1972a).

Peters does not enter directly into this discussion, although he is familiar with papers by Wilson and Hare which set in motion recent debate on the subject of indoctrination (Hollins, 1964; EE26ff). Peters' few comments on 'indoctrination,' scattered through several papers, indicate that he believes the aims of the indoctrinator, the method the indoctrinator employs and the content of what is passed on are all to some extent central to the activity of indoctrinating. He does not use the terms 'method,' 'intention,' or 'content' in his statements on indoctrination; but rather the notions 'belief,' 'evidence,' 'valid- ity,' 'critical thought' and 'autonomy.' His use of these terms gives evidence of his concern with the "upshot" sense: the state of the indoctrinated person.

Peters offers insights into the notion of 'indoctrination' using only the example of morality and moral education. This could make it difficult to decide whether he believes the notions 'indoctrination' and 'indoctrinating' can appropriately be used to refer to the passing on of beliefs not ordinarily labelled "controversial" or "value-laden," for

example mathematics and science (White, 1967). Peters suggests, however, that 'indoctrination' "has something to do with doctrines which are species of beliefs. These have to be understood and assented to in some embryonic way" (EE41). Since we usually associate 'doctrines' with political, religious and moral beliefs, it is safe for us to assume that Peters believes 'indoctrination' is typically associated with politics, religion and morality, and that the notion should be clarified at least with respect to these subjects.

Indoctrination, he concludes, is a "form of instruction," a special manner of instruction (RC17). It involves the passing on of fixed beliefs "in a way which <u>discourages</u> questions about their validity" (RC17;Fr349; italics mine). Bodies of knowledge "with principles immanent in them," he says, "can be handed on without systematic attempts to explain or justify them or to deal honestly with phenomena that do not fit." Fixed beliefs are thus perpetuated (EP19).

In the context of morality, these fixed beliefs reflect a conformist attitude towards rules and authority—a 'good boy' morality (RC17; Fr349). At some point in our lives, we have conformed to rules and authority. Some degree of conformity may always be desirable. What concerns Peters is persons' acceptance of fixed bodies of rules or beliefs as a result of techniques "which <u>incapacitate</u> (those persons) from adopting critical autonomous attitudes" (RC17; italics mine). He speaks of indoctrination as an activity which prevents critical autonamous thought.

Without engaging in a full-fledged examination of the notion of 'indoctrination,' I will point out some difficulties in Peters' treatment

of this concept.   My discussion centers on his use of the words

"discouragement," "incapacitating," "fixed beliefs," and "instruction."

To pass on fixed beliefs to others in a way which <u>discourages</u>

critical thought about their validity is not necessarily to <u>incapacitate</u>

or prevent persons from later adopting critical attitudes towards those

beliefs.   In the passing on of religious beliefs, often considered a

form of indoctrination, an attractive presentation might discourage

assessment of the validity of those beliefs.   The claim that such pre-

sentation incapacitates or prevents the believer from being critical of

those beliefs is a stronger one than his 'discouragement' notion.   On

the other hand, the notions 'incapacitating' and 'preventing' both imply

'discouragement.'

It is a necessary condition of indoctrination that an indoctrin-

ated person be discouraged in some way for some period of time from

thinking critically about his beliefs.   Peters, however, does not spell

out exactly how such discouragement comes about.   Since he does not

treat in any detail the nature of the indoctrinated persons' inability

to critically assess his beliefs, we must conclude that Peters' idea of

'discouraging' does not present a very satisfactory necessary condition.

Nor is "discouraging someone from critical thought about his beliefs,"

just as it stands, a sufficient condition of 'indoctrination.'   There

are some instances in which persons justifiably discourage others from

critically assessing their beliefs.   To discourage a young adult from

critically assessing his belief that he has a terminal illness because

of the damage such assessment would do to his mental health, or to dis-

courage a woman from determining the truth about her father's past, when

such knowledge would result in pain to herself and others, are both instances where the term 'indoctrination' is inappropriate.

The 'incapacitating' notion, on its side, offers conditions which are unnecessarily strong; it offers neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition of 'indoctrination.' It is sensible to say that someone was indoctrinated into superstitious beliefs, but later saw the folly of those beliefs. As well, an unusually difficult proof for a mathematical theorem may incapacitate a believer in the theorem from assessing his beliefs about that theorem. The incapacitating notion, then, rules out cases that we might very well like to call indoctrination, i.e., those in which a person later came to assess the beliefs he held, and the incapacitating notion allows cases, e.g., "difficult proofs," for which the label 'indoctrination' may be out of place. Peters' comments about 'discouragement' and 'incapacitating' do point to an important issue about indoctrination: determining what it is to pass on beliefs without also passing on grounds for the beliefs. This is the problem of determining what the indoctrinatory methods consist in. But the notions of discouragement and incapacitation do little in themselves to clarify features distinctive of 'indoctrination.'

In "Indoctrination and Beliefs," T. H. Green argues that indoctrination is that activity which gets another to believe certain things without any evidence--he calls it 'the non-evidential holding of beliefs' (Green, 1972). On his view, we would say that a person had been indoctrinated if he believed certain things without seeking evidence or without being inclined to question these beliefs. In Peters' words, the indoctrinated person may have been discouraged by the indoctrinator from

examining the evidence, or he may have been incapacitated from doing so. Nevertheless, on Green's account, it is the way the beliefs are held, i.e., without supporting evidence, that marks out one necessary condition of indoctrination.

In using the phrase "fixed beliefs," Peters refers, I believe, to the role evidence plays for the person who comes to believe something. The beliefs are fixed in the sense that the indoctrinator believes them to be true and passes them on to the believer in a non-evidential manner, without "attempts to explain or justify them or deal honestly with phenomena that do not fit" (EE19). The believer comes to hold the beliefs 'non-evidentially'; he has "no grasp of the underlying rationale of his beliefs" (EE41). The believer (and probably also the indoctrin- ator) do not hold up for check the validity of the beliefs and the validity of any reasons given for the beliefs.

Green's analysis of 'indoctrination' in terms of the 'non- evidential holding of beliefs' is the best way, I believe, to get clear what Peters means by his notion of a "fixed belief."

But we may also be persuaded to assess the notion of a "fixed belief" by attending to the "inclinations" or "dispositions" which accompany having the belief. In cases of 'indoctrination,' we could say that a belief is "fixed" in the sense that persons feel something, or are moved in certain ways by the belief (or, in the case of insensi- tivities to suffering, are less inclined to "move" or "be moved" by it). The indoctrinated person often appears to be committed to the beliefs for the satisfaction, comfort, guidance these beliefs give him. An indoctrinated person may not worry about--he may give no thought to--

the validity of his beliefs.   And he may also be inclined to perpetuate these beliefs in others.*

Although we might believe that one upshot of indoctrination—one feature of the indoctrinated person—is his tendency to have strong feelings or commitments to the beliefs, content or subject-matter, we should not conclude, because of this, that 'having a strong commitment to the belief' is a necessary condition of 'being indoctrinated.'

To say that an indoctrinated person gives the appearance of being strongly committed to a belief is not to say that an indoctrinated person necessarily is committed to a belief because of the satisfaction or comfort it gives him, nor is it to say that he is committed to the belief in the sense of perpetuating this belief in others.   An indoctrinated person may believe something simply because he genuinely thinks the belief is true.   Indoctrinated persons, in other words, do tend to have strong commitments to their beliefs, but that may only be because we normally speak of indoctrination when the beliefs are "value-laden," and not because strong feelings are characteristic of non-evidentially held beliefs.   In explicating the notion of indoctrination, then, we should concentrate on the reasons why the indoctrinated person takes certain beliefs to be true.   To examine the reasons why an indoctrinated person believes as he does is, in part at least, to examine the method or manner by which the beliefs were presented to him.

Peters speaks of the activity of indoctrinating or indoctrination

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*For an example of this view of the indoctrinated person, see Association for Values Education and Research (AVER).   Prejudice; Teacher's Manual.   Toronto: OISE Publications, 1978, p. 2.

as a method or manner of instruction. Now a manner of method of instruc-
tion which gets persons committed to beliefs without encouraging the
assessment of those beliefs is, on the face of it, a case of indoctrin-
ation. Some may argue, however, whether the necessary method or manner
of the indoctrinator be one of instruction and whether instruction always
implies intentions on the instructor/indoctrinator's part to get persons
to hold the particular beliefs which the indoctrinated person holds non-
evidentially.

Part of the difficulty with assessing Peters' claim about indoc-
trination as a method of instruction lies with his own analysis of 'in-
struction.' As we will see (p. 39), Peters suggests that "instructing"
means engaging in many different kinds of activities so as to "get per-
sons up to certain standards," or, as he puts it, to help them to acquire
knowledge. He intimates that the acquisition of this knowledge does not
necessarily mean that these persons see the rationale behind the facts or
information imparted. His notion of "teaching" covers that function.
For most persons, however, the notion of "instruction" does carry with it
the idea that the rationale "behind the facts" is revealed to the learner;
on this understanding, "instruction" differs little from "teaching."
Moreover, the notion of "acquiring knowledge" suggests something more or
different from "acquiring beliefs"; "knowledge" suggests some justifi-
cation or rationale for the beliefs.

Suppose, however, we accept Peters' view that instruction merely
involves the imparting of "facts" or information (i.e., beliefs) without
giving the underlying rationale for those beliefs. Can we say that
'indoctrinatory methods' must consist in some instructional activity?

To test this claim, we would need to construct cases where persons come to hold beliefs non-evidentially but where there seems to be no method or manner of instruction. A case in point might be one in which sexist and/or racist beliefs and attitudes were upshots or consequences of certain institutional, conventional, customary or habitual arrangements. Such beliefs (e.g., that women and non-whites are inferior and ought to be kept at their present status), are certainly common; we would most likely say that persons hold these beliefs non-evidentially. Moreover, there need be no obvious instructional methods employed to get persons to have these beliefs, although there may be.

Would we, however, call these cases of indoctrination, or would we simply say that these cases "exhibit elements" of indoctrination (i.e., these "elements" being the non-evidentially held beliefs)? If we said the latter, then we would be implying that a "full-fledged" case of indoctrination included more than the "upshot" (the way the beliefs were held). No doubt we would say this "something more" was the intention behind the manner or method of the indoctrinator, whether or not we conceived of the 'indoctrinator' as an individual or an "institution."* To classify an activity as indoctrination, then, is to suggest that there was some intention to get persons to hold beliefs without giving the supporting evidence for those beliefs; indeed, there may have been none to give.

I conclude that Peters is right to say there must be some kind of instruction necessary to indoctrination, at least some kind of intention

*See, for example, AVER, Prejudice, p. 3.

behind the indoctrinator's methods. But the instruction and/or intentions to indoctrinate may not be as clear or as obvious as Peters seems to suggest they are.

Let us now look at Peters' reasons for objecting to 'indoctrination' as an 'educational process.' In his view, the indoctrinator violates the 'wittingness and voluntariness' of the learner by not revealing evidence for beliefs nor encouraging the learner to check the validity of these beliefs. This is objectionable on 'moral' grounds, he says, since it does not respect the learner's capacity to think critically and autonomously. Peters believes that the goal of education is to promote desirable forms of knowledge and understanding, and he also believes that "understanding" involves knowing the underlying rationale, the "why" of things. Hence, it follows, along this line of argument, that 'indoctrination' cannot be an educational process.

Suppose, however, it could be shown that one's respect for a learner's capacity to think critically was somehow maintained in the face of "failure to reveal" evidence for a belief to the learner. Could one escape the charge that he was indoctrinating (or, perhaps, claim that indoctrination was "educational")?

Peters' word 'capacity' is an ambiguous one here. As an educator, I could maintain that I respected a learner's capacity to think critically even though I did not "reveal evidence" about a belief to the learner (1) if I was fairly certain that the learner could not, at this time, comprehend the evidence; (2) if I was convinced that the learner's critical assessment, at the time of introducing the belief, would interfere with my purpose for getting him to hold the belief; or

(3) if I believed, not that the learner's critical assessment would interfere with my purposes, but that such critical assessment by the learner was dependent upon his coming to have the belief, i.e., that having the belief (acting on it) was logically prior to his critical assessment of it.

Peters might reply to this that if, for any of the above reasons, I did not reveal the evidence to a learner, I would not be respecting the learner as an autonomous person. If the learner was an adult, I would probably agree. With children, however, the case may be different. Part of the difficulty in resolving this question is to decide what "revealing the evidence" is in the case of getting persons to hold and act on moral beliefs. Is it holding up a justification for the moral rules? Is it pointing out various principles, or the reasons for adopting those principles? Or is "moral evidence" more than "giving reasons": is it being respectful and loving to the learner, perhaps also being a model of moral behaviour oneself?

For moral educators concerned with getting others to 'be moral,' these issues are obviously of importance; especially so since it is a common assumption among moral educators that getting others to 'be moral' is, at the least, to get them to hold beliefs about (as well as to act on) the moral rules. In Peters' treatment of indoctrination, he pays scant attention to the notion of revealing evidence to children for the moral beliefs we may want them to have. He does try to show, however, that moral beliefs can be derived from the fundamental principles presupposed by moral discourse. This we will see in Chapter 3.

In sum, Peters' account of 'indoctrination' sweeps lightly over

the manner or style of instruction which results in a person's unquestioning acceptance of beliefs. Nor does he satisfactorily apply his general comments about indoctrination to the notion of evidencing moral beliefs. In his discussions of 'indoctrination,' he neglects to tell what evidence for a moral belief looks like, and how evidence for a moral belief can be revealed to a believer so that the believer will come to hold the belief "on the evidence." In his brief statements about 'indoctrination,' he also neglects the question whether revealing reasons for moral beliefs can be called indoctrinatory if the reasons for these beliefs are beyond the comprehension of the believer, or if presenting reasons interferes with persons coming to have the beliefs, or if the believer must come to have (act on) the beliefs before he assesses them critically.

Peters also omits to consider whether we can label institutions, conventions or customs 'indoctrinatory' if "fixed beliefs" are passed on. This is a less serious charge perhaps. But moral educators, presumably, must make inroads on answers to these questions if they are to be certain that what they do is not indoctrination. It is likely, however, that educators may feel compelled to get children simply to hold and act on some moral beliefs, whether or not these children hold the beliefs on the evidence. In these circumstances, educators may or may not prefer to call what they are doing "indoctrination."

C. Conditioning

Peters sees 'indoctrination' as antithetical to the sense of education in which knowledge and understanding are central. He allows some place for conditioning techniques, however, in the enterprise of

education. We must find out now what he understands by conditioning and why he objects to it on moral grounds; then assess his reasons for allowing conditioning procedures as "aids to," but not "processes of" education.

A clue to Peters' objection to classifying conditioning as an educational process is his frequent statement that while indoctrination concerns the inculcation of beliefs, conditioning primarily concerns behaviour (EE42). All those concerned with the moral education of the young are no doubt "interested in" behaviour. But those who think in terms of conditioning youngsters, Peters maintains, are "interested in" bringing about particular behaviours in children, e.g., being tidy or respectful. Peters too is concerned that people behave (act) in certain ways, but he wants them to behave in these ways because there are good reasons, and they see that there are good reasons, for so behaving.

Peters' determination to probe the adequacy of the 'conditioned behaviour' or 'behaviouristic' approach to psychological explanation led him to analyze critically the conception of human nature upon which this approach was based. Finding that the largest part of the study of psychology assumed simplistic conceptions of human conduct (even simplistic conceptions of animal conduct from which inferences were made to human conduct), Peters persuasively argued an alternative, "more logically adequate" account (CM; ME; B).

Peters made clear his belief (shared by educators and philosophers as far back as Aristotle and elaborated by writers up to the present), that humans act, they do things for reasons or out of certain motives or intentions. Humans are not just bundles of 'nerve-endings,' responding

to 'stimuli.' They are not only subject to "happenings" or "reactions." Humans are agents, Peters insists; they do things, they make things happen. Behaviourism fails to acknowledge action, reason and motive accounts of human conduct because it fails to distinguish between movements and actions. Behaviourism cannot succeed, then, in its attempt to provide adequate explanations of human conduct.

Peters scrutinizes two techniques of behaviouristic psychology: 'classical conditioning' and 'operant conditioning,' and assesses their value for education.

Classical conditioning, associated with the early dog and pigeon experiments of Pavlov and with the recent writings of the "radical behaviourist" B. F. Skinner, "is concerned with reactions such as salivation and eye-blinks and simple movements which are not seen as bringing about anything by the subject" (EE42). Random movements are positively rewarded or negatively punished; these constitute 'reinforcements.' Peters finds no difficulty in dismissing classical conditioning as an educational process since it is "concerned only with involuntary behaviour" (EP12). Injecting adrenalin into the body, administering drugs, stimulating by electrodes and other methods of (classical) conditioning, he says, "do not of themselves bring about knowledge and understanding" (EEm174).

Operant conditioning, also associated with the work of Skinner, bears some resemblance to an educational process, but it would be a mistake, Peters continues, to think that it is one (Kazepides, 1976).

In simple operant conditioning experiments, the subject makes random movements, one of which may result in a reward. The subject is

said to have been conditioned when his movements are less randomized, more directly related to goal attainment (e.g., subject presses the lever which rewards with a pellet of food; subject avoids the buzzer which shocks). In more complex experimental situations, the operant conditioner still sees 'goal-directed behaviours' and 'reinforcements' in simple terms (Kazepides, op. cit.). In non-experimental 'educational' settings, the notions 'goal,' 'means,' 'reinforcements' are also simply spelled out, but refer to quite diverse and complex "goings-on": from the recitation of 2+2=4, to reading a book; from switching off a light upon leaving a room, to "being favorably disposed towards other persons."

Behaviourists not only appear to reduce all educational procedures and all learnings to operant conditioned responses, they claim that the notions 'education,' 'knowledge,' 'learning' and 'understanding' make little sense when divorced from the notion of 'conditioned responses.' Peters, by contrast, argues that 'education' and 'understanding' make little sense when thought of as 'conditioned responses.'

The chief mistake of Behaviourism, says Peters, lies in its assumption that the proposition 'being disposed to effect a particular result' implies a second proposition 'the subject moves so as to bring about the goal,' (the subject sees his movement as instrumental to the goal-attainment). The first proposition, however, does not require that the subject believe his movement and the goal are connected. Nor does the first proposition carry the suggestion that the subject will adapt or vary his behaviour so as to reach the goal. The subject simply moves and the goal is reached. A pattern of behaviour is "stamped in" which we might falsely regard as an achievement on the sub-

ject's part (EP13). The second proposition implies that a pattern of behaviour is established <u>because</u> it is seen by the subject to be a correct way to attain the goal. Modifications in the subject's behaviour follow if the subject sees other 'correct' ways of attaining the goal. The second proposition, then, implies beliefs on the subject's part--which the first does not--beliefs about correct ways of behaving.

In operant conditioning, asserts Peters, "what has to be learned is not grasped by the learner to start with, if ever, as being instrumentally related to what counts as reinforcement" (EP12), because in operant conditioning there is no place for the subject's beliefs or concepts under which he views his behaviour, the goal and the 'reinforcement.' "There is no consciousness in conditioning of what has to be learnt as a <u>task</u>" (EP13). On the operant conditioning paradigm, most educational goals--learning that X, learning to be X, learning X, learning to X--cannot be accounted for. "A man," he says, "might be conditioned to avoid dogs or induced to do something by hypnotic suggestion. But we could not describe this as 'education' if he did not know what he was learning while he was learning it" (EI91).

How, then, can Peters allow conditioning procedures as <u>aids</u> to education if he rules them out as processes of education? We must be clear here on his use of the word 'aid.' He explains this while discussing the learning of moral rules:

> At the early stages of moral learning, aids to learning, which are <u>developments of conditioning</u> such as rewards and punishments, praise and blame, are extremely important . . . and their importance . . . is not difficult to understand. For a child has not just got to learn how to apply concepts correctly; he has also to learn to behave consistently in the required way. Rules must regulate something and what they regulate are human inclinations. Children,

have, therefore, to start off their moral life with some kind of
habit training. . . . (Since) their counter-inclinations are
strong . . . wanting something now or wanting something at other
people's expense . . . insistence by parents on rules often has
to be backed by extrinsic aids such as rewards and approval in
order to provide positive incentives to outweigh the pull of the
child's inclinations. And so simple habits are built up.
                                (RC64; italics mine; also ML366)

He says that parents have an option of supplementing example and

instruction by the positive extrinsic aids of rewards or approval or by

the negative ones of punishment and disapproval. He points to "strong

evidence" from research in psychology supporting the view that positive

aids are more conducive to moral learning. "The hypothesis is that

punitive and rejecting techniques militate against attention, and hence

against learning, by producing anxiety; (they) undermine the child's

confidence in himself" (RC65).

Peters sees that "developments of conditioning" techniques are

aids to education, then, because he believes habits must be built up in

the early stages of moral learning, that children must learn to conform

their behaviour to rules, and that children's inclinations must be

regulated. He assumes that such regulation of desire and inclination

is necessary, and that this is best done using techniques of praise and

blame, especially praise. Praising and blaming, he believes, are

essential in helping children to understand moral concepts and are

essential to getting children to behave in the required way.

Peters calls praising, approving, blaming, and disapproving

"developments of conditioning" and "conditioning aids" because these

techniques could not be considered either operant or classical condi-

tioning techniques on his own strict account of these. Praising and

blaming are used to reinforce and change a child's behaviour but they do this, presumably, by helping the child to develop his understanding of what he is doing. Giving a child praise and blame has some effect on a child's beliefs, and this change in or development of his beliefs is related in some way to a change in his behaviour.

Peters assumes that when praise and blame are used, there is some kind of conditioning taking place; moreover he assumes that these techniques are the procedures which are responsible for the conditioning. The question which can be put to Peters is this: when is he ever sure that the use of these "developments of conditioning" are the ones efficacious in getting the child to regulate his inclinations? How can he single out these techniques as the ones responsible for the child's conformity to rules? These questions are particularly important ones, for as we will see, Peters believes that "educational processes" (instruction and example) are necessary too, in helping the child to develop and enlarge his understanding of moral concepts, and in getting him to behave in the required way. Peters assumes that there is some real difference between "developments of conditioning" (aids) and educational processes (instruction, giving examples, giving reasons). But it is not entirely clear on what basis he makes this distinction; it is not clear, in fact, whether the distinction can be maintained.

D. Processes of Education

We must now attend to the processes of education, "the family of tasks leading up to the achievement of being educated." Being educated involves acquiring some skills, knowledge and understanding of principles. Peters examines the tasks which he believes bring these learnings about.

Again, his discussion turns on examples from moral education.

1. Training

'Training' is a term appropriately used, Peters writes, with reference to the learning of skills where a combination of practice and instruction are necessary, and where correction and example are often helpful. Skills include bicycle riding, shooting, swimming and swinging a golf club; they have a close connection with bodily movements.

The concept of 'training,' Peters believes, has application when (1) there is some specifiable type of performance that has to be mastered; (2) practice is required for the mastery of it; and (3) little emphasis is placed on the underlying rationale (EP15).

But the concept of 'training,' he continues, also has application "whenever anything coming up to a clear-cut specification has to be learned." He offers as examples here the inculcation of habits such as punctuality, tidiness and honesty. Habit-learning is not simply learning a know-how or knack. These habits cannot be 'picked up' as can skills. In order for someone to develop habits of punctuality, tidiness and honesty, he must have a whole range of action-concepts.

> He cannot learn what 'stealing' is (for instance) just by watching others. For he cannot tell what an action is just from the outside: he also has to know how the agent conceived what he is doing. The notion of theft cannot be tied down . . . to any specifiable range of bodily movements . . . . there are an infinite number of ways of appropriating (concepts of stealing, theft) . . . therefore there must be instruction and correction as well as practice and imitation, if a child is to learn not to steal.
> (EP15ff.)

'Moral training,' he continues, is different from 'moral education.' Moral training suggests the learning of habits, which in turn suggests the learning of a moral code "tied down to specifiable rules."

Moral education, on the other hand, suggests "the passing on of the underlying rationale, the underlying principles." But 'moral training,' he says "involves much more than know-how or knack. The child must learn that certain classes of action are wrong. Such knowledge could never just be 'caught'." Unlike the learning of skills for which practice and imitation are necessary and instruction and example are helpful, Peters believes that the learning of moral habits requires not only practice and imitation but also instruction and example. And this is because concepts peculiar to the moral rules must be learned.

To assess Peters' work on the educational process he calls 'training,' we must try to determine whether he appropriately uses the notions 'practicing' and 'training' to explain habituation to moral rules. We must also ask, of course, whether his notion of 'habituation to moral rules' makes sense; this we will do more fully in Chapter 4.

First, Peters is correct to point out that a person learning the moral rules must come to understand a number of concepts, an example of which is the concept 'stealing.' He is also correct to say that there are a number of different sorts of things which can count as stealing, and that seeing something as 'stealing' is not seeing movements of various sorts but is 'seeing' such movements under different descriptions (as 'actions'), in which agents' intentions and reasons are central.

Second, in his consideration of the child's learning of moral rules and concepts peculiar to them, Peters is probably correct to say that some kind of instruction, including the giving of examples, and some kind of imitative behaviour on the learner's part are both necessary. At any rate, it is difficult to quarrel with his assertion that the child "must

come to learn that some classes of action are wrong."

As I have hinted, however, Peters' suggestion that learning these rules and rule-concepts necessitates _practice_ is a more problematic one. By the notion of 'habituation to moral rules,' I assume Peters means _being disposed_ to act on these rules, in contrast to just _knowing_ or _knowing about_ the rules (e.g., being able to pick out instances of the concept 'stealing' for the rule "Do not steal"). Rule-learning in this disposition sense implies learning _not to steal_ (a logical precondition of which is knowing what 'stealing' is, as he suggests). We have now to test his notion of 'practice' against the disposition sense of rule-learning.

In his introductory comments on 'training,' Peters attends to the training of skills, attainments which involve bodily movements. Practicing the bodily movements which make up skills involves repetition without, he says, any implication of a rationale for the practice for particular moves.

In extending 'training' to cases of moral habits or moral rule-learning, Peters concentrates on 'coming to know what stealing is.' 'Stealing' is suggestive of actions, not movements, and it presupposes other concepts, e.g., 'possession.' He does not attend to the kind of practice or repetition he believes is required to learn to be disposed to act on the moral rule 'Do not steal'--that is, learning not to steal--other than to mention that habituation to a moral rule 'Do not steal' implies learning not to steal.

First, the notion of practicing makes some sense in the context of learning what the concept 'stealing' is about. He says in another

section that "a certain amount of practice is required for the child to learn to use necessary concepts; but nothing like the same amount as in the case of skills" (EP17). We might imagine that the person could "try out" information he has about what constitutes stealing. He might do this either by himself or in the company of an instructor (e.g., parent or teacher). By "trying out" or "practicing" the application of this concept, the person may learn what are correct examples and what are incorrect examples of stealing; he may, in doing so, come to have the concept 'stealing.' Even here, the notion of "practicing" is a rather odd one.

But can we make any sense of Peters' suggestion that a person is 'trained' in the moral rules, and that this training is achieved largely by practicing? This question gains in importance when we realize that moral rules, when formulated, are usually worded as injunctions against doing certain things. We may be caught here in a bind, a 'logical bind.' If we interpret 'practicing the moral rules' to mean the repetition of movements, as with the practicing of skills, then on Peters' suggestion, we have not attended to the proper features of moral rule-learning, i.e., that they involve seeing "movements" under a different aspect (as actions). Along this line of argument, we might conclude that if "practicing the moral rules" means the repeated following of (or obedience to) the moral rules, practicing is unnecessary or "logically odd," or both.

We could interpret Peters' phrase "practicing or training in the moral rules," however, in a different way. Suppose we wanted to get a child not to steal. We might do this by punishing him every time he

was tempted to steal but didn't. We could say that we were giving him some practice in not stealing—that we were training him in the moral rule 'Do not steal.' We would not necessarily mean by this that _he_ knew the rule he was acting on was a _moral_ rule. We would simply be getting him—training him—not to steal by means of punishment and praise. And we might carry out this endeavour quite independently of our attempts to convince him that stealing was _morally_ wrong. This interpretation of Peters' claim, I believe, makes the most sense. It makes more sense, I believe, than saying that we must train a child in the moral rule if by this Peters means that the child must respond in a particular way because he believes the rule to be a _moral_ one.

As we will see in Chapter 4, Peters does not believe the _best_ form of developing moral habits in youngsters is by drill or practice or training; he emphasizes reason-giving as the best way of forming "adaptable habits" in children. At the same time, he is reluctant to give up the notions "practice," "training," "movement," and those methods he loosely classifies as "non-cognitive" ones. Given Peters' ambivalence on this point, we must seriously question whether he presents a clear picture of how moral development takes place, and a clear picture of what he expects of the moral educator.

2. Instruction

For Peters, 'being educated' implies the development of a conceptual scheme "that has to be fitted to phenomena," and this suggests that teachers must use the language meaningfully. Instruction and explanation are as essential to educating persons, he claims, as the persons' own first-hand experience. Properly conducted, instruction and

explanation will be geared to the conceptual level of the learner.

Under "instructional activities," Peters groups the following: confronting children with relevant experiences, presenting to children things which are related to their stage of development, asking the right questions at the appropriate time, answering questions, guiding the experiences of the child in various directions (EP17). He does not say how many of these activities are necessary to 'instructing.' In fact, he shies away from a serious analysis of the concept, hinting only that in "instructing" our aim is to get persons up to certain standards ("acquiring knowledge"). Noticeably, he does not demand that instruction include presentation of the rationale behind the facts or information imparted. He leaves this function to 'teaching.'

3. Teaching and Learning Principles

Peters believes that the main aim of education and of teaching is to get students to learn (understand) principles. Such understanding does not necessarily come about by "accumulation of items of knowledge." It requires reflection "(so that) principles can illuminate the facts" (EP18).

Peters looks briefly at what is necessary for the acquisition of learning of principles:

(a) acquiring ("in some way") a lot of knowledge. In science, this means acquiring a mass of empirical generalizations; in morals it means acquiring 'low-level' rules or assumptions. Understanding principles cannot be separated from the acquisition of knowledge of this 'low-level' sort.

(b) coming to see that principles are "appealed to in order to

substantiate . . . and give unity to lower order ones." This is achieved, he says, by "explanation and teaching" and by a "selective survey of the many." 'Teaching' suggests that a rationale behind the skills or body of knowledge is to be grasped.

Peters emphasizes understanding the rationale "behind" skills and bodies of knowledge because he believes that knowledge and critical thought about that knowledge, are necessary to avoid indoctrination: "the passing on of fixed beliefs." But 'critical clarification' of principles (the discussion and justification of principles) is a very different exercise from applying principles in concrete circumstances. Applying principles requires "judgment," he says, which probably comes through experience "in the presence of those who already have it." Understanding the rationale behind facts is important, Peters believes, to avoid being indoctrinated and to learn to apply principles.

In this section, we have seen that Peters' analysis of the concept 'education' and his analyses of 'educational processes' center on examples drawn from morality and moral education. Just how closely he views the enterprise of general education and the enterprise of moral education will become clearer in the section to follow.

E. Peters on Worthwhile Activities

Before outlining Peters' views on moral education, I give some attention to an issue controversial among some moral educators: deciding what the scope of moral education shall be. One of Peters' notions, "the initiation of persons into worthwhile activities," has provided fuel for current debate. The question of what constitutes 'morality,' however, is obviously not a new one.

I begin with an objection against Peters' claim that initiating a person into worthwhile activities is a 'moral matter.' I continue with a note on his "worthwhile activities." Finally, I present and assess five interpretations of his claim. The fifth of these holds the best possibilities, I believe, for the task of morally educating persons. In stating my preference for the fifth interpretation over the third or fourth, I depart from what is Peters' probable intent in making the claim. But I point out the worthwhileness of his view for those educators, who, like myself, conceive differently the task of moral education.

1. The Argument Against Peters

The objection to Peters' view runs thus. Morality has to do with interpersonal conduct, primarily with agents' avoidance of harm and prevention of harm to other persons. The main and perhaps only thrust of moral education should be to get persons to reflect on, and to act in accordance with, rules and principles which have to do with this primary concern. If we accepted Peters' view of the 'moral,' we would include as necessary tasks of moral education, activities whose aim is to help persons avoid and prevent harm to others, and activities which encourage the "initiation" of which he speaks. His view of moral education is therefore wider than the first view. In all likelihood, it stands less chance of successful accomplishment. We should reject his claim, so the argument goes, and attend only to what is of central importance in morality.*

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*I know of no recorded objection to Peters' claim that the initiation of persons into worthwhile activities is a 'moral' matter.

2. Worthwhile Activities

A 'worthwhile activity,' for Peters, is one which has 'intrinsic desirability,' one which is "pursued for its own sake." He speaks frequently and with some enthusiasm of 'intrinsic interest' and 'intrinsic desirability' (EE144ff). But he is often ambivalent about the activities which "have" this feature and the state of mind of the person so engaged. He allows that persons might pursue many kinds of activities for their "intrinsic interest." But he also states his belief that the only 'intrinsically interesting or desirable' activities are those for which public standards or criteria of excellence apply. He means that activities are worthwhile (1) if they hold the attention of the participant, and (2) if participants could perform them more or less well according to standards. His most common examples are ones we recognize as subject-areas or disciplines like history or mathematics. Occasionally he allows—but with much less ardour—practical activities like cookery, archery and motor mechanics. These activities can all be done more or less well according to certain standards of performance. But the 'core subjects' or what he frequently calls "the public modes of thought" or "the forms of life," have standards of reasoning "built into them."

Peters rules out bingo and pushpin as worthwhile activities. Someone may engage in these, his attention riveted. But no one could perform them more or less well according to public standards of excellence. One does not reason in the performance of bingo, he says; "standards of reasoning" here makes no sense.

Clearly, Peters places great value upon the development of

reasoning abilities (rationality). He comfortably labels as 'worthwhile' or 'intrinsically desirable' those activities which require reasoning in the pursuit of them. And of these, he favours the so-called "theoretical pursuits"--activities which involve distinctive methods of evidencing claims and beliefs.

3. Interpretations of Peters' Claim

We now turn to Peters' claim that the initiation of persons into worthwhile activities is a moral matter.

(a) The 'methods of education' interpretation

We could interpret Peters' claim to mean that the initiation of persons into worthwhile activities should be done by methods which respect the person's rationality, i.e., "morally unobjectionable methods." If this is what he intends, it does not differ from earlier views he expresses on the processes which can be called 'educational.' We should say that Peters uses the term 'moral education' in two different senses: to refer to the conduct of general education, broadly conceived; and to refer to a classification within general education, like mathematics, history or science education. But it is with this second classificatory sense of 'moral education' that we are concerned here, and in the light of which we must assess his comment. The 'methods of education' interpretation, then, is an implausible one because it does not delineate the content of the <u>subject</u> 'moral education.'

(b) The 'empirical' interpretation

By his claim, Peters could mean that those who are engaged in worthwhile activities are also those who are "disposed to take the moral point of view." This is an interesting empirical hypothesis open to

confirmation or disconfirmation. But as there is little textual evidence to suggest this is Peters' intent; it seems an unlikely interpretation.

(c) The 'human ideal' interpretation

The initiation of persons into worthwhile activities may be a matter so important, so serious to Peters, that he describes or evaluates this as a matter of "moral" concern. Such initiation has the "highest" of goals: to develop persons' rational capacities. It reflects an ideal of human achievement.

Without doubt, Peters thinks that the development of persons' rational capacities is a very serious matter. But if he considers this an "ideal" of human achievement, surely he would not recommend that everyone adopt this ideal. There are other "ideals" in terms of which one can govern one's conduct or towards which a person can direct his actions; at least Strawson suggests that there are (Strawson, 1970). Many of these--for example the "ideal" of asceticism--is not primarily concerned with the development of rationality (reasoning abilities).

(d) The 'ethical excellences' interpretation

Peters gives evidence in his writing of adopting what could be called an "Aristotelian" approach to education. All education for Peters is moral or "ethical" education. Education is, or should be about the initiation of persons into all sorts of activities, and the more the better: the visual arts, music, politics, cooking, physical education, the literary skills, history and mathematics. Educators should be concerned that persons being educated strive for excellence in all these fields; by striving for these goals they will develop and

enhance their personalities and characters.

For (c) above, educators might consider it their responsibility to cultivate in others an appreciation for music, because music is a worthwhile activity. Educators might consider that it was their moral responsibility to do so: it would be wrong for them not to cultivate in others the enjoyment of music. For (d) however, educators might think that they ought to include music and worthwhile activities as part of the curriculum of moral education because these activities are themselves ethical excellences. An "ethical" (moral) education here would consist of any activities which are worthwhile.

The 'ethical excellences' interpretation probably best reflects Peters' intent. Accepting this interpretation as the basis for moral education, however, has its difficulties: we would be committed to initiating persons into a wide variety of areas (excellences), and this would make moral education virtually coextensive with general education.

(e) The knowledge and skills components of 'avoiding harm'

There is a fifth interpretation of the claim that the initiation of persons into worthwhile activities is a "moral matter." In this, 'morality' and 'moral education' are centrally concerned with the avoidance of harm. If persons are to be morally educated--if they are to learn to avoid and prevent harmful acts to others--they ought to acquire a range of skills, abilities, beliefs and dispositions. They ought to know, for example, how to verify relevant empirical beliefs, to understand a range of moral concepts (e.g., 'rights'), and to know the causal consequences of certain actions.

A moral educator who adopted this "narrower" interpretation of

'morality' and 'moral education' could well advocate the initiation of persons into worthwhile activities. He might do so because he believed (a) that the knowledge, skills and dispositions gained from such initiation were in some sense "transferable" to moral thought and action; or because he believed (b) that an empirically necessary method for getting persons to be moral was to engage persons in "worthwhile activities."

In his talk of the "rational passions," Peters gives us some indication that he believes (a); this will become clearer in Chapter 5. My own view is that (b) is a reasonable suggestion. Initiating persons into "worthwhile activities" undoubtedly helps persons to attain levels of competency in at least some of the abilities and dispositions which are necessary for being moral. A person's initiation into worthwhile activities would not be necessary, however, for his attaining competency in some moral abilities, namely those of a 'dispositional' sort: feeling certain things; being sensitive to other persons' hurt or suffering, or carrying out in the civic or political realm judgments made on moral grounds.

It should be said that Peters does not offer arguments in support of the pursuit of human ideals or excellences--(c) or (d)--over what might be called "other-regarding duties." He admits, in fact, that he often uses a "wide sense of the moral." But he also says that his primary concern "is with the following of rules and practices of an interpersonal sort" (FC142).

II. Peters on Morality and Moral Education

I turn now to some highlights of Peters' account of rational
morality and moral education. Many of these arguments and statements
I elaborate upon and criticize in succeeding chapters. In this over-
view, I include a few of the differences and similarities Peters sees
between his conception of morality and the conceptions of others.
These remarks help us to understand his position and to place it within
the tradition of moral philosophy.

A. Codes, Subjectivism and Rational Morality (RC,9ff.)

Peters is convinced that his view of morality is more complex than
other views. To others, 'morality' is a matter of "love" or "integrity,"
or "willing one thing," or "role-related duties" or "conformity to moral
codes." One moral philosopher argues that moral decisions are made by
"lonely individuals" who "universalize their judgments"; yet another
thinks morality is concerned mainly with "calculations." All of these
considerations may be parts of the moral life. But each must be seen,
says Peters, against a background "provided by the others"; this back-
ground is often mistakenly forgotten.

Peters encourages people to take their own moral stance, an idea
he believes is based on the liberal notion of respect for the individual.
Encouraging individuals' initiative is a vacuous notion, he admits,
unless people are introduced to a "moral mode of experience." They
must come to share a complex inheritance within which they can "locate
and make something of themselves." Herein, he says, lies the educa-
tional significance of his understanding of morality.

He contrasts his view with two general streams of thought. The

first interprets 'morality' as a code which prohibits actions such as stealing, sex and being selfish.   'Code' here is used to refer to a body of rules which "hang together."   Either subscribers to the code do not see the rational basis for such a code, or else that rational basis does not exist.   The second interprets 'morality' as a romantic notion, suggestive of individual choices, autonomy, subjective preferences. Notions such as 'authenticity,' 'commitment,' 'likes and dislikes' figure significantly in descriptions of this view of morality.

Advocates of both positions often supply ideas on how to obtain conformity with their goals.   Those who think of morality in the first sense tend to be authoritarian, and to regard moral education as necessarily indoctrinative.   Those who think of morality in the second sense think that any attempt to instruct children in moral matters is a form of indoctrination, hence it must be avoided.

Depicting morality in such either/or terms is false in Peters' view.   In his account of the "historical evolution" of a rational form of morality, he claims that the encouragement of discussion and dissent led to the questioning of current codes and standards.

B.   Principles and Rules (RC,12ff.)

Basic to this questioning and debate, certain fundamental principles were and are presupposed, Peters says, "without which the use of reason would be mere shadow-play."   The presuppositions of being reasonable, he says, are those of impartiality, truth-telling, freedom and the consideration of interests.   These principles provide point to the giving of reasons.   They indicate that "it matters whether people suffer or whether they satisfy their wants."

To these four principles, he adds a fifth: respect for persons. This principle accommodates the idea that an individual's view about his own life matters. Each person is not to be thought of just as an occupant of a role or as a means to someone else's ends. Rather, each person should be regarded with respect, "as a being with a life-space and point of view of his own."

When we view codes of conduct (sets of rules) in terms of these principles, we see differences in the content of such codes. But, says Peters, it is important to see at what points such differences in content become apparent.

There are few differences among codes adumbrated as basic rules. Rules are necessary to any continuing form of social life, "man being what he is and the conditions of life on earth being what they are." He cites here such rules as making and keeping of contracts, non-injury, care of the young and care of property.

Above the level of rules, however, "there is room for any amount of disagreement and development." Stability and consensus at the level of basic rules is compatible with change and experiment at other levels. Such changes at these other levels must be carried out with sensitivity to the five fundamental principles. These provide general criteria of relevance for moral appraisal; they tell us what is a reason and what is not. "They sensitize us to features of people and situations which are morally significant." "A 'form' of experience gradually emerges under which 'contents' deriving from different traditions are fitted." This form of experience Peters calls 'rational morality.'

C. Facets of the Moral Life (RC,16ff.)

Peters traces the history of that form of life called 'rational morality.' Locke, Butler, Hume, Kant, Price and Mill contributed to this understanding of morality.

In eclectic fashion, Peters draws together what he takes to be the chief features of rational morality:

1. Man has certain wants and takes part in characteristic activities. Terms such as 'good,' 'desirable,' 'worthwhile,' 'well-being,' and 'interest,' he says, "have application here."

2. Man has social roles. Various duties and obligations accompany him in his various stations.

3. Rules govern conduct between people. He lists here duties such as fairness, unselfishness and honesty. These, he says, "affect the manner in which a person conducts himself within his activities and roles." Such rules are personalized as character-traits.

4. Goals of life. These point to purposes which "derive from non-neutral appraisals" of a situation. Goals of life (ambition, benevolence, envy, greed, love and respect), are personalized in the form of 'motives.'

5. Character-traits. These determine the manner in which a man follows or pursues rules. He emphasizes two kinds of traits: those connected with the will (determination, integrity, conscientiousness, consistency), and those connected with human excellences (autonomy, creativeness, wisdom; these "depend on the development of rational capacities").

Some character-traits and some motives are 'virtues,' he says;

others are vices.

Peters criticizes moral philosophers who "like to impose unity on the moral life by fastening on one or two features of it." The Utilitarians emphasize only the considerations of interests, largely ignoring general obligations, duties and virtues such as integrity and conscientiousness. Kantians apply only an abstract test of impartiality, downgrading 'the good,' ignore social morality (including role-performances), and disregard motives excepting 'respect.' The Intuitionists, he says, are wrong to assert the self-evidence of principles. Yet Peters sympathizes with intuitionists who construct lists of _prima facie_ duties and obligations--what he calls the different 'facets' of the moral life.

He is most impressed with David Hume's understanding of morality because "it takes account of all spheres of morality." Hume's morality emphasizes impartiality and those mental qualities or dispositions agreeable to the individual and to society. Hume admires the individual who pursues what is 'good,' and approves qualities "useful to society": justice and benevolence. Within this group of socially useful qualities are the natural virtues stemming from universal motives and conventional virtues, e.g., justice (RC20).

Peters sees two major weaknesses in Hume's account: the discussion of justice in the Enquiry and the "thin account" of reason--Hume's conception of the "disinterested passions." In light of his criticisms of Hume, we would do well to scrutinize Peters' own analyses of 'justice' and 'reason' in morals; this will be done in Chapters 3 to 5.

Finally, Peters demarcates two distinct features of rational morality which, he believes, integrate the best features of the ethical

systems put forward by moral philosophers:

(1) the _form_ of morality which is given by the five fundamental "procedural" principles, "the presuppositions of being reasonable"; and

(2) the content of morality which is given by accounts of

(a) what a man's interests are, and of what is good and desirable;

(b) what a man's role and duties are as he takes part in institutionalized social practices;

(c) character-traits and motives.

These diverse contents, he says, "permit different emphases." But moral educators must certainly give attention to both the form and content of morality.

Peters states a case for _form_ and _content_. But a review of his writing suggests, perhaps, an inconsistent use of these very terms. He regards form and content as components of moral reasoning. Yet he also sees _content_ as the various aspects of one's life which can be affected by knowing the form of morality. He criticizes the developmentalists, Piaget and Kohlberg, for attending only to the form of morality ("how rules are conceived"). In his view, they attend only to moral reasoning (moral judgments), but not to the dispositions to act in certain ways or the dispositions to feel certain things (RC42). Peters' recommendations to them appear to lead, however, in two (different) directions: (1) he recommends that they give attention to moral _content_ which turns out to be his notion of habituation to moral rules, and (2) he recommends they give attention to compassion and concern for others--those dispositions or attitudes which he believes must accompany or "supplement" the use of

reason.

Let us look briefly at this second recommendation.

D. Reason and 'Feeling'

Peters' account of rational morality is replete with 'feeling'

terms; to 'compassion' and 'concern' he adds 'sensitivities,'

'motives,' 'emotions,' 'dispositions' and 'rational passions.' If we

are to be clear on Peters' understanding of reason in morals, we must

certainly examine his analyses of these feeling-terms.

As I have said, Peters believes that compassion and concern for

others are feelings that must supplement the use of reason.

> There can be over-emphasis on reason . . . we must have compassion
> and love as well as reason . . . these transform role-performances.
> (What we need is) . . . an account of Hume's sentiment for
> humanity.
>
> (RC26)

Peters also speaks of reasoning as "having motives" or "being

sensitive" to peoples' suffering. To reason in morals, he says, is to

have the motives of concern, compassion, benevolence, and to be moved

to act in certain ways. Principles can function as motives, he says;

they can become "personalized" as motives. Do Peters' statements on

compassion and concern as supplementary to reason, and his statements on

reasons as motives reflect differing senses of what it is to reason on

moral matters? Or does he believe that to reason well on moral mat-

ters is to show some compassion and concern for others?

In this thesis, we shall have to clarify what Peters sees as the

role of both motives and the emotions in moral thinking and behaviour.

He believes motives and emotions involve cognition: they are based on

beliefs (RC81). But beliefs can be held on good evidence, on poor

evidence or on no evidence at all. He uses the term 'appraisal' to refer to "what is of value to the individual"; it indicates a "moving away from or a moving toward." 'Appropriate appraisals' are those motives and emotions based on good evidence.

Does he believe certain emotion/appraisals are required for taking the moral point of view? Does he allow or prohibit other emotion/ appraisals? With answers in hand, we may be able to see the merit of his suggestion that the emotions can be educated, and that the education of the emotions is an important part of educating persons into rational morality.

E. Moral Development and Moral Learning

I have already indicated some of Peters' views about moral development and moral learning: the strong emphasis he places on training and instruction in a child's habituation to moral rules ("the content of morality"), and the role he sees for teaching in the child's learning of moral principles ("the form of morality"). I have also mentioned one criticism he brings against the developmental view of moral learning put forward by both Piaget and Kohlberg.

Peters says that the notions of form and content present two puzzles for moral educators. One is a 'paradoxical' notion: how can a rational morality emerge from a lowly level of habit-formation? He concludes that the paradox between reason and habit is resolved if we notice that a 'habit' is really an 'action' in different disguise. The other puzzle is whether different views about human learning (conditioning and instruction vs. experience and discovery) are recon- cilable. Here he concludes that at the early stages of learning, the

notion of learning content is compatible with the notion of conditioning. Learning the form of morality, however, is a different matter. Some types of teaching content might impede the child from developing to a stage at which different conceptions of rules are possible.

Each of these puzzles and each of Peters' arguments will be assessed in Chapters 3 and 4.

CHAPTER 3

The Form and Content of Moral Education

> Depth (of understanding in morals) is
> provided partly by the principles immanent in the mode of experience and partly
> in the degree to which it has been possible to discern the one in the many in
> the content.
>
> (CP299)

In this chapter I discuss Peters' treatment of four concepts—
'form,' 'content,' 'principles,' and 'rules.' Part I consists of a

comprehensive survey of Peters' ideas on the teaching and learning of

moral principles and rules. Part II attends to his consideration of

the concepts 'form' and 'content.'

His account of teaching and learning principles and rules raises

important conceptual issues. One issue is the compatibility he sees

between developing <u>habits</u> in children and developing their moral

<u>motives</u>. Another issue, related to this, is the distinction he makes

between <u>caring</u> and <u>reasoning</u>. The habit/motive theme and the caring/

reasoning theme will come under closer scrutiny in the next chapter:

Habits, Motives and Emotions.

Here, I systematize his writing on moral principles and rules and

offer critical comments. The task of systematization itself requires

some analytical competence as Peters' suggestions are scattered through-

out several sources and are often presented without careful attention to

the language.

To set the tone for a consideration of Peters' account of principles, I discuss what some moral educators think are two senses of 'having principles' or 'being principled': the so-called argument and disposition senses. Examining these senses helps us to see what similarities and differences there may be between (a) a person's ability to judge certain principles to be the right ones, and (b) a person's disposition to act as the principles prescribe: with fairness and concern for others.

I. Teaching and Learning Principles and Rules

    A. Principles in Peters' Account of Morality

        1. 'Having Principles': Arguing, and Acting on Principle

Moral educators occasionally distinguish two senses of 'having principles' or 'acting on principle': the argument sense and the disposition sense (Parkinson, 1974). And, as we saw in Chapter 2, Peters points to a difference between the "clarification of principles" and the "application of principles in concrete circumstances." I shall argue, however, that the labels "argument/sense" and "disposition/sense" do not reflect different senses of 'having principles.' Rather, they emphasize important features of (or conditions for) 'having principles' or 'being principled.'

'Having principles' (argument sense) is often distinguished from 'having principles' (disposition sense) in the following way. The argument sense of 'having principles' refers to the principles or rules a person invokes in argument or public discussion where decisions are made about "what ought to be done." A person might argue in a seminar

or public forum, for example, that given the principle of respect for persons, we should make exceptions in certain cases of rule-application: in those cases where acting on a rule would harm someone. The arguer might claim that we should make exceptions to the rule 'Do not lie' in cases where persons would be hurt if the truth was told. "Adoption" of the principle of respect for persons would mean his choice of this principle as a standard for judging the proper application of a rule about lying. But his "adoption" of the principle would not necessarily imply that "the arguer" himself was 'moved' by the principle. To say that he chose or adopted the principle in argument would not necessarily mean that he had or showed respect for persons. There might be a gap between what he said and what he did. In other cases, arguers might claim to be committed to equality and to the impartial consideration of interests, while their actions belied their words.

Obviously, the intent of those who make the distinction between the argument and disposition senses is to impress upon us the importance of attending to what a person does, not just to what he says. The assumption is that a person doesn't necessarily act morally if he judges a certain action to be the right one. Seen in this light, the argument sense of 'having principles' is unattractive: 'reasoning' or 'judging' here suggests a verbal display, not genuine concern. Green calls this the 'verbal sense' of following a rule (Green, 1967).

The disposition sense of 'having principles,' by contrast, is more attractive. If a person "has principles" in this sense, he acts in certain ways, is sensitive to others' feelings, is disposed to do or feel certain things as a result of judgments he makes. He may also

'have principles' in the sense that he decides inwardly (or publicly)
what he shall do.   But while he may argue and may in so doing invoke
principles to help him decide, he would not 'have principles' disposi-
tionally unless he was moved to act in the ways the principles pre-
scribed, that is, with sensitivity and concern for other persons.   Green
calls this the 'active sense' of following a rule (Green, 1967).

While it is important to acknowledge the fact that persons often
fail to act on what they consider (judge) to be right, an exclusive con-
cern with the disposition "sense" of having principles may lead us to
overlook the importance of arguing or judging or reasoning.   In fact,
both reasoning (arguing) on principle and acting in accordance with
principle are important features of 'having principles.'   Let us see
how this is so.

First, we cannot uncritically assume that those who "argue" using
moral principles as "premises" of their arguments do not hold these
principles dispositionally.   In accepting the argument/disposition
distinction, there is an inclination, I suspect, to assume this.   Quite
common, and of concern to moral educators, are men and women who do not
"invoke" any moral principle in their reasoning or arguments, and who
display partiality and lack of respect for each other.   My own view is
that those who adopt moral principles as part of their public or private
rehearsal of reasons are likely to be those who "hold principles dispos-
itionally."   This is an empirical, not a conceptual claim.   These are
persons who are likely to be sensitive to others' feelings, who know about
what it is to interfere with others' rights, and who care about persons
whose rights are interfered with.

It is often difficult, of course, to verify whether persons have moral dispositions (principles) even when they publicly rehearse their reasons, but this is probably less difficult than verifying whether persons who rehearse their reasons privately are those who are acting on principle. There is, as well, a kind of "intermediate" case. A person might argue--that is, he might supply material facts for a judgment--but he might argue "in accordance with unformulated principles." He might not be able to say why certain facts are relevant facts, but he knows that they are. This person might 'have principles,' but he may be unable to express his principles either publicly or privately.

Second, if we say that 'having principles' means 'being disposed to act on principle,' we might forget that an agent's articulation or formulation of his reasons (principles) is important, perhaps even necessary for deciding complex cases (Coombs, 1976, p. 18). We would most likely say that an agent 'had principles' when he made difficult decisions if he could both articulate the reasons or principles why he thought something ought or ought not to be done and if he acted on those principles he thought were the right ones.

Conversely, I do not believe that we can correctly say of a person that he holds moral principle P unless we have evidence of his using moral principle P as a "premise" for his moral conclusions. If we do not have some evidence of this kind, we probably cannot make well-grounded claims that a person's "sensitivity to others' feelings," for example, is evidence that this person holds the principle of respecting others' feelings.

As we will see in section 3(a), Peters believes that a person is

principled if he <u>acts</u> on his principles: he does not pay much attention to the importance of developing persons' reasoning abilities, if by that we mean the person's ability to publicly articulate his reasons for acting. Nevertheless Peters thinks that the formulation of moral principles is necessary--for a reason we will now see.

2. Principle Formulation

Those who draw the distinction between the argument and disposition senses, as well as those who don't, usually have some views about whether moral principles can be formulated or articulated or put into words. For the argument sense, principles must be the kinds of things which <u>can</u> be formulated, put into words, specified. On the other hand, when we speak of 'having principles dispositionally,' we are very often acknowledging the difficulty of explicitly formulating or articulating the complex principles and rules people "have" and act on.

To say of a person that he acted on principle dispositionally, for example, presents the observer of that person with the challenge of putting into words what this person has done. If a person makes exceptions to rules in the light of what the consequences would be to others, it is difficult for observers interpreting that behaviour to say what principles the person acted on (impartiality, freedom, respect for persons, consideration of their interest, etc.), whether he acted on specific rules, or perhaps some "combination" of rules and principles. Moreover, in those cases where a person failed to act in a particular manner, it is enormously difficult to tell what his principles are. His failure to act may have been due to self-deception, weakness of the will, or other social pressures.

From the point of view of judging our own or others' behaviour, it is difficult to say what principles and rules we act on: "our principles" are not easy to formulate.

Nevertheless, we do exhort others to abide by certain rules and principles. Peters himself says that "the formulation (of principles) is necessary if one intends to embark on (the task) of justifying principles" (CP286). When principles are thought of as guides to action, then, and when they are "justified" as guides to action, we try to formulate or articulate them in some way, even if we cannot do this with precision (Hirst, 1974, p. 60).

From this second perspective of principles as guides to action, I now formulate the principles Peters defends as moral ones.

3. Peters' Principles

In this section, I attend first to Peters' comments on the notion of a 'principle.' Second, I mention his method of justification. Third, I relate his comments on the five principles of morality (equality, consideration of interests, respect for persons, truth-telling and freedom) to see what directives he says they give us.

(a) His notion of 'principle'

Peters says that a 'principle' is a consideration "to which we appeal when we criticize, justify or explain" a course of action (RC59), or to which we appeal in contexts of moral uncertainty (MD315). The fundamental principles of fairness, truth-telling, freedom and respect for persons are articulations of ultimate values (RC114). Our moral principles, he says, "are those which are fundamental or overriding" (RH269). Principles are abstract considerations, he says, but they

"enter our lives in concrete, specific ways" (MD315). Principles "determine the relevance of reasons" in deciding what we ought to do (RC71). Principles cannot prescribe precisely what we ought to do, but at least they rule out certain courses of action and sensitize us to the features of a situation which are morally relevant. They function more as "signposts" than as "guidebooks" (CP285).

He sees some difference between principles and rules. Principles, he says, "support" or "back" rules. They "justify" more specific rules or courses of action (MD312). Rules are specific in what they pick out to do; principles on the other hand are more general (MD315; DB192). Principles are of a 'higher-order' than rules; they are formal in character. They enable a person "to apply rules intelligently, and to revise . . . the substantial content of rules at a lower level" (RH269).

Peters' views on the differences between principles and rules are similar in some respects to the view of Marcus Singer (Singer, 1967, p. 160ff.). Singer sees moral principles as more general, pervasive and fundamental than moral rules. Principles, he says, underlie certain rules, determine their scope and justify exceptions to rules. On the other hand Singer claims that principles hold in all circumstances, with no exceptions. Peters, by contrast, does not regard principles as exceptionless.

In Peters' view, a person who has principles may or may not be able to formulate these principles explicitly (CP286). But a person's acceptance of a principle is reflected in what he does. In coming to have principles, one acquires the ability to see connections between many rules and their effects on other people (MD326). Principles

sensitize one to considerations such as others' suffering.   Having prin-

ciples means caring about the consequences of one's actions (RC50,59,99;

CP286).   Principles are not "affectively neutral"; they are "apprai-

sals" (CP286).

(b) His method of justifying principles

Peters employs what he calls a "transcendental argument" or

"transcendental deduction" to justify his five principles.   He calls

this method a "Kantian reconstruction" (EE114).   Many writers have

criticized Peters for his use of this justification method, but I will

not examine this literature here.*   In commenting later on each of the

principles, I do point to some difficulties with Peters' method of

principle-justification.   And those difficulties surface again when I

discuss Peters' sense of the term "formal" in Part II of this chapter.

All five principles, he says, are presuppositions of asking the

question "What ought I to do?" or "What are there reasons for doing?"

These principles are necessary if a form of discourse is "to have mean-

ing, to be applied or to have point" (EE115).   Although individuals

may have all sorts of private purposes in using the form of discourse

called moral discourse, "they must have some kind of commitment to its

point" (DB188).   Without these presuppositions, he says, "the use of

reason (is) mere shadow-play," "reason lacks point" (RC12), reasoning

about "personal conduct or social practices would never get properly

off the ground" (RC22).   This form of the justification of principles

"consists in probing behind (the forms of discourse) in order to make

*See Kleinig (1973) and Downie and Telfer (1969) who present two
of the many criticisms of Peters' method of justifying principles.

explicit what they implicitly presuppose . . . it may be the only form of argument by means of which more general moral principles can be shown to be well-grounded" (EE114).

Peters doesn't argue these points. And there is, in fact, a certain implausibility about his assertions, both for the general form of reasoning and for moral reasoning in particular. But let us see now what he says about each of the principles.

(c) The five principles

(i) Equality, Impartiality, Justice

The principle of 'No distinctions without relevant differences,' writes Peters, is "central to all forms of reasoning" (RC77). In ethics we call this the principle of equality, impartiality or justice. The minimal form of the impartiality, equality or justice principles is a highly general prescription: we should not make distinctions between cases unless there are relevant grounds for doing so (DB192). This rule or principle provides "a criterion of relevance for justifying particular rules and for making exceptions in particular cases" (RH269). Peters calls this principle "the principle of principles" (PK152).

In its "more full-blooded form," the equality principle says that we must regard other peoples' claims and interests impartially with our own. "We must settle issues on relevant grounds: we must ban arbitrariness. (The principle) cannot be employed unless something of value is at stake. We must have other criteria of value in order to determine relevance" (PK152). He provides examples of what he takes to be irrelevant considerations: "people cannot be ignored because of the colour of their eyes, or ruled out of court because of the colour of

their skin" (MD364; FC145; SP35).

When we talk about what is just or unjust, he says, we are appeal-ing to this formal principle of reason. This applies to "questions of distribution when we are concerned about treatments different people are to receive, or to commutative situations when we are concerned not with comparisons but with questions of desert, as in punishment." In all cases like this, "some criterion has to be produced by reference to which the treatment is to be based on relevant considerations. There must be some evaluative premises (which) determine relevance" (MD331; PK152).

Peters considers the principles of consideration of interests and impartiality (equality; justice) to be the most important higher-order principles (PC253). Consideration of interests, he says, provides a "criterion of relevance" for the equality principle (PK152).

Peters' analysis of the principle of equality is not original. As well, current writers express similar views. Komisar and Coombs (1964) argue that a commitment to the equality principle reflects com-mitments of two sorts: a commitment to reason, and a "prior ethical commitment" about which they do not comment further. Williams (1969) explicates the "moral" commitment he thinks is implied by a normative principle of equality: he calls this a moral sense of "personhood."*

(ii) Consideration of Interests

The principle of consideration of interests, Peters asserts, "is very close in its general meaning to the characterization of the form

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*See my paper (Bruneau, 1978) for a discussion of the equality principle and the concept of a person.

of (moral) discourse itself as one in which reasons are sought for doing this rather than that" (DB188).*   In the sphere of social practices in which debates are largely about conflicting interests, "there must be assent to the principle that peoples' interests should be considered, for the use of reasons lacks point unless it is accepted that it matters whether people suffer or satisfy their wants" (RC12; PK152).   Peters admits that neither concern for others nor concern for oneself can be demonstrated as _necessary_ for the application of reasoning to inter-personal conduct.   Nevertheless he assumes them to be "preconditions" in his system of rational morality (ML364).

Peters makes some attempt to specify whose interests are to be considered. "We must _assume_ that those with a capacity for reasoning (will have) a concern for the interests of others as well as for their own interests.   For those who reason there _must_ be some concern to ameliorate the human predicament, to consider people's interests" (ML364; italics mine).   What kind of discussion would it be, he queries, "if there was deliberation about what ought to be done with no concern for the interests of those who might contribute and who might be affected?" (FC144).

The principle of the consideration of interests, he remarks, is appealed to in criticism or justification of social practices like punishment (RC60) and abortion (ML377).   (This principle) "acts also as an ever present corrective to, and possible ground of criticism of rules (when they) conflict" (CP291).   The principle "can be regarded

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*See (Baier, 1967) for a critical comment on Peters' method of justifying the principle of Consideration of Interests.

as a _telos_ immanent in roles and social practices" (RC60; ML377). "The experience of a society with regard to the tendencies of actions in relation to peoples' interests lies behind its roles and general duties --the role of parent largely defines what this principle means in dealings with children" (RC60). We also understand this principle, Peters says, "by the specific duties constitutive of the roles of teacher and citizen and by the more general rules that are internalized in the form of punctuality, tidiness and thriftiness" (MD315; LE90).

Peters admits that there is vast disagreement on the _content_ to be given this principle. What, we ask, is a man's interest? Purporting to answer this question, he suggests that we select those things which are _in_ a person's interest.

First, "there are certain general conditions which it is in any man's interest to preserve however idiosyncratic his view of what are his interests. These general conditions include not only the avoidance of pain and injury but also the minimal rules for living together" (CP285). But "above the level of physical and mental health what is to count? Surely not just what he thinks his interest to be?" (CP299). He suggests that we "try to understand various forms of worthwhile activities and personal ideals, not only in general but in relation to the capacity of particular individuals" (CP299; EE176ff.).

Moral education, Peters suggests, should be as much concerned "with the promotion of good activities as it will be with the maintenance of rules of social conduct--with what ought to be as well as with what men ought to do." The pursuit of truth, the creation of beauty, the enjoyment of sensitive personal relationships are constituents, he

says, of the "civilized life" (CP270).

Peters' interpretation of this principle raises some puzzling questions.* First, it is not clear how he distinguishes this principle from the equality principle which states than an agent, to be rational, must consider another's interests impartially with his own. Second, Peters' choice of things "in a person's interest" are not well-defended; in particular he is not clear about how these choices are "presupposed" by rational thought or are "preconditions" of his system of morality. Third, by interpreting the principle of consideration of interests in so many different ways, as rules, roles, worthwhile activities and non-injury, Peters' formulations of the principle provide no clear "signpost" indicating what we should not do: it would often be difficult, even impossible, to decide which actions were in violation of this principle.

(iii) Respect for Persons

An agent might be committed to equality and to the consideration of interests, says Peters, but he might not regard other persons with respect (EE142; EE210). To be rational, an agent must have respect for persons. This norm is "presupposed by those entering seriously into discussion" (EE214).

I state, first, some general comments Peters makes on this principle. I summarize next his negative and positive formulations of respect for persons. Finally, I mention those places where he speaks of 'respect' as a sensitivity or feeling.

In calling respect for persons a principle, he says, "we mean that

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*See my paper (Bruneau, 1977) which presents some criticisms of Peters' consideration of interests principle.

it embodies a consideration to which appeal is made when criticizing, justifying or explaining some determinate content of behaviour or belief" (RC59).   Seeing the validity of rules is dependent upon reasons made relevant by this principle (RC99).   In a rather ambiguous move, Peters says that this principle is only intelligible "in contexts of life where persons occupy roles" (RC59; ML377).   And he says as well that the principle of respect for persons acts as a corrective to formalized dealings between men (CP293).

At many points, Peters defines a principle of respect for persons in negative terms.   We are not to think of or treat others, as the mere occupants of roles (RC13,30,59; PU411; ML377), as means to the purposes of others (RC59; ML377), as beings open to exploitation (RC30), as persons judged only for their competence in activities (RC59; ML377), only as beings who are alive, or who feel pain, or who are centers of wants and expectations (LE90).

If we have respect for persons, we will view and treat others as distinctive centers of consciousness (EI101; EE59), as rule-makers (DR132), as beings with life-spaces and points of view of their own (RC13), as possessors of rational capacities (RC30), as centers of evaluation and choice (RC30), as sources of argument (SP35), as centers of intentions and decisions (LE90), as determiners of their own destinies (RC30), as persons who have pride in their achievements (EI101; EE59), as ones who, like ourselves, have points of view worth considering--who may have a glimmering of the truth which has eluded us (RC79; EI101), as beings who have rights (LE90), as persons who have human characteristics that animals do not share . . . assertive points of view (LE90; EE210),

as persons with aspirations, abilities and inclinations that are peculiar to them (EE55). There is something about other persons, Peters intones, "which matters supremely" (CP298).

Having respect for persons, he continues, is not just knowing these things about other persons, it is _caring_ as well (EE59). He calls such respect an "emotion" (RC26), a "feeling" (EE208), a "rational passion" (RC98), an "attitude affectively tinged" (RC30), an "attitude under-written by a reasonably distinctive set of appraisals" (EE223), an attitude directed toward individuals which is "essential to the stress on reason" (EE208,213; RC30). Such a principle sensitizes an individual "to the way in which he should conduct himself in various areas of the moral life which constitute its content" (RC59).

Sporadic sympathy for others, Peters says, must develop into the rational passion we call respect for persons (DR135,140; LE39). Peters also believes that respect for persons is possible only "as one becomes sensitive and sympathetic to others' sufferings" (DR139).

While Peters sees 'respect for persons' both as an attitude one takes towards others' rational natures and as the recognition that others have rights, he suggests that the notion that others have rights is somehow logically dependent upon the fact that they are rational. 'Being rational' for him means being able to choose and enter into rational discussion. Viewing others as rational in this sense _is_ consistent with viewing others as beings who have action-rights. That is, to recognize that persons have action-rights is to be committed in some sense to a principle of non-interference with persons' rights to do what they choose to do.

Peters' exclusive emphasis on this kind of <u>right</u>, however, ignores those cases where beings (e.g., the feeble-minded and children) may have rights to have things done for them. These are cases where we would likely say that persons are not rational, or are not yet rational, and where someone (or some group of persons, for example, the government) would be responsible for making provisions for the satisfaction of the rights of these beings.

In any case, Peters does not clearly state his principle of respect for persons; nor does he attend to the different kinds of rights, in terms of which moral agents would "have" respect for persons.

(iv) Truth-telling

Peters thinks that an important mark of the educated person and of the morally educated person is a "passionate concern for the truth"; this theme pervades his writing. Yet he devotes little attention to making clear a <u>principle</u> of truth-telling. At times he interprets "truth-telling" as a <u>concern</u> for truth; at other times as an injunction to <u>tell</u> the truth.

Peters states that truth-telling is, like the other principles, a presupposition of "being reasonable" (RC22; DB188; EE115). He is less certain whether a principle of truth-telling always helps us to decide what to do: "the fundamental principles--impartiality, consideration of interests, freedom, respect for persons and <u>probably</u> truth-telling lay down general guidance about the ways in which we should go about deciding matters" (CP286; italics mine). Peters believes that in seriously asking the question "Why do this rather than that?" a person signifies his desire to acquaint himself with the situation out of which

the question arises: he must already have a serious concern for truth

built into his consciousness.

In his criticisms of Kohlberg's theory of moral development,

Peters wonders why Kohlberg sees only the principle of justice as an

ultimate principle of morality:

> Why (does he) not include truth-telling? For Peter Winch has
> argued that this principle is a presupposition of human com-
> munication. This may be too strong a thesis actually; but a
> good case can be made out for it as a presupposition of the
> descriptive, explanatory, and argumentative uses of language,
> which would include moral reasoning.
>
> (PK155)

In speaking about the five principles as presuppositions of rational

thought, however, Peters twice mentions a presumption of truth-telling.

People should tell the truth, he insists, or rational discussion would be

impossible. As a general practice, "systematic lying would be counter-

productive to any common concern to discover what ought to be done"

(ML364; FC144).

He also says "white lies" may be told if telling the truth would

cause great suffering. Fundamental principles like truth-telling have

to be bent a bit. They do not provide specific edicts, only considera-

tions that make reasons relevant. As guides to conduct, "(principles)

are always to be asserted with an 'other things being equal' proviso.

In cases like those of white lies, other things are not equal because

another fundamental principle is involved, for example, that of causing

harm to others" (FC148).

Some comments on his views are in order. Peters may be correct to

speak of truth-telling as a presupposition of the agent's rational

thought. A concern for truth may be "required" or "presupposed" by

seriously asking oneself what reasons there are for doing things. In asking others about his own practical conduct, the agent assumes that he will get the truth from them. If others systematically lied to him the agent would be thwarted in his attempt to get a "serious" reply to his "serious" question. Rational discussion would probably also be impossible if the agent systematically lied to others: their decisions about doing what was best for themselves would be impeded.

Peters' account of truth-telling raises a problem. How does he move from the claim that a concern for truth is a rational principle, to his claim that it is a moral principle: one which ought to guide the agent's interpersonal conduct? Just because the agent may himself have a concern for truth presupposed by his asking practical questions does not require him to tell others the truth (not lie to them).

(v) Freedom

The principle of freedom is the last of Peters' "presuppositions of being reasonable." This principle, he believes, is directly and logically related to rational thought and action. If a man is to be free, he must be educated to become a "chooser"--a person who sees that he has a range of options before him, and whose choice of options can be made on good grounds, rationally (CP297). To make persons free, educators should initiate educands into a wide variety of worthwhile activities. Choosers should have breadth of understanding, Peters asserts; this gives "concrete backing to the ideal of freedom" (CP292,289).

From his assumption that the principle of freedom is a principle of rational choice, Peters argues that it is a principle which also guides interpersonal conduct.

Peters begins by noting what typically takes place in public discussion or private deliberation. An agent asks others or asks himself what reasons there are for doing things. The serious asking of this question implies that the agent will make a choice from among possible ones. The questioning also implies that the agent wants to base his choice on relevant grounds; he is looking for reasons in support of one option over another. According to Peters, the agent would not seriously ask himself the question "What are there reasons for doing?" unless he also expected to <u>act</u> on the decisions or choices he came to (DB188).* There is a presumption, but not a right, favouring the agent's freedom to act on decisions, choices the agent makes (FC148; ML364). With this presumption of freedom, the agent can demand non-interference from others so that he might do what he wants. He can demand to be allowed to do what there are reasons for doing (EE180). "Otherwise his deliberation about alternatives would have no point . . . it would be like a rehearsal without a play to follow" (EE182).

The agent's demand for his own freedom (non-interference from others) is subject to a "other things being equal" clause. The presumption of freedom (or, as he calls it "a <u>prima facie</u> right to non-conformity" (FC147) holds, he says, provided the action is not one which causes harm to another human being. If the agent's exercise of freedom is likely to occasion great unfairness or suffering to others, this constitutes sufficient ground for interfering in the agent's freedom. Interference would be justified only under these conditions. Peters

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*J. McClellan expresses similar views in his reply to Coombs (1976).

readily acknowledges his debt to J. S. Mill, "who argued that the sole warrant for interfering with people's liberty was if its exercise involved manifest harm to others" (EE180).

Peters also believes that the agent must presume others' freedom. He reaches this conclusion via an intermediary premise: the agent must presume others' freedom of speech. Agents must allow others to speak their point of view, that is, engage similarly in rational discussion.

The presumption in favour of freedom of speech, he says, "derives from the situation of practical reason." The agent "must obviously demand absence of interference from others." His deliberation "is not . . . something that grows out of his head like a plant from a bulb." It mirrors a social situation into which the agent has been initiated, where alternative courses of action are suggested and discussed. "In such deliberations, assessments such as 'wise' and 'foolish' are applied to suggestions in the light of public criteria which are built into the form of discourse" (EE180).

On grounds of prudence, Peters argues, the agent would be "very foolish to shut himself off from other rational beings who also have views about what there are reasons for doing. He would be foolish to impose constraints on others so as to prevent them from giving him advice." He concludes, then, that freedom of expression of other rational beings must be demanded by any rational agent for "he would be stupid if he deprived himself of access to considerations which others might offer." (The conditions of argument) "include letting any rational being contribute to a public discussion." The agent, therefore, must demand freedom (of speech) for others for "how can (the agent)

engage in such discussions with other rational beings and yet deny to them what he must rationally demand for himself?" Without freedom of speech, he says, "the community would be hamstrung in relation to its concern to arrive at an answer; for even the most offensive or simple members might have something of importance to contribute" (FC144).

He says that the presumption favouring the principle of freedom "in the sphere of opinions" has to be justified "in the sphere of actions" as well. This, he says, "is not very difficult to do," but it presupposes "a close link between discussion and action." The agent must place a great deal of importance upon the contributions beings make to a rational discussion. To be rational, the agent must treat others as rational beings, that is, he must not interfere with their actions.

In his treatment of this principle, Peters seems to confuse the point of deliberating about a matter with the point of morality. Other than to say that rational agents ought not to interfere with others' freedom unless these others are themselves causing harm, Peters never states a _moral_ principle of freedom. He gives no further indication of those circumstances in which it is permissible to interfere in another's freedom, nor any indication of those circumstances in which it is morally required or morally prohibited to interfere with others' liberties. If he had explicated the phrase "unless these others are harming others," we would have a clearer indication of what he thinks _is_ a moral principle of freedom.

4. Conflicts of Principle

Peters is aware that the fundamental principles may sometimes conflict. He provides three examples of conflict of principles. Arguments deriving from the consideration of interests "sometimes clash with those deriving from respect for persons" (EE128). The principle of truth-telling and the principle of freedom may conflict with what are in persons' interests (FC148).

Determining what is a "just wage," he says, illustrates the clash of principles. "It is usually granted that there shall be different categories. . . . What criteria should determine the level of wages? (Considerations of) merit . . . or need . . . or the value of work done to the community . . . and if these . . . what relative weights to each?" (EE128).

His advice for resolving conflicts of principles, however, contains few leads. There is no rule, he says, "for determining which reasons are most relevant when the reasons fall under different fundamental principles which conflict in a particular case. Judgment is required, not a slide-rule" (EE128; CP284). Moreover, Peters does not tell us how one justifies a decision made when two principles conflict.

Peters' failure to discuss in any detail the resolution of conflicts of principle is a serious weakness in his account. As we will see in the next section, Peters expects that agents will resolve conflicts of rule by recourse to moral principles. But he seems not to have noticed that he has presented five principles which do not all recommend the same thing. To say as he does that the moral agent must simply use his 'judgment' to resolve principle conflicts is not

particularly enlightening. The moral agent must surely be able to use some criteria to decide whether to restrict a person's freedom, for example, in order to act on what is in that person's interests.

B. Rules in Peters' Account of Morality

Peters divides moral rules into two categories: basic social rules and local, relative rules. Some of the basic social rules, he says, may be "personalized" as character-traits: unselfishness, fairness and honesty. These character-traits, he believes, differ from those which affect the "manner" in which rules are followed (see Chapter 5). In the present section, I give examples of his two main rule-categories, and indicate some problems with his conception of moral rules. Following this, I sort out his views on the teaching and learning of rules, and the teaching and learning of principles.

1. Basic Social Rules

There are some basic social rules, Peters says, which every person must learn as part of his moral education. These include rules concerning contracts, non-injury to others, care of the young, and care of property (RC13; FC145; CP285; RH269; PC254; PK156; EE202). Singer calls these "fundamental" moral rules (Singer, op. cit., p. 176).

To this list of basic rules, Peters adds others: 'veracity' (PC254), 'not stealing,' 'punctuality' and 'honesty' (CP297). 'Veracity' and 'honesty' are rules which are "personalized" and 'not stealing,' presumably, is a rule about the care of property. It is less clear where 'punctuality' belongs (see Ch. 4). Peters regards 'promising' as a contract rule (FC153). As well, he mentions "basic rules regulating reproduction" but takes this no further (EE174).

The basic rules, he proclaims, "can be straightforwardly justified by appeal to principles" (PK156). These rules are so important "that they could be regarded almost as definitions of society" (RH269; PC254). A rational man can see that these rules "are necessary to any continuing form of social life, man being what he is and the conditions of life on earth being what they are" (RC13; EE174). They are binding "on anyone who is deemed to be a member of the same society" (RH269).

Peters speaks of an agreement about, acceptance of, and a consensus concerning these general social rules. But he vacillates on the question of what it is to accept them, and who is to accept these rules. As in science where there is a fair degree of consensus at a low level of laws, "so in the moral case there are basic rules. The individual must accept the general rules of a society" (CP292; FC146). A society, he says, is a collection of individuals "united by the acceptance of certain rules" (RH269). These individuals must agree "about a level of basic rules which provide conditions necessary for anyone to pursue his interests" (CP297). It is absolutely essential, he says, that in the area of basic rules "there should be a high degree of conformity, whether people conform on principled grounds or whether their conformity is of the conventional type" (PK156).

He speaks also of "determining" what are basic rules. At the level of basic rules, "we may seek ways of living which (are) improvements on those we have inherited. (We have recourse to procedural principles) . . . . which at least rule out certain courses of action" (CP285). But, he adds, "it would be difficult to conceive of any social, economic, or geographical changes which would lead one to think that such basic rules

should be abrogated, though, of course, exception could be made to them under special circumstances" (RH269).

Peters is correct to say that these rules are in some sense necessary to social life and that they have some kind of binding quality. But his comments present a host of problems.

Especially arguable is his claim that basic rules are binding on anyone deemed a member of the same society. My understanding of moral rules is that they have a "universal character." They apply to all persons at all times. They are not dependent on the notion "members of the same society."

There is something odd about Peters notion of an agreement, acceptance of or consensus concerning the basic moral rules. Again, I understand moral rules to hold whether or not members of the society consider them to hold. As well, moral rules "exist" whether or not they appear to be "in force." Peters' notion that members of a society agree or accept or reach a consensus about basic rules is therefore odd and probably wrong. So also is his suggestion that members of the society can determine what are the basic rules, if "determine" means to formulate or change basic rules. He is confused about whether basic rules are rules a society _does_ agree on, or whether they are rules a society _ought_ to agree on if it is moral and rational, i.e., if it accepts the fundamental principles.

Part of the difficulty in evaluating Peters arises from the fact that he does not list or spell out what he thinks _are_ basic social rules; he mentions only a few general categories.

Peters justifies the rules by reference to the "procedural"

(fundamental) principles of morality and "the requirements of social living." There is no unanimity of opinion, however, about how basic rules are to be justified. Gert, for example, believes moral rules are justified by reference to what "all rational men would advocate: the attitude rational men would take towards violation of the rules" (Gert, 1966, p. 76ff). One obeys the moral rules, on his account, because it is rational to do so and irrational otherwise.

2. Local or Relative Rules

Peters distinguishes basic rules from local (relative) rules. These latter rules "depend upon particular circumstances—upon contingent facts about social, economic and geographical conditions" (RH269). Relative rules, he says, are "more controversial" than basic rules (PK156). They can be revised; they permit of "change and experiment," which basic rules do not (FC145).

There is some affinity between Peters' category of local rules and Singer's category of local rules. Singer says local rules refer to social needs and purposes and derive from local conditions in terms of which they may be justified. For Singer, local rules include traditions, customs and the ethical codes of different professions (Singer, op. cit., p. 179).

Peters gives only a few examples of local, relative rules and conducts no analysis of them. His local rules are less like _rules_ than they are like _issues_ persons must come to decisions about: prohibitions on usury, birth-control and possessiveness (FC145), participation in trade unions (PK156), the rule that one should be sparing in the use of water, a rule defensible only in times of drought (RH269), and rules

about gambling and smoking.

Peters admits that it is not easy to ascertain which rules fit into which category. Rules about sexual behaviour, he suggests, are not easily categorized. But the difficulty of categorizing rules, he says, does not affect the general usefulness of the distinction. In a rational code, "there (are) procedural rules (fundamental principles) which could be regarded as presupposed by the very activity of giving reasons for rules, basic rules which could be justified under any conceivable conditions, and the more relative rules" (RH269).

> These sorts of distinctions are very relevant when one is confronted by the confident assertion that all moral matters are relative or expressions of private preference. Those who proclaim this usually point to disagreements over sexual morality, punishment or the war in Vietnam. But this is merely to make the point that the content of morality is not uniformly acceptable. Of course it is not; neither is the content of science.
>
> (FC145)

3. Conflicts of Rule

Peters gives virtually no attention to "conflicts of rule." Conflicts between rules and conflicts between rules and roles, he says, can be resolved if persons become sensitized to the procedural rules (principles) of morality. "The principle that one should consider peoples' interests acts an ever-present corrective to, and possible ground of criticism of, rules and social practices which can be appealed to when rules conflict" (CP291).

As we have seen, however, Peters interprets the principle of Consideration of Interests in many different ways; it is unclear how this principle is to be a "corrective to" or "ground of criticism for" conflicts of rule. Moreover, Peters does not say why he chose this principle over others for the resolution of rule-conflicts.

C. Teaching and Learning Principles and Rules

    1. Teaching and Learning Rules

        (a) Introduction

An especially important task of moral education, Peters claims, is the "passing on of procedural rules and basic rules." He calls these rules "minimum equipment" without which an individual "cannot rationally make exceptions to basic rules or take decisions about rules of a more relative status" (RH269; EE314).

How are these rules passed on? We might anticipate Peters' process of "passing on" consists of some teaching procedures: "there must be some kind of teaching of rules for moral education to get started at all" (MD325). What kind of activities does he allow as teaching activities? What other processes should accompany teaching? This section includes those passages where his use of the term 'content' refers only to 'rules.'

        (b) Teaching and learning moral rules

To learn a moral rule, Peters believes, is not to learn the rule "as a bit of verbalism . . . without understanding of its application." Learning a rule means "being able to apply it in a variety of situations, that is, attending to the situations and to the similarities in them picked out by the rule." It also means "attending to what (specific) actions are likely to bring about." Learning a moral rule, he says, "presupposes understanding of a complicated network of concepts" (RC63).

The learner's understanding of moral rules and related concepts, he says, is not achieved by trial and error. It must be brought about by "teaching, instruction and explanation" (RC66). The content "has to

be exhibited, explained or marked out in some way which is intrinsically
rather than extrinsically related to it. This is a central feature of
any process that can be called a process of teaching" (MD325; LE29;
MD310).

Peters uses the term "induction" to refer to the process of explain-
ing a rule in the context to which it applies--pointing to the consequen-
ces of acting on a rule (RC66,71; ML381; PK156). Interestingly, he
avoids the word "teaching." Induction, he says, can only be effective
"when a child reaches the appropriate level of cognitive development."
Only when a child is capable of reversibility of thought and can look at
actions from the point of view of others, "(is) this technique effective"
(RC66).

To foster this cognitive development, "rational techniques such as
persuasion, discussion, encouraging children to take part in 'practical
situations' . . . in games and in dramatic productions . . . stimulates
their development and encourages (them) to see the other person's point
of view" (FC153).

Peters is careful to point out that learning a moral rule is not
just understanding the rule and the situations to which it is approp-
riately applied. Nor is learning a rule a "theoretical grasp of the
conductiveness of such rules to the general good" (CP297). Even if a
person sees the reasons behind rules, and even if he sees what is another
person's point of view, the job of morally educating him is only half
done. He must also learn how to behave consistently in the required
way. That is why the notions 'conditioning' and 'reinforcement' are
important, Peters avers, "for what we are concerned with here is habit-

training." Habit-training must precede "more rational techniques"
(FC153).

Peters insists that behaviouristic techniques are a necessary means
for getting children to behave consistently in the required way.

> There is no other way that a rule is meaningful to a small child as
> a guide to conduct except as it is linked with approval and dis-
> approval, reward or punishment. . . . . There would be no point in
> general in having such rules, unless they regulated wayward inclin-
> ations, so conformity usually demands the presence of some counter-
> inclinations such as the desire for approval or reward, as the
> child cannot see their point deriving from principles.
>
> (PK156; RC71)

As might be expected, Peters stresses the limitations of this
approach. "A person could not learn to behave morally _purely_ by some
process of conditioning in a strict sense . . . because in learning a
rule, he has to develop . . . concepts" (RC62). "Moral education is
inconceivable without some process of teaching, whatever additional help
is provided by various processes of habituation" (MD325).

Peters concludes that a combination of introduction and reinforce-
ment (conditioning) is required for moral-learning (RC71; ML381). Both
must be done in a way which does not stunt children's capacity to develop
an autonomous attitude to rules (FC153). Learning the 'form' of moral-
ity, he says, must not be impeded.

2. Teaching and Learning Principles

Peters speaks of the teaching and learning of principles as the
teaching and learning of the 'form' of morality.

Peters writes in two ways about the learning of form. One ques-
tion we should ask about his work is whether he has two different con-
ceptions of 'form,' or whether he believes there are two ways, perhaps

complementary, of learning form.

(a) The logical prerequisite of learning form

To begin, Peters insists that learning content is a logical pre-
requisite to learning form. He explicates the connections between
learning form and learning content in what appear to be two different
ways. He says, first, that learning content is a logical prerequisite
to learning form since learning to follow a rule is necessary before one
can reflect on that rule.

> It is very important that the child should firmly internalize a
> set of rules so that they know what it is to act on a rule in a
> non-egocentric fashion. Unless they do this, they have not the
> necessary basis to reflect or reject those which they deem justi-
> fiable or non-justifiable.
>
> (PK155; ML377)

Children learn to follow rules autonomously "by generalizing their exper-
ience of picking up some particular 'bag of virtues'" (RC59).

Second, Peters asserts that learning content is a logical pre-
requisite to learning form since we cannot apply principles to concrete
circumstances unless we have been introduced to some "determinate con-
tent":

> Content vitally affects the application of principles both in
> the lives of societies and individuals. What counts as wel-
> fare, for instance, depends very much on current social prac-
> tices and individual needs (a normative notion). The appli-
> cation of justice depends on whether need is thought more
> important than desert. And so on. There is no slide-rule
> for applying abstract principles to concrete situations. How
> they are applied, which is often highly controversial, depends
> upon judgment and what Kohlberg calls the 'content' of morality
> in a given society. And unless there were a determinate con-
> tent principles would have no function; for they are what we
> appeal to when we criticize or justify some lower-level form
> of conduct.
>
> (PK155; ML378)

His analysis of the learning of content, summarized in section 1, appears to coincide with these statements. Recall that he emphasizes two necessary features of learning content: (1) becoming habituated to moral rules (behaving consistently in the required way), and (2) learning the concepts peculiar to the moral rules. For (1) he believes that the methods of conditioning are essential; for (2) he believes the methods of teaching are essential.

Peters' statements on habituation to moral rules (behaving consistently) coincide with his statement _supra_ about learning content as a logical requirement for learning form: he emphasizes the "internalization" of sets of rules, "following rules," "knowing what it is to act on a rule." These are logical prerequisites, he says, to rational reflection on a rule.

Similarly, his statements on learning the concepts peculiar to the moral rules coincide with his statements that one cannot "apply principles in concrete circumstances" unless one first understands moral concepts (e.g., 'justice,' 'needs,' 'desert,' 'welfare'). Applying principles requires "judgment" and this in turn requires knowledge of moral concepts. Judgment, he suggests, is learned in the presence of someone "who already has it"; he likens this to an apprentice/master relationship (CP292,298; EI102; OP; EE60; PK155; RH267,272,276; PC257).

Summarizing these points, we can say that the notion of 'form' for Peters has to do with seeing the point of having rules or seeing the unity of rules, in short, reasoning about rules. Initiating persons into content--getting them to act in accordance with rules--gives them a basis upon which they can reflect on the legitimacy of these rules.

Persons must be initiated into the content of morality in order to learn the form of morality.

'Form' for Peters also has to do with "applying rules appropriately in particular cases." This involves knowing what makes reasons relevant; and to do this, he says, one must know moral concepts.

(b) The "teaching" of form

As for the teaching of form, Peters says that "it is a very different matter" from the teaching of content. He says the unity a principle provides

> to a number of previously disconnected experiences . . . has to be 'seen' or grasped by the individual and it cannot be grasped as a principle unless the individual is provided with experience of the items it unifies. . . . If the teacher is trying to get the learner to grasp a principle all he can do is to draw attention to common features of cases and hope that the penny will drop. Once the child has grasped the principle, he knows how to go on . . . there is thus no limit to the number of cases that he will see as falling under the principle. There is a sense . . . in which the learner gets out much more than any teacher could have put in . . . principles are just not the sort of things that can be applied only to a specific number of items which could be imparted by the teacher."
>
> (RC37; MD310,311)

He takes Kohlberg to task for claiming that a person learns principles by "interacting with the environment" ("cognitive stimulation"), rather than by a process of teaching: "Kohlberg makes it look too much as if the child, as it were, does it himself" (ML366). Peters later concedes that "do-it-yourself" methods might be effective in learning principles (FC142).

(c) Learning form: developing sensitivities

Peters speaks in another way of learning the form of morality: he calls this "the development of sensitivities." Learners must "become

sensitized in early childhood to considerations which will later serve (them) as principles" (MD326). This is Peters' notion of <u>principles as motives</u>. The sensitivities which can become a person's principles (motives) are <u>concern</u> and <u>compassion</u> for others, <u>sensitivity</u> to others' suffering, a <u>sense</u> of justice and fairness, and <u>sympathy</u> with persons. These sensitivities and concerns are "preconditions" to there being reasons, he says; they determine relevance in morals (RC71).

(i) caring and reasoning

Peters sometimes contrasts caring or concern for others with moral reasoning:

> What is the status of a man who can reason in an abstract way about rules if he does not <u>care</u> about people who are affected by his breach or observance of them? Is not the capacity to love, as well as the capacity to reason, important in the form of morality? Does it not transform a person's role-performances and dealings with others? Must not some developmental account be given of Hume's sentiment for humanity?
> (RC26)

But Peters also speaks of a person's concern and caring in terms of those principles which become a person's motives. This suggests that Peters believes a person engaged in moral reasoning <u>is</u> sensitized to considerations which pick out morally relevant reasons. That is, a person's engagement in moral reasoning would be illustrative of his care and concern for persons who might be affected by his or others' actions. In any case, Peters holds that the "awakening of the moral agent's feelings" is required for engaging in moral reasoning and for being moral.

Peters believes that the origin of feelings of caring and concern may be innate. He certainly believes that these feelings can be nurtured or hampered by the child's early social relationships, particularly

the child's relationship with his mother. He is convinced that children (he does not specify ages) cannot understand reasons picked out by the principles, and hence are unable to let those reasons "become motives"-- "become their own." His conviction is based on findings of the Piagetian school of psychology. Children cannot grasp reasons for types of action in the sense that they cannot connect a practice such as that of stealing with considerations such as the harm to others brought about by such a practice (ML373; RC42). Piaget and Kohlberg, he says, have shown "that children are incapable of appealing to (sensitivities) as backing for rules" (Fr351). Therefore, Peters insists, it is "point-less" to encourage children to reflect about rules, and to link them with general considerations of harm and benefit, "if these considerations do not act as powerful motives for the person who can perform such calculations" (MD327).

Children can feel genuine concern for others; this much he concedes.

> If (children) are sensitive to the suffering of others early on, the hope is that, with the development of their capacity for reasoning this will later be one of the main principles in a rational form of life.
>
> (ML373; RC42)

Part of the difficulty in assessing Peters' statements here lies with his failure to specify the ages at which he thinks children cannot be moved by considerations of harm and benefit. Although he points to strong empirical evidence which suggests that children are "incapable of appealing to sensitivities as backing for rules," he does not explore what it means to say of a child that he has "genuine concern for others." In my view, to say of a child that he is "sensitive to others'

suffering" or that he has "genuine concern for others" is to say that this child acts for reasons of sensitivity and concern. The child's "capacity to reason" and his capacity to act for moral reasons is <u>there</u> from the time adults begin to reason with them. In saying this, I am not only questioning the empirical evidence Peters relies on by presenting "empirical observations" of my own. I am also offering a tentative analysis of what it means to say that anyone (a child) "has sensitivities" or "feels genuine concern for others."

<p style="text-align:center;">(ii) the development of the imagination</p>

For Peters, the key notion in the development of these sensitivities is imagination. The development of the imagination, he says, "makes possible fine shades of sensitivity and compassion" (LE54). "Concern for others can be exhibited at different levels which vary according to a person's imagination and sophistication about what constitutes harm or welfare" (MD313). "Sympathy and imagination are necessary not simply for caring about rules sufficiently to feel guilt or remorse if they are broken. They are necessary also for the sensitive exercise of . . . making exceptions to rules and for seeing situations as falling under different rules" (PC261).

How does Peters believe imagination develops, and with it a heightened sensitivity to suffering and concern for others? He says this is largely a matter for speculation, since our knowledge about this comes from psychoanalytic speculation and from the hunches of practical men (Fr351; PC261). He provides no analysis of the concept 'imagination' and offers only a few <u>unimaginative</u> suggestions for teaching strategies and general environment.

Peters suggests the example of parents and teachers is essential to "imitation and identification" (MD313). But their example must be supplemented by purposeful activities. Organized religious activities and stories about modern heroes have been effective in the past, but now "should be re-assessed." At the least adults must offer children a "degree of first-hand experience: they must not shield young people from suffering, but must encourage them to take part in practical tasks where there is suffering to be relieved" (Fr351). As well, adults must teach rules in "non-arbitrary ways" before children are capable of accepting them for the reasons given, "to help them to get to the stage when they follow rules because of the reasons for them." Peters does not say, however, how one can teach in a "non-arbitrary" way without giving reasons; nor does he say what counts as "arbitrary" and "non-arbitrary" when one rules out the giving of reasons.

Peters toys with the suggestion that 'training' and 'habituation' might be appropriate notions in the development of a child's sensitivities. But 'habituation' "is probably a misplaced (notion) here," he concludes, "for the last thing we want is to habituate children to the sight of suffering" (MD327). As well, he believes the notion 'habit' "cannot really get a grip here" (MD318). Reluctant to give up the notion 'habit,' however, Peters recommends that adults "expose children a bit to the sight of suffering, or at least not shield them from situations where they will be confronted by it in a first-hand way." In this way, he says, children can be encouraged to "form the habit of paying attention to peoples' suffering rather than just concentrating on their own projects." This habit of mind would not be a virtue, he

adds, "but it might predispose children to be influenced by compassion on specific occasions" (MD327).

Peters believes that the best environment for encouraging the development of sensitivities (and by implication the development of the imagination), is one in which "discussion and criticism" is a feature. "Reasons for doing things can be indicated quite early on, even though it is appreciated that the child cannot yet think in this way." Without "cognitive stimulation" in the environment, a "reflective attitude towards rules is unlikely to develop." The use of "appropriate" language is an important consideration here, he says. "Middle class language" is better suited for a reflective or reasoning attitude, Peters claims, than "working class language" (Fr351). This comment is an interesting one, given Peters' objections to the notion of "class" (DD).

Although Peters does not specify many details about how he believes imagination develops, he is persuaded that there are conditions which stunt the development of sensitivities towards other persons. He believes that if adults consistently employ punitive and rejecting techniques towards children, making them feel guilty and unworthy, children will likely not reach a rational form of morality. Some sorts of extrinsic aids, such as punishment, may encourage rigidity or lack of intelligence in rule-following that may become compulsive (RC66ff.).

Peters also believes that complete permissiveness--or "inconsistency of treatment" (providing children with "no determinate expectations")--also stunts development. Children need predictability, he insists, so that they can learn to predict consequences. They need a consistent pattern of rules, and an accepting attitude towards them-

selves.   To humiliate children is to "diminish their view of themselves as persons."

* * * * * *

In this section, I have looked at Peters' discussions of teaching and learning moral rules and principles.   Peters believes that moral rules are learned by <u>grasping the concepts</u> peculiar to the rules and by <u>conforming one's behaviour</u> to these rules.   They are "taught" using methods of induction and conditioning.   Principles, on the other hand, cannot be "taught."   A person properly inducted into the moral rules will come to see principles which give backing to rules.   The educator's role here is to stimulate the child's sensitivities by helping to develop his moral imagination.   And this, Peters says, is best done in an atmosphere of reason-giving.

Peters' account here is relatively uncontroversial.   But there is something odd about his dual claims: that children must learn moral rules by conforming to them, and that children's sensitivities to others can be developed early on.   I have already made some comments on this in the section on caring and reasoning, but I will look at the conceptual issues more closely in Chapter 4.   There I examine Peters' analyses of the concepts 'habits' and 'motives.'

II.   Form and Content

Thus far, I have systematized Peters' discussions on the teaching and learning of moral rules and principles.   He makes both direct and indirect references to the notions of 'form' and 'content.'   In this

section, I consider these notions in more detail. My first section on

the form of morality consists of four parts: Peters' use of the term

"formal," his argument concerning 'form' as the evidential holding of

beliefs, his objections to Piaget and Kolberg's notion of 'form,' and

his notion of 'form' as the development of autonomy in morals.

A. The Form of Morality

1. Peters' Use of "Formal"

In the section on principles, we saw that Peters considers moral

principles to be highly _formal_ in character.   He also says that prin-

ciples are more _general_ than moral rules.

(a) Formal, rational principles

Recall that Peters considers his five principles are the pre-

suppositions of rational thought and action.   He claims that the prin-

ciples he calls "fundamental" to morality are formal principles: they

are the principles presupposed in asking oneself what there are reasons

for doing.

At one point, he suggests that these principles may be _necessary_

principles:

> If it could be shown that certain principles are necessary for
> a form of discourse to have meaning, to be applied or to have
> point, then this would be a very strong argument for the justi-
> fication of the principles in question. They would show what
> anyone must be committed to who uses it seriously.
>
> (EE115)

Regarding the principle of consideration of interests, however, he

admits that it cannot be demonstrated as _necessary_ for the application

of reasoning to interpersonal conduct.   Yet he still calls this prin-

ciple a "precondition" in his system of rational morality (ML364).

Whether or not he regards all five principles as <u>necessary</u> for the application of reasoning to interpersonal conduct, he does speak of them as <u>required</u> by practical reason. Noticeably, he avoids the issue whether there are any differences between kinds of "requiredness" in the principles. It may be that if all five principles are required by rational thought, they are required in different ways. More than one sense of "rational" may be implied.

In its minimal version, the principle of equality appears to be a straightforward case of a formal, "rational" principle. This principle says that we must judge similar cases similarly unless there are relevant grounds for judging the cases differently. In other words, we must have reasons for judging cases differently. This formulation of the equality principle is similar to Hare's formulation of the principle of universalizability in his account of moral reasoning (Hare, 1952, 1964). The principle of equality and the principle of universalizability both point to a sense of "rational" which means being consistent with regard to one's judgments or use of moral concepts (being logically consistent).

Likewise, there seems to be some concern for truth "presupposed" by someone asking questions concerning his own practical conduct. If concern for truth is what Peters intends by his principle of truth-telling (and I have said earlier that he is confusing on this point), the principle of <u>truth-seeking</u> is a formal, rational principle. So also is the principle of freedom in one of its versions: an agent presumes (presupposes) himself to be free to act on decisions he comes to. Let us call these formal principles which appear to be required by

rational thought, Group 1 principles.

Of course, Peters could be criticized here for suggesting that these "preconditions of rational thought" are principles of rational thought. After all, not all necessary conditions of rationality ("preconditions") are principles which must be adopted by the deliberator. Nevertheless I will continue to call these "preconditions" Group 1 principles since this is Peters' own terminology.

(b) 'Moral' and 'Substantive' principles

The other principles and principle-versions in Peters' account differ from Group 1 principles. He suggests a more "full-blooded" version of the equality or justice principle: an agent must judge other persons' interests impartially with his own. He includes a principle of consideration of interests and a principle of respect for persons. In addition, Peters believes that we must tell the truth (not lie),and that we must not interfere with other persons' liberty.

These principles and principle-versions (Group 2 principles) are highly general and formal. But Peters does not argue in a completely convincing manner that these principles are presupposed or required by the asking of questions concerning moral or practical conduct. If these principles are required by practical reason they may be required in a way which differs from Group 1 principles. Group 1 principles are "rational" principles in that they refer to a kind of "conceptual consistency." Group 2 principles are "rational" principles in that they have to do with actions which might have harmful effects on other persons.

Group 2 principles demarcate an area of moral concerns from non-

moral concerns.   They help to distinguish a "moral point of view," one classification among several under the rubric "practical reason."   They provide the "evaluative premises" for Group 1 principles; they help to determine what are morally relevant reasons.

It might be objected here that impartiality, consideration of interests and respect for persons do not provide evaluative premises; that one gets these premises only after deciding what things are in persons' interests, and only after deciding what a person is entitled to in the way of treatment by others.   In response to this, it could be said that Peters thinks that these principles do tell us what are in persons' interests (avoidance of pain, non-injury, minimum standards of food and shelter).   His failure to be clear in stating his principles should not deflect us from what I believe is his intent: to state what persons are entitled to and to state what are in persons' interests.

It is tempting to call Peters' Group 2 principles--principles which distinguish moral from non-moral concerns--"substantive" principles.   This is common enough in discussions of ethical principles. But Peters avoids the word "substantive" except in respect of particular "substantive issues" we must decide (e.g., gambling RC14 and just wages MD332).

One reason for his avoidance of the word "substantive" could be the ambiguity of the notion.   Although it is common to contrast "substantive" with "formal" principles, on some occasions we might consider formal principles to be substantive ones.   For example, the equality principle could be regarded as a "substantive" principle: it tells us to be consistent in our judgments--to use reason--even though it does

not tell us what are relevant reasons for particular cases. The term "substantive" can play double-duty: it can tell us that we should use reason, and it can point to reasons which are relevant.

Peters might well have used the term "substantive" with reference to his moral _rules_, since the term "substantive" is used to refer to specific guides to action. But if he had, it is unlikely he would also use the term with reference to his _principles_. Recall that he believes principles function differently from rules. Principles, he says, act only as "signposts," not as "guidebooks." They sensitize us to considerations; they do not supply specific guides to action. Principles are more general than rules; they provide backing to rules.

What is the importance of this discussion for the task of clarifying Peters' sense of the form of morality? Just this. Peters uses the term "formal" with reference to all five fundamental principles, but this usage obscures differences between the principles. Some are preconditions (principles) of rational thought; others are principles which tell us something of what we should and should not do to other persons. Both are "rational" principles; to act on both would suggest some kind of "consistency." Yet Group 2 principles have to do with taking others' interests into account while Group 1 principles do not.

We can anticipate, therefore, that when Peters speaks of knowing or learning the form of morality and when he speaks of the formal properties of moral reasoning, he will be referring both to reasoning as such, and to certain kinds of reasons: morally relevant reasons.

2. 'Form': Holding Beliefs Evidentially

A clearer picture of Peters' understanding of 'form' emerges in his paper "The Form and Content of Moral Education." Form and content, he says, are parts of the "structure" of what has to be learned in moral education. In this paper, he speaks of _form_ as the way in which beliefs are held.

The distinction between form and content, he begins, "is similar to that which can be made in the sphere of beliefs about the world." Each belief (e.g., that the earth is round) could be held in different ways: evidentially or non-evidentially. "A belief with the same content could be held in quite different ways, which could constitute two distinct forms the belief might have" (FC142).

Holding beliefs rationally or on evidence, is to adopt only one of many possible _forms_ for beliefs. There could be different forms, that is, assent to different evidence about the same beliefs (content). He gives the example of the belief "It is wrong to break promises." Various persons may have this belief, but they may differ in their reasons for having the belief: they may disagree on why promise-breaking is wrong. The reasons they adduce for having the belief may be based on custom, tradition, or "authoritative sources" (religion). Peters says he is committed to the _rational form_ of morality: in this form beliefs are held evidentially, i.e., on good grounds.

Peters does not claim that persons like himself who hold beliefs evidentially, or rationally, think alike about such beliefs. In the example of promising, two persons might think promise-breaking is wrong, but they may think this for different reasons. These persons, Peters

says, give different weights to considerations relevant to holding the beliefs.

Peters specifies the kinds of considerations which constitute the form of morality to which he is committed (FC148). The notion of 'form' for him means holding beliefs on the evidence. But only certain evidence is relevant to moral decisions: to say of a person that he holds a moral belief rationally is to say that he considers relevant those features picked out by the five fundamental principles. These are the principles, he says, which supply a "form for the moral consciousness" (FC144).

In this argument Peters uses the term 'form' to refer to the many ways beliefs can be held; there are many such 'forms.' And Peters says that he is committed to only one of these 'forms'--holding beliefs on evidence. But notice how his notion of evidence is circumscribed by his understanding of the principles he thinks are presuppositions of rational thought. If it could be shown that these principles are not the presuppositions of rational thought, what would this do to his notion of evidence for a moral belief? Would he say that there was no longer evidence for a moral belief? Peters does not consider the possibility that there may be other ways of holding beliefs "on the evidence" which do not refer to features "made relevant by his fundamental principles."

3. Peters' Objections to Kohlberg's Notion of 'Form'

Peters gives hints as to his own view of the form of morality in his many discussions of the work of the psychologist, Lawrence Kohlberg. Again we see Peters' claim that there can be more than one form of morality, and that Kohlberg emphasizes the wrong one. Before noting

Peters' objections to the Kohlberg account, I outline this account in

brief.   I rely here on Peters' own summary of Kohlberg.

Kohlberg claims there is a difference between cultures in the

content of their moral beliefs, but that the form of morality is a cul-

tural invariant.   That is, he believes there are cultural variations

regarding thrift, punctuality and sexual relationships, for example,

but cross-cultural uniformities "in how such rules are conceived."

Kohlberg proposes a stage-developmental account of moral learning,

which, he claims, is confirmed by extensive empirical investigations.

Regardless of the cultural setting, children start by seeing rules as

dependent upon power and external compulsion;   they then see them as

instrumental to rewards and to the satisfaction of their needs;   then as

ways of obtaining some ideal order, and finally as articulations of

social principles like justice, which are necessary to living together

with others.   "Varying contents given to rules are fitted into invariant

forms of conceiving of rules" (RC42; LE47; MD304; see Appendix).

The ways of conceiving rules, Kohlberg maintains, characterize

different levels of development;   they form a 'logical hierarchy.'

Moral development proceeds when a person passes from the 'heteronomous'

stage--in which rules are regarded as "laid down" by peer group or

family--to the autonomous stage when questions of their validity can be

entertained and their basis in reciprocity and consent discerned.   This

development, says Kohlberg, could not be in any other order, although it

can be retarded or accelerated by social factors (RC24; MD304).

In his use of the phrase "cognitive stimulation," Kohlberg sug-

gests how progression through the different stages might be accelerated.

Although Kohlberg does not clearly set out what he means by "cognitive stimulation," he thinks it differs from "teaching," that is, explicit instruction. Cognitive stimulation can help a person to pass through one stage to another "higher" one. This stimulation, presumably, comes through the person's "interaction with the environment": the person's interaction with peers, authorities and "institutions."

Peters criticizes Kohlberg's theory on three fronts: on his notion of the hierarchical ordering of stages, on his notion of cognitive stimulation versus teaching, and on the emphasis he gives to the 'form' of morality. I mention briefly Peters' first two objections before considering the third.

First, Peters worries whether "the stages logically must occur in the order which research has revealed them to occur" (PK150). He wonders as well whether empirical investigation was even necessary to find out what could have ascertained by reflection.

> It would be difficult to see how an autonomous type of morality could precede a conventional one; for unless a child has had some prior introduction to rule-following and knows, from the inside, as it were, what it is to apply rules to his conduct, the notion of accepting or rejecting rules for himself, would scarcely seem intelligible.
>
> (PK150)

Kohlberg's extensive empirical investigations, Peters suspects, are somewhat redundant.

In earlier writing (LE47), Peters appears to accept Kohlberg's "logical hierarchy of stages." In later articles he expresses more skepticism. Kohlberg's notion of the "logical hierarchy of stages," he concludes, does not really explain the notion of "cultural invariance." Peters sees no logical necessity in the claim that a 'good boy' morality

of the peer group must precede a morality more dependent on the approval

of authorities, or that "children must conceive of rules as connected

with punishment before they see them as connected with rewards." As

well, Peters sees no logical reason why a person reaching autonomy

"should not come up with any type of ethical position, rather than pass-

ing from a system characterized by an ideal order to one characterized

by abstract principles" (PK150).

Commenting on Kohlberg's vague analysis of 'cognitive stimulation,'

Peters writes that the notion could cover 'teaching,' if Kohlberg

expanded his notion of teaching to include more than "explicit instruc-

tion." In fact, says Peters, the notion of 'cognitive stimulation'

"must be extended to cover all social influences, many of which could be

legitimately thought of as forms of teaching" (FC151).

Peters' chief objection to Kohlberg's account lies with what he

believes is its one-sidedness: the exclusive concentration on the form

of morality, and not its content.

Peters describes Kohlberg's and Piaget's accounts of moral devel-

opment as very "Kantian" ones. "What emerges as the end-point of moral

development," he says, "is the autonomous individual acting on prin-

ciples that can be universalized, with strength of will to stick to

them" (RC25; ML366). Peters points out what he thinks are defects of

this notion of moral development. First, there is exclusive interest

in how the individual conceives of interpersonal rules, without any

probing of motives that explain their actions. Peters calls this a

"monadic account of development . . . too simple, too monolithic" (RC26;

DB193). Second, there is no assessment "of the intensity and level of

compassion which suffuses a person's dealing with others." Peters says in some places that both Piaget and Kohlberg concentrate on the form of morality "viewed in terms of the way rules are conceived and the manner in which they are followed" (RC26). In other places, Peters says that Kohlberg is at fault for concentrating on only one form of morality (FC151).

As part of his criticism, Peters takes Kohlberg to task for not attending to the learning of content. Kohlberg is wrong to deemphasize content by referring to it as a "mere bag of virtues." Kohlberg's notion of 'habit,' Peters maintains, is wrongly conceived (RC34; MD305, 307; ML366). Charging that Kohlberg pays no attention at all to the affective side of moral development, Peters insists that Kohlberg's distinction between traits and principles is ill-conceived, and that he has no clear view of how the term 'principle' functions (MD312; RK678).

There is a hollow ring to Peters' criticisms of the Kohlberg account of 'form.' Let us consider his comments. First, Peters says that Kohlberg is at fault for attending only to the 'form' of morality. Then he accuses Kohlberg of attending to a particular 'form' of morality. What seems to upset Peters is Kohlberg's emphasis on the reasons persons have for conforming to or obeying rules. Kohlberg believes that persons see rule-obedience as a means for avoiding punishment, then as necessary in some sense to social functioning. But Peters' own views parallel these; in fact he relies heavily on Kohlberg for support of his own thesis: persons conform to rules before they obey them. Moreover, Peters relies on the notions of 'conditioning' and 'reinforcement' for the child's learning of rules because he believes, along with Piaget and

Kohlberg, that the child's conceptual apparatus is not ready for him to understand and act for moral reasons (motives).

Second, Peters charges that Kohlberg attends to only one form of morality. He strikes out at Kohlberg for maintaining that only the justice principle illustrates the highest-order reasoning in his stage-developmental account. Peters alleges that Kohlberg has not paid any attention to other higher-order principles like respect for persons. But Kohlberg is aware that commitment to the justice principle involves commitment to principles which make certain considerations morally relevant. Kohlberg says of stage 6 reasoning, "these are universal principles of justice, of reciprocity and equality of human rights, and respect for the dignity of human beings as individual persons" (see Appendix II).

It is true that Kohlberg does not speak of the motives of concern, compassion and benevolence, and he does not speak of sensitivity to suffering. But Kohlberg does spell out the motives persons have at each of the stages. At stage 1, the person acts so as to avoid punishment, at stage 3, the person acts so as to avoid a guilty conscience, and at stage 6 Kohlberg suggests, at least, that the person's motive is 'being just.'

In sum, Peters' objections to Kohlberg are not very convincing ones. And Peters does not make clear how his own account of moral reasoning is a substantial departure from the Kohlberg (stage 6) account.

4. 'Form' as the Development of Autonomy

In this section, I relate Peters' views on 'form' as the development of autonomy in morals: to learn the form of morality means learning to be autonomous or independent in one's moral reasoning. Peters speaks of 'autonomy in morals' in terms of one's reasoning capacities and in terms of developing feelings or sensitivities for others. As I have summarized on p. 90ff. his views on the second of these, I attend here to statements he makes about the first. He offers no new insights on the notion of 'form.' Rather, he speaks of those conditions necessary for developing reasoning abilities.

He discusses the development of persons' rational capacities in terms of enabling persons to become choosers; this is reminiscent of his discussion of "freedom." Persons must acquire "basic cognitive and affective apparatuses without which (they) could not qualify as moral agents in the full sense." They must learn to "delay gratification, and use publicly assessable reasons; they must learn to act after deliberation." Piaget and Kohlberg, following Kant, were right to say that this presupposes the development of a type of "categoreal apparatus." Choosers must learn to take means to ends, appreciate causal properties of things, and distinguish consequences; the categoreal concepts 'thinghood,' 'causality,' 'means to ends' are important ones for choosers to grasp (RC36ff.).

Various social conditions militate against the development of reasoning abilities; these conditions often create what he calls "pathological states." Psychopaths and schizophrenics lack the sense of "integral selfhood and personal identity, of the permanency of things,

of the reliability of natural processes, of the substantiality of others."

These states are cases of "irrationality." He also speaks of cases of

"unreasonableness" where there is a limited development of capacities

necessary for becoming choosers. Choosers, Peters concludes, must

develop the ability to abstract and use generalizations. They must per-

ceive the world as an ordered universe in which rational action is

rewarded. They must plan ahead and exercise self-control. As well,

choosers must have self-confidence (RC36-41).

The notion of persons becoming "choosers"--choosing reasons or

choosing principles--presents problems with which Peters does not grapple.

On one level, it makes sense to say that persons can choose their reasons:

that they can be autonomous or independent in their thinking on moral

matters. On another level it makes no sense at all to speak of persons

choosing what are abstract moral principles and rules. Peters seems

not to see any difficulty in his position: moral agents cannot be

autonomous unless they become "choosers," but the only choices open to

them are circumscribed by the "procedural" (fundamental) principles.

If an autonomous agent chooses in accord with Peters' principles, this

does not guarantee that he will make choices which avoid or prevent

harm to other persons.

5. Comments on Peters' Notion of 'Form'

Clearly, Peters wants the notion of form to mean something like

reasoning: this reasoning is to include making inferences of various

sorts, and it includes caring about the consequences of actions (RC32;

ML363). He also wants to contrast this sense of form with other forms

(reasons) for holding beliefs, i.e., tradition, peer pressure, or

authority. But he is less than persuasive when he criticizes Kohlberg's "exclusive emphasis on form," and offers little in his talk of autonomous moral choices. He generally treats the notion of 'form' so cursorily that we cannot be certain what he believes about the notion.

B. The Content of Morality

In his criticism of Kohlberg, Peters remarks that Kohlberg's highest order principle--the justice principle--should have been supplemented by other principles, ones like respect for persons. Peters continues: ". . . the evaluative premises which are required for a commitment to the justice principle . . . open up obvious possibilities for alternative emphases in morality." Peters asks, 'Are these emphases to be put on the "formal" side or on the "content" side?' (MD331).

Peters does not supply an answer. Either he is not clear himself what he means by the content of morality or he is simply pointing to a common difficulty of categorizing various considerations as form or content. From the earlier section on the teaching and learning of rules and principles, we know that learning content for Peters means the learning of moral rules. Kohlberg's failure to stress the importance of learning content (rules) led Peters to criticize Kohlberg's account. But Peters himself has many things in mind when he speaks of the <u>content</u> of morality. In this section, I bring together Peters' senses of 'content.' First, however, I make some general remarks about 'the content of morality.'

1. Why Content is Stressed

Peters is not alone in emphasizing as he does the content of morality and of moral education. The trend in current ethical philosophy

and in several moral education projects has been to stress the importance of good reasoning and reasoning ability in deciding moral matters. Some writers have maintained that analyses of moral reasoning have been carried out without due regard to the central concern of morality: the avoidance and prevention of actions harmful to persons.

R. M. Hare's work, for example, centers on the logical properties of moral reasoning. Universalizability and Prescriptivity, he claims, are logically necessary features of moral judgments. Hare believes that if a person universally prescribes a particular judgment, the judgment will be one which coincides with our moral sentiments. But certain implications of his views have been criticized for exactly this: other writers point out that a person might well universally prescribe an action which _offends_ our moral sensitivities, e.g., universally prescribing the judgment that all Jews should be killed (Coombs, 1975, p. 10). Partly in response to Hare's work, Frankena and Warnock argue that the content of morality ought not to be ignored. These writers regard content not as an alternative to reason in morals, nor as an alternative to the study of the logic of moral reasoning, but as an integral part of moral reasoning. For both authors, the notion of content in morality has to do with the avoidance of harm to persons (Frankena 1970; Warnock 1967).

2. Conceptions of Content

If we were asked to elaborate on what we mean by the content of morality, there are several topics upon which we could dwell. I outline here three ways we could talk about 'content,' then review what Peters says about each.

(a) The formal/substantive distinction

We frequently speak of the differences between formal and substantive principles. The substantive side of the distinction is often said to pick out _moral_ principles (classificatory sense), while the formal side is said to pick out _rational_ principles. Substantive principles are believed to offer content to formal principles of moral reasoning: substantive principles tell us what considerations are likely to be relevant to moral decisions.

(b) Moral rules and their concepts

A second way to consider 'content' is to talk of moral rules. Rules provide specific guides to action; they tell us what to do and what not to do. The notion of the content of morality, some say, is given some "substance" or "content" by talk of rules. The analysis of concepts peculiar to the rules--ones like 'cheating,' 'bullying,' and 'stealing,'--indicate more fully what this content is like.

(c) Persons and harm

A third place for considering the content of morality is deciding how we are to apply--put into practice--the rules and principles of morality. If agents are to "take into account certain morally relevant considerations," they should be sensitized to those who would be affected by the agents' actions. If agents come to have the concept of a 'person,' and if they "use" this concept in their moral deliberations, they should have at least _prima facie_ reasons for not engaging in activities which are harmful to persons.

As several writers have said (e.g., Williams, _op. cit._) the notion of a 'person' is conceptually related to the notion of 'rights.' The

concept 'rights,' at least, is a moral notion: it cannot be "read off"
the facts. The concept 'harm' is an empirical notion, but it is often
spelled out in what appear to be moral notions--cheating, lying, promise-
breaking.

If agents are to be introduced to the content of morality, they
must at least come to have the concepts 'person,' 'rights' and 'harm.'

3. Peters' Discussions of Content

Let us see now how Peters' comments on 'content' can be classified
in terms of these three categories. He speaks of 'content' in still
other ways; this we will see in part 4.

(a) The formal/substantive distinction

As I have said earlier, Peters classifies all five principles as
formal ones. I have claimed that subsumed under this category are dif-
ferent sorts of principles. Some of these are principles or precondi-
tions of rational thought; others are principles by which we can
decide what are morally relevant differences or content for the formal
principle of equality (justice). Given the differences among Peters'
formal principles, it is understandable why Peters finds it difficult
to classify certain considerations as formal or as content notions.

(b) Moral rules and their concepts

By far the largest part of Peters' discussion of content reflects
his interest in the learning of moral rules. When he speaks of learning
and teaching the content of morality, this most often means the teaching
and learning of rules. Noticeably he doesn't distinguish learning or
teaching one type of content--basic social rules--from learning and
teaching another type of content, local or relative rules. As I have

said earlier, Peters' category of relative rules resembles issues or dilemmas a person must decide.

The learning and teaching of basic rules would no doubt differ from the learning and teaching of relative rules. Peters stresses that to learn the basic rules, one needs to have a grasp of moral concepts peculiar to those rules; and one must act in conformity with the rules.

In learning local or relative rules, one would no doubt be required to have moral concepts such as 'rights' and 'persons,' and as well, be required to make well-grounded decisions about issues "using" those concepts. Making well-grounded decisions about moral issues would presuppose having some knowledge about how to justify moral decisions, and the knowledge, skill and disposition to act on those judgments.

Peters offers little or no comment on the moral-rule concepts like bullying and cheating, caring for the young, caring for property, and the keeping of contracts. He gives a few comments on the notion of 'stealing' and 'promising,' but nothing in the way of analyses.

(c) Persons and harm

In discussing Peters' principle of respect for persons, I summarized what Peters says on the concept of a 'person.' The notion of a person—regarding him as a rational being—"is not just a fact about the world, it is a fact of supreme ethical importance" (EE209). Peters goes on to say that a man can be said to have the concept of a person "only if he thinks that the fact that he and others represent distinct points of view is a matter of importance" (EE224). Again, he says: "to regard people as persons is to consider them as beings with rights and duties. This is distinct from seeing them as the mere occupants of

roles" (CP289,293; ME96).

Peters does not broach the tricky question of how rational a person

must be to be a person, or how much potential to be rational a being has.

He doesn't say whether foetuses, young children, beings with less than

average intelligence, or the senile are persons, and he doesn't say

whether their rights are of the same kind that normal adults have.

4. Peters' Other Senses of 'Content'

We have seen in the previous section that Peters has many things

to say about the content of morality where this means "those considera-

tions which are relevant to morality and which must be acted on in order

to be moral." In addition to this sense of 'the content of morality,'

Peters speaks of content as those aspects of one's life which can be

affected by making and acting on "moral" decisions.

(a) Roles and duties

While Peters advises that we regard individuals as persons, and not

as the mere occupants of roles, he also advises that our own roles and

duties, and the attitude we take toward fulfilling these, is an import-

ant part of the content of the 'moral life':

> (The moral life) . . . is a complex affair involving roles, activ-
> ities, motives and interpersonal rules. It also involves the
> disposition to be critical of this wide-ranging content in which
> any generation must necessarily be nurtured.
>
> (CP300)

Under the concepts 'obligation' and 'duty,' he says, "fall ways of

behaving connected with social roles. Much of a person's life is taken

up with his station and its duties, with what is socially required of

him as a husband, father, citizen and member of a profession or occupa-

tion" (RC16; CP289).

Not only must the moral agent attend to those duties which accompany his various roles, he should carry them out with vigour and dedication.   A person's conduct in his role might display a certain "second-handedness," a "lack of authenticity or genuineness."   A person might not really make his "roles, rules and reactions" his own.   He may live his life as a kind of "toil" or in a way which suggests he needs approval.   Occupying a role in such a way as to suggest either "simulation or second-handedness" should not be confused, he says, with a genuine commitment to a role (CP297).   The norms connected with treating people as persons "should penetrate those connected with roles" (CP289).

Surely Peters is correct to say that if an agent is to be moral, he must treat other people as persons whenever he has dealings with them.   But it is not clear how carrying out one's role-duties with authenticity and genuineness is a requirement for 'being moral.'   I will discuss this further in Chapter 5.

(b)   Worthwhile activities

The moral life, says Peters, "must have content as well as procedural principles for reasoning about what one is to do, be or think. Some account has to be given of what a man's interests are, of the realm of the pursuit of what is good or worthwhile" (RC22).   Again, we see Peters' interpretation of 'moral' in terms of 'ethical excellences' (see Chapter 2).

(c)   Character-traits and motives

Peters also speaks of the content of morality in terms of having the right character-traits and motives.   I discuss one set of

character-traits in the next chapter: those habits connected with social

rules like punctuality, honesty, tidiness and honesty. Another set of

traits--the self-control traits--I examine in Chapter 5. The notion

'motive' straddles both 'form' and 'content' in Peters' portrayal of the

moral life; I examine this notion in the chapter to follow.

CHAPTER 4

Habits, Motives and Emotions

> Habits, like motives or emotions, are not, as it
> were, part of the furniture of the mind in the
> way in which the yellow, green and black are part
> of a snooker set. These terms are higher-order
> ones by means of which we say all sorts of extra
> things about peoples' actions and feelings.
> (RH275)

In this chapter, I examine more closely three key concepts in
Peters' view of moral education: 'habits,' 'motives,' and 'emotions.'
A recapitulation of my summary in Chapters 2 and 3 lays out the diffi-
culties with his notions of "habit" and "habit-training." I examine
next his analysis of 'motive' to see how it contributes to our under-
standing of 'moral motives.' Finally, I add to his account of 'reason'
and 'feeling' by looking at his account of emotions in the moral life.

I. Habits

A. The Problems

In Chapters 2 and 3 I mention frequently Peters' insistence that
the moral development of children must begin with habit-training. The
habits he points to are 'being punctual,' 'being polite,' 'being tidy,'
and 'being honest.' But he emphasizes as well habituation to other
"basic" and "local" rules. Moral training in these rules, he says,
involves more than "know-how" or "knack." Children must learn (a) that
certain classes of action are wrong, and (b) how to behave in the
required way. This is achieved, he claims, through instruction,

example, practice and imitation (see Ch. 2, pp. 34ff.; Ch. 3, pp. 85ff.).

Moral training must include the use of extrinsic conditioning aids such as rewards and approval. Peters believes that children cannot learn to reason about moral matters until they have reached a certain level of cognitive development. Children cannot grasp principles nor can they raise questions about the validity of rules.

> In their early years, (children) cannot accept rules in a
> rational way or be taught rules by processes such as explan-
> ation and persuasion, which depend upon the ability to grasp
> a principle.
> <div align="right">(MD312)</div>

At the same time, Peters holds that children _can_ learn such rele-vant sensitivities as concern for others and sympathy to others' suffer-ing. Indeed they _must_ learn to have sensitivities or be sensitive, he claims, if they are to reason on moral matters when they are older (Ch. 3, pp. 90ff.). Principles, he says, can later function as agents' motives--reasons which "become the agents' own."

I have drawn attention in Chapter 2 to some difficulties with Peters' account of training in (practicing) the moral rules. As well, I have pointed to problems in his argument concerning conditioning as supplementary to the "teaching" of moral rules (see pp. 33ff.). Coin-cident with these problems is the "parallelism" (my term) Peters expects between the task of habit-training and the task of developing sensitiv-ities. I spell this out below.

To review his position, Peters believes that learning to be auton-omous in morality is to learn the _form_ of morality. Being autonomous, or knowing the form of morality, means having the ability to reason well on matters of moral concern. That ability includes sensitivity to

considerations "made relevant by the principles." He speaks in two ways about learning form: (1) a person comes to see principles which give "unity" to the rules which he now habitually obeys (Peters calls this "generalizing from a bag of virtues"), and (2) a person develops sensitivities (concern for others) and learning them is part of what it means to learn a form of reasoning. Peters believes that the activities engaged in so as to achieve (1) must proceed somewhat independently of those activities engaged in so as to achieve (2), and that activities pertinent to (1) are, in some sense, preconditions to the achievement of tasks pertinent to (2). We should first assess whether Peters is internally consistent.

One inconsistency is apparent in Peters' views about reason-giving. He suggests that in developing the child's imagination further to increasing that child's sensitivities, adults should provide reasons for acting, even though "it is appreciated that children cannot yet think in this way" (Ch. 3, p. 95). Yet he insists that giving reasons to children may be a "pointless" endeavour because "children are unable to let principles become their motives (reasons which move them to act)" (Ch. 3, p. 95). This vacillation stems, no doubt, from his reluctance to lay out clearly what he believes is involved in giving children reasons and what it is to get children to understand or "use" reason. I return to this point later. But Peters is not consistent if he maintains both that it is pointless to give children reasons for acting, and that reasons for acting can and should be pointed out to children "early on."

Suppose we temporarily ignore his remark about the pointlessness of providing children with reasons, and concentrate instead on his

suggestion that the child's imagination and concern for others can be encouraged by providing an atmosphere in which discussion and criticism (reason-giving) is a feature. If an adult were to act on Peters' suggestion that reasons for acting can and should be indicated early on in order that the child's sensitivities be developed, why couldn't the adult indicate reasons for acting so as to get the child to act on the moral rules? Indeed, would not the adult's giving of reasons, done for the adult's purpose of imagination-development, likely be viewed by the child as reason why he (the child) should act in certain ways and not in others? What I suggest is that Peters has inadequate grounds for denying the possibility that children at an early age may very well understand reasons for behaving (acting) in certain ways. He may also be remiss in not exploring the possibility that this understanding coincides--conceptually and empirically--with the development of that child's sensitivities to other persons. For to say that a child's sensitivities to others "are being developed" is to say that the child is learning to understand and act on reasons which show his sensitivity to other persons.

Now some may object that what I call an inconsistency on Peters' part is not an inconsistency at all. They might claim that one can develop a child's sensitivities and feelings for others, and that the child might not "connect" these sensitivities with reasons for acting. But, in respect of _moral_ sensitivities and feelings, I cannot imagine circumstances where we would _say_ of a child that he had sensitivities and concern for others, if he did not connect these feelings with reasons for doing certain things and reasons for not doing others. This is not to deny that a child could have sensitivities and not be

disposed to act on them in particular circumstances. What it does say

is that having sensitivities must somehow be reflected in what the child

does and in his reasons for acting.

Peters might grant this. But he might still try to argue that

before a child can understand reasons (what I have called "being disposed

to use or appeal to reason"), or at the same time as he understands

reasons, he must also develop dispositions to behave in the required

ways. Peters might say that the child must still be trained in moral

habits--made to conform to desired standards of behaviour. But I would

claim, in response to this, that if a child comes to understand and act

on reasons (of concern and compassion for example), he has already begun

to develop "dispositions to behave in the required ways: he has begun

to develop dispositions to appeal to reason in deciding what he should

or should not do."*

We must see, then, how Peters reconciles habit-training and the

"disposition to act on reason." Now follows an examination of Peters'

analysis of 'habit' to see what persuaded Peters to place so much

emphasis on this notion.

B. Peters' Analysis of 'Habit'

Peters frequently speaks of 'habit-formation,' as I have said, in

terms of the methods he believes efficacious in bringing them about--

training and conditioning aids. In Chapter 2, I drew attention to his

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*I do not mean to suggest that 'understanding' implies 'acting on.'
If I did, Peters could say that understanding reasons and being disposed
to behave are two different things. I am suggesting however, that if a
child understands reasons and acts on them, he is learning to act in
accordance with, follow, or obey reason. This we might call his "dis-
positions to act on reason," but the child's understanding does not
imply his disposition to act in this way.

belief that conditioning procedures as well as conditioning aids (praise, blame, reward, punishment) "bypass" the human mind. These devices are non-cognitive ones, he says: they do not appeal (directly, at any rate) to a person's beliefs or reasoning abilities. Does he successfully reconcile 'habit' with these methods? How much room, if any, does he allow for cognitive methods in the development of moral habits?

1. Habits as Actions

Peters insists that 'habit' and 'reason' are compatible notions. "There is no contradiction," he says, "between habituation and the intelligent adaptability associated with reason." Indeed, he considers it one of his purposes to effect a rapprochement between those who stress habit and tradition, and those who stress critical thought and choice (RH269). Persons like Ryle who find the notions 'habit' and 'reason' incompatible, Peters suggests, are either confused about the concept 'habit,' or concentrate on specific habits which get in the way of acting on reason.

The concept 'habit' picks out persons' inclinations to carry out actions automatically. But not all actions carried out automatically are habits. A habit also implies the repetition of acts. Habits are "settled dispositions," and, "like clothes, can be put on or taken off at will." To say someone has a habit is to pick out things "he could, in principle, have reasons for doing and things, that, in principle (he) could, stop doing if he tried" (RH275). Dreaming, stomach aches and facial tics are not habits; nor is 'being sympathetic' and 'being angry.' Going for a walk before breakfast, talking philosophy in a pub, and being punctual and polite, are Peters' primary examples of

habits (MD317).

Peters compares 'acting habitually' (acting on habit) and 'acting out of habit' (acting from force of habit), which latter notion, he believes, _is_ incompatible with reason.   Moral habit-training, he believes, is conceptually connected with the first sense of 'habit.'

To say that someone acted 'out of habit' (from force of habit), Peters says, is to say that the person "responded in a routine way to routine types of situations."   The concept of 'intelligence' is inapplicable; the condition of automaticity, of a steroetyped form of behaviour is strongly implied.   This notion, he suggests, "rules out the possibility that the individual has deliberated before he has done something or that he has reflected or gone through a process of self-criticism or justification."   It also implies that the individual does not see what he does as a means to a further end.   In using the phrase 'out of habit,' "we are denying any of the processes typically associated with reason . . . at least a person acting out of habit was not acting for _his_ reason" (MD320-1).

The notion 'acting out of habit,' Peters continues, also rules out the notion of acting for intrinsic enjoyment or acting from a sense of duty.   All the notion claims is that "this is the sort of thing the individual tends to do because he has done it often before":

> To say that something is a habit is to say that it is the sort of behaviour that an individual _could_ perform without giving his mind to it, but to say that he performed it out of habit is to suggest that he did not give his mind to it.
>
> (MD321)

This quotation does not clearly differentiate (i) acting habitually (acting on habit) from (ii) acting out of habit.   In fact, it

serves only to confuse the reader. Consider Peters' proposition above that acting habitually suggests a person could perform the act "without giving his mind to it": this does not differentiate (i) from (ii). By his previous comments, 'acting out of habit' implies that a person performs an act without giving his mind to it, (that is, does not do so) and that he could not do so, for the reason that "actions performed out of habit . . . deny the possibility that any of the processes typically associated with reason have taken place." Peters, however, might mean this: acting out of habit is a subclass of acting habitually. Acting habitually includes all actions which could be performed unmindfully. Thus all cases of acting out of habit are cases of acting habitually. But acting out of habit is a special subclass of habitual actions, including only those actions that actually are performed unmindfully. Thus, not all cases of acting habitually are cases of acting out of habit. Those cases of acting habitually which are not also cases of acting out of habit are the ones Peters thinks are incompatible with reason.

In any case, Peters' attempt to distinguish between acting habitually and acting out of habit simply amounts to a claim that 'acting habitually' (acting on habit) is compatible with the notion of acting for a reason, and that 'acting out of habit' is not. First, it is not clear that acting out of habit "denies that any of the processes of reason have taken place." Second, "giving his mind to it"--Peters' key phrase for distinguishing the two--does not do the job he intends for it.

In the next section on 'habituation,' we see that his understanding of 'habit' is compatible with 'acting on or for a reason'; there does not seem to be any distinction between the two.

2. Habituation

'Habituation,' says Peters, refers to a wide class of learning processes: being instructed, getting used to, being in the presence of, insight and drill. This, it should be said, is an odd beginning. In contrast to earlier statements in which he said that conditioning aids and reinforcement must be used because habits must be formed, he now maintains that there are no grounds for saying that habits must be learned by repetition or drill. He says, "if all habits were associated with drill, the emergence of any rational type of morality out of processes of habituation would be a mystery" (MD323). Indeed, this is precisely the difficulty one has had, from the outset, with his notion of habit-training.

What process of habituation does he prefer, then, and for what reason? He asserts that habits can and should be formed intelligently "in the context of an activity." We might drill ourselves in particular moves. We might engage in practice in situations where the movements have to be varied in the light of changes in the situation. To do this is to "prevent a stereotyped pattern of movements from developing." What we want, he says, "are adaptable habits." Hence we must appeal to persons' intelligence by using reasons rather than means which depend on the laws of association: contiguity, recency and frequency.

Peters surely would like to have it both ways. He should either claim (if he truly believes this), that habits should be developed in children by conditioning techniques because they cannot reason, or settle for the claim that settled dispositions to reason can and should be developed in children by means of reasoning (what he calls "rational")

techniques. Not both. In other words, his persistent talk of habit-training in terms of conditioning and allied "movement" terms (e.g., practice, drill) adds serious confusions to his account. Anyone who disbelieves that he places this much emphasis on "movement-terms" should consider this sentence: "Moral habits must be exhibited in a wide range of actions in so far as actions are thought to be constituted by the sorts of movements of the body that are usually associated with skills. . . . " (RH277). This may be Peters' root confusion: a habit is not a skill, it is a propensity or inclination.

Yet now we have to conclude after all that Peters believes children can learn to reason and act on reason at an early age. Why else would he advocate the giving of reasons as the best form of "habituation"?

3. Habits and Morality

Peters emphasizes the importance of habits in morality in this way:

> Surely the importance of established habits in the moral life is manifest. Life would be very exhausting if, in moral situations, we always had to reflect, deliberate and make decisions . . . (we have to) count on a fair stock of habits . . . (ones such as punctuality, politeness, tidiness and honesty).
>
> (MD318)

His "stock of habits" however, is limited to these. They are "connected with specific types of acts . . . so there seems to be no difficulty about the condition of automaticity being sometimes ful-filled." By 'automaticity' Peters probably intends the following: in acting habitually the reason for acting is not conscious to the person at the time he acts, but there may well be reason for acting as he does.

Motives such as compassion, he says, cannot be habits. Neither can the "artificial virtues" of justice and tolerance, for these virtues

"involve much in the way of thought . . . considerations are weighed and assessed." Nor can higher-order virtues such as courage, integrity and persistence be habits since they require "active attention" (MD319).

The basic stock of moral habits (punctuality, tidiness, politeness and honesty), he says, are necessary but not sufficient for acting morally. They "have an incompleteness about them because the reason for behaving in the ways which they mark out is not internal to them." Some reason, he says, is required for acting honestly. Honesty is a character-trait, not a motive. Ideally, "acting honestly is connected with considerations which provide a rationale, rather than considerations which are manifestly extrinsic to this form of behaviour."

Peters says that habits are not sufficient for acting morally because "they cannot carry people through in non-routine situations where the usual reinforcements are absent" (MD320). But if, as he says, adaptable habits are best formed by a process of "habituation" in which reason-giving is a key feature, why would he worry about the insufficiency of habits to carry people through non-routine situations? Moreover, would he say that habits are sufficient for acting morally if the "usual reinforcements" (whatever these are) are present?

4. Peters on 'Habit' and Habits

Peters' suggestion that some "settled dispositions" are necessary for persons to be moral seems a reasonable one. He is right to say that we cannot always deliberate about what we are to do before we act. We require settled dispositions of some kind to "carry" us through at least some "routine" situations and some "non-routine" situations. I have suggested, however, that Peters' analysis of 'habit' (one kind of

settled disposition), particularly his distinction between 'acting

habitually' and 'acting out of habit,' is not at all clear.

Peters leaves unresolved at least two problems for the moral edu-

cator. One is whether his advocacy of habit-training for the early

moral education of children is intelligible and consistent, given his

analysis of the concept 'habit.' The second is whether the habits he

considers essential to being moral meet with our approval. Do they seem

to us justifiable habits to develop? Do we, too, think of the habits of

punctuality, tidiness, politeness and honesty (e.g., not cheating and not

lying) as moral requirements?

(a) Children and moral habits

It is rather curious that Peters emphasizes the conditioning tech-

niques essential to habit-training "because children cannot reason," and

yet stresses the use of rational (reasoning) means so that children will

form "adaptable habits." It is understandable, of course, why he picks

out reasoning as a means for bringing about "settled dispositions" given

his interpretation of 'habit.' But Peters, I suggest, cannot now main-

tain his earlier claim that conditioning techniques must <u>precede</u>

rational techniques in the inculcation of habits (FC153, see Ch. 3,

p. 87). From Peters' confusing and internally contradictory statements

on habits, conditioning and reasoning, I draw together here what I

believe is his intent.

We require some settled dispositions for acting morally, since we

can't be bothered to (perhaps we are unable to) call up reasons every

time we act. Some settled dispositions (habits) give rise to "actions,"

since the notion of acting on reason does not rule out spontaneity, a

feature of habitual action, nor does it require the notion of deliberation, which is absent in the case of habits. If there is a good rationale for developing particular habits in children, we should do so. Since these settled dispositions are compatible with reason, and since it may be desirous to have persons intelligently reflect on what they do, moral educators must appeal to children's intelligence and employ rational, reason-giving means so that the "habits" formed are "adaptable" ones. Young children are not, in their very youngest years, able to provide justifications for all their actions; nor can they grasp all there is to grasp about the "validity" of rules. Moral educators (parents and teachers) then should couple rational means (appeal to children's intelligence) with praise, perhaps some punishment so as to keep children moving in the direction of autonomous moral thought. One problem in moral education is to determine which non-rational (non-cognitive) means should supplement the use of reason so that children are helped rather than hindered from reaching the stage of autonomy.

This condensation and restatement of Peters' position is worded so as to minimize the emphasis he gives to training and conditioning in moral habit-formation. My simplified wording brings out a point of view that I believe Peters holds but for some reason is reluctant to admit. Children _can_ understand reasons and learn to act on reason from an early age. What they cannot do when very young is provide justifications for the rules, or see the "validity" (overall justification) of certain rules, although they can learn to apply rules in the appropriate circumstances. The other tasks and abilities central to justifying rules must await children's further cognitive development. And this

cognitive development is best brought about in an atmosphere of honest

discussion and criticism (rational give-and-take).

(b) Are these habits necessary to morality?

Peters believes there is a rationale for promoting the habits of

politeness, punctuality, tidiness and honesty (MD320).*   But what are

these reasons?   Is Peters' rationale a good one?   Except for a small

discussion on the justification of honesty (truth-telling), Peters does

not debate how, in what ways these habits are required for or are pre-

conditions of being moral;   he simply states that they are necessary.

He says little about what forms of behaviour constitute such habits, so

let us now test the correctness of his views by comparing them with our

common-sense views.

My suspicion is that tidiness and punctuality have very little to

do with becoming autonomous moral agents.   We can, with little diffi-

culty, think of counter-examples to Peters' claim—ones which fit with

our ordinary moral intuitions.   Many of our own acquaintances who would

be characterized as persons sensitive to others' rights and feelings and

who are disposed to act so as to avoid suffering and prevent harm, are

not particularly tidy or punctual.   Often, as well, tidy and punctual

persons in our acquaintance and in our history books (e.g., the Nazis)

are quite immoral persons.   Being tidy and being punctual reflect, it

is true, certain standards of behaviour.   But that such standards are

moral virtues is certainly a disputable claim.

Politeness is more directly connected with a view of morality which

has primarily to do with taking others' interests into account

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*See (Coombs, 1976, p. 25).

impartially with one's own.   But here, too, there are difficulties. Peters does not conduct an analysis of 'politeness' and obviously sees no problem with his claim.

A person who is consistently, or even occasionally impolite--who acts scornfully, ungraciously or rudely--draws our ire.   We would say, most likely, that he lacked character--moral character.   The settled disposition of being polite, we might say, inclines a person towards viewing others as persons: politeness is part of having respect for persons.   As a general recommendation, the notion that we should be polite, or at least not impolite seems like a fairly innocuous state-ment.   But if we admit that, as part of their moral character, persons should not be impolite to others, the question still remains what man-ners or forms of politeness are truly required, if any are, for viewing and treating others as persons, caring about the consequences of acts and considering others' interests impartially.

Some forms of politeness, "socially approved," or at least not so-cially disapproved, may actually serve to prevent or inhibit moral agents from viewing and treating others as persons (i.e., as beings with rights, claims, interests), and it is this fact which stands as a challenge to Peters' view.   The custom, tradition or habit of opening doors for women, for example, would be viewed by most members of our society, including women, as an instance of politeness.   But acting on this gesture might serve to perpetuate the myth that women are objects, that they are to be placed on a pedestal, that they are passive and dependent creatures.   The door-opening gesture traditionally accom-panied views about how women should be treated: open doors for them

but ignore their more serious, long-term interests, claims and rights.

While it would be difficult to maintain that acting in accordance with this habit entailed or meant that one ignored women's rights, there was, and still seems to be, a strong contingent connection between opening doors for women on the one hand, and ignoring their rights, on the other. I believe there is sufficient doubt about this rule of politeness, at any rate, to make me suspect its requiredness for moral education. How many other examples of politeness fit rather dubiously into the category of being moral required is difficult to say. But the notion of "polite acts" as moral habits invites some examination--more than Peters provides.

Peters might have stressed instead the "settled disposition" of being courteous to other people. Obviously being courteous and being polite have much in common. But courteousness suggests a wider range of acts and slightly different attitude toward people and customs than does politeness. Being courteous places more importance on the subject, the receiver of the courtesies, the person to whom one is courteous, than does being polite. As well, 'courtesy' suggests an attitude more adaptable to changing situations and people.

The remaining habit, honesty, presents questions of another kind. Without doubt, as moral educators we would like children and adults to be honest rather than dishonest. We can more readily accept honesty, therefore, as a requirement or necessary feature of being moral. The problem which arises with this "virtue" is whether it makes any sense to speak of being honest (Peters' examples are not cheating and not lying) as habit, even given Peters' reinterpretation of the concept 'habit.'

Rarely, if ever, would we speak of a person in the following way: 'He's a fine chap, he has the habit of not lying,' or 'She is in the habit of not cheating, therefore she would make a good treasurer.' This point about language-use aside, can we make sense of the claim that not lying and not cheating are settled dispositions, carried out automatically, with repetition?

Now we might interpret the phrase 'not lying' in several ways. We might say of a person that he has the habit of not lying and mean by this that he keeps quiet or that he tells the truth. But if a person keeps quiet, we would not necessarily say that he has a habit of not lying; he may not know the truth of a particular matter. And if this person tells the truth "automatically and with repetition," we might not always say that he has the habit of not lying. A person who told the truth all the time (as he saw it) would without doubt hurt others' feelings at least part of the time. We might not say he was acting immorally, but he would be engaging in morally hazardous actions. The notion 'not lying' in terms of telling the truth seems to be based on the idea that there are standards of truth and that these are decipherable to the person. In many cases this may be so, but with little difficulty we can think of instances when telling the truth (being honest; not lying) is a very difficult notion to get any handle on.

Perhaps it is wrong to interpret the phrase 'a habit of not lying' as one of positive action: telling the truth. It might be better analyzed as a "constant inhibition of any impulse to lie which did happen to come up." But if a person had impulses to lie, even if he did suppress them, would we say that his 'habit of not lying' was a

virtue?   In my view we would have less reason to say this was a virtue

than to say that a person who "told the truth all the time" was <u>not</u>

virtuous.

In any case, Peters might have explicated what he means by a

'habit of not lying,' and he might have offered us some reasons why he

thinks it important to promote such a habit.   What does he believe the

consequences would be if moral educators did not do what they could to

habituate youngsters not to lie?

In sum, Peters provides no convincing arguments, indeed no argu-

ments at all for the particular habits of punctuality, tidiness and

politeness as requirements or preconditions of acting morally.   These

"virtues" reflect a set of standards Peters thinks desirable;   others

may not consider them so vital or intelligible as settled dispositions or

"habits."   And some of these forms of behaviour or habits--for example,

politeness--may in fact prohibit or prevent individuals from seeing

other individuals as persons.

Why does Peters believe children should acquire habits?   He sug-

gests that children, because of their lowly level of conceptual develop-

ment, cannot reason about what they are to do.   This suggests that

Peters believes that children cannot make discriminations, and cannot

be mindful of possible consequences of their actions.   If these are

his reasons, then I must disagree with him.   Such a disagreement de-

pends for its resolution, not only on empirical research which might

tell us what children are now capable of doing, but also depends on

conceptions of what children could think, and do, if parents and

teachers would only, as it were, give their minds to this task.

C.   The Paradox of Moral Education

In my summary of Peters' analysis of 'habit,' I might have included Peters' statements on the "paradox of moral education," since it is in discussions of the paradox that Peters' treatment of 'habit' takes place. I have kept separate, however, the sections of 'habits' and "the paradox" as this latter "issue" is mildly puzzling.   It is not clear to me, in fact, whether there is a "paradox," although there are some important issues.

R. G. Oliver alleges that Peters presents not one, but four para-doxes of moral education: the Basic Paradox, the Stultification Paradox, the Brute Facts Paradox, and the Conceptual Change Paradox (Oliver, 1978).   I do not believe that Oliver establishes this many different versions in Peters; it is useful, nevertheless, to read Peters with the Oliver argument in mind.

Apparently, Peters was intrigued by Aristotle's suggestion that the things we have to learn to do, we learn by doing them: "just as men become builders by building, so men become honest by being honest." Peters, correctly or incorrectly concluded from this that habit-formation plays an important part in moral learning.   But those habituated to being honest, he says, view the act of being honest in a way different from the morally mature person.   The paradox of moral education (like the paradox of all education), he says, is this: "how can a rational level of morality emerge from a lowly level of habit-formation?" (RC33; RC71).

This question can be interpreted, of course, in at least two ways. Peters might be questioning how it is possible or conceivable that a

rational form of morality can emerge from habit-formation, that is, how a child's moral concepts (e.g., honesty) change and develop as he grows up. Or Peters could be questioning what empirical means (e.g., teaching methods and/or non-rational methods) are efficacious in getting a child to follow or obey rules, rather than just conform to them. In fact, Peters does speak of the "paradox" in both these ways: he questions how a child's concepts might develop, and he asks what methods might be used to aid this development. I believe Peters sees these two questions to be logically related to each other. I think he would say that if one could answer the question 'how do a child's moral concepts change and develop?', one might then have some inside track on what means are efficacious in bringing about that concept-change.

His "methods" interpretations of the paradox are stated in the following ways:

1. "How can a basic content for morality be provided that gives children a firm basis for moral behaviour without impeding the development of a rational form of it?" (RC72).
2. "What non-rational methods of teaching aid, or at least do not impede, the development of rationality?" (RC72).
3. "The Problem of moral education is that of how the necessary habits of behaviour and deep-rooted assumptions of the 'literature' of various forms of good activities can be acquired in a way which does not stultify the development of a rational code or the mastery of the 'language' of activities at a later stage" (RH272).

And his statements of the paradox in terms of children's conceptual abilities are put in these ways:

1. "The brute facts of child development reveal that at the most formative years of a child's development he is incapable of this form of life and impervious to the proper manner of passing it on" (RH271).
2. "Through instruction, praise and blame, reward and punishment by men who are already courageous and just, (children) can acquire action patterns which gradually become informed by a

growing understanding of what they are doing and why . . .
how then can a morality . . . firmly rooted in habit . . .
provide the appropriate basis for a more rational reflective
type of morality?" (MD316).

Peters' "resolution" of the paradox is less than satisfactory. He
claims to have solved the "theoretical" paradox of moral education by
reinterpreting 'habit' to show its compatibility with 'reason'--what
Prof. Kazepides calls a "conceptual diversion" (Kazepides, 1969, p. 179).
But Peters doesn't address the more difficult and interesting problem of
how a child's moral concepts change and develop.   Nor does he give much
attention to the question of what means likely bring about (at least do
not hinder) the development of moral autonomy (rational morality).   He
speculates on which non-cognitive means (praise and reward or punish-
ment) will aid the development of rational morality and leaves the
working out of this idea to empirical psychologists (EE274).   But he
virtually ignores the problem of how to reason with children in ways
they can understand and act on, so that their early response to reason
will develop later into more sophisticated reasoning.

On the question of the use of non-rational (non-cognitive or
"conditioning") means, Professor Coombs views the use of these means
with some skepticism.   The use of these techniques, he suggests, "puts
(educators) in a very hazardous position with regard to the so-called
paradox of moral education . . . it may involve them in the use of
immoral means to promote the ends of moral education."   Not that the
use of non-cognitive means to teach persons to do what they have
decided is right "is always immoral."   But "the person who employs non-
cognitive means bears the burden of proof.   He must show that his

particular employment of non-cognitive means is <u>not</u> manipulative and thus
not immoral." Coombs advocates that non-cognitive means be used "only
if it is true that cognitive teaching <u>cannot</u> be effective, and perhaps
not even then" (Coombs, 1976, p. 25).

Notice how Coombs' position differs from Peters' assertion that
educators must employ non-cognitive means as preparatory to and as sup-
plementary to the use of cognitive ones. Coombs does not discuss when
he thinks non-cognitive means <u>could</u> be used to teach persons, that is,
when they would be acceptable methods, but he seems suspicious of these
methods even when they are conjoined with cognitive means. Non-
cognitive means, when used alone or with cognitive ones, may be manipu-
lative and hence immoral.

The worrisome part about both positions is the assumption Peters
and Coombs make that cognitive and non-cognitive means can be clearly
distinguished from each other, an assumption which is far from true.
Peters sees some difficulty in this when he mentions giving reasons
"with a right tone of voice," but develops this no further (PC256). In
any case, presenting reasons to a child with an authoritative or threat-
ening tone of voice, or presenting reasons with smiles and praise, or
simply presenting reasons in a friendly manner are methods both
"cognitive" and "non-cognitive." These "mixed methods" are not at all
rare; they are used far more often by parents and teachers than the
"exclusive" use of either reasons or punishment/praise. It would be
enormously difficult to tell whether such mixed methods are or are not
manipulative, and even more difficult to tell whether they were immoral.
For such <u>mixed</u> methods, at any rate, Coombs' suggestion about the "burden

of proof" seems appropriate for the reason-plus-threat example, especially if an adult has an enduring disposition to threaten the child, but his suggestion is not a convincing one for the reason-plus-praise example.

* * * * * *

In Part I of this chapter, I have examined Peters' analysis of 'habit' and have found that he finds the concept compatible with 'reason.' The best way to habituate a child to behave is to provide him with reasons for action. His analysis casts some doubt on reasons he has given for inculcating habits in children: he has recommended that habits be developed <u>because</u> children cannot learn to reason at an early age. In those arguments, he strongly recommended the use of conditioning and reinforcement techniques because of his belief that children's conceptual levels were not sufficiently well-developed for them to understand reasons. There is thus an inconsistency between Peters' recommendations that habits be developed in children because they cannot reason, and his recommendations that habits be formed by the adult's use of reason-giving (rational) techniques.

II. Motives

In this section, I discuss Peters' contention that moral principles (and rules) should become an agent's motives or motives for action. We require answers to two questions before we have a clear account of what Peters intends: (1) What does the notion of a 'motive' mean for Peters? and (2) What does Peters' analysis of 'motive' contribute to our understanding of moral motivation?

A. Peters' Analysis of 'Motive'

The term 'motive,' Peters says, does not do a different explanatory job from the notion of 'his reason' or 'the reason why.'   Rather, 'motive' marks off certain sorts of reasons from others.   Motives "are a particular class of reasons, distinguished by certain logical properties."   Theories of motivation usually attempt causal interpretations of human behaviour without recognizing the logical force of the term 'motive.'   For this reason, Peters considers it important to set out the necessary features (logical properties) of the concept.

1. Motives, Justifications and Explanations

Peters considers, first, the contexts in which it is appropriate to ask for a person's motives.   We ask for a person's motives where the action is a relatively important one, and where there seems to be a departure from conventional expectations, i.e., in those cases where the man's action seems to be out of character or in those cases where his action seems not to follow any standard rule-following, purposive pattern.   Asking for a man's motive, he says, strengthens the suggestion that there was some point in what the man did, although the man's pursuit of his objective may be carried out according to no standard pattern of rules, and hence may not be clear to us (CM,29).   When we ask for a man's motive, his conduct is up for assessment: his actions have to be justified, not simply explained.   There is a suggestion that a person's motive might be a discreditable one.   We enquire of a man's motives, Peters says, when we are a little suspicious of the man's point or purpose in doing what he did.

Against Peters, Browne argues that it is wrong to say that we <u>only</u>

ask for a man's motives where there is a question of assessing his conduct--where we want justification of the man's actions. Browne argues that we can appropriately ask for a man's motives in those cases where there is not a question of justification, but only a question of explanation: in those cases where the answer to the question 'What was the man's motive in doing Y?' serves to "dispel some mystery" (e.g., What was the man's motive in giving up his legal practice just when he was becoming successful? or What was his motive in making that odd bequest in his will?). In cases such as these, Browne argues, the actions appear to stand in need of explanation--they may point to unusual events--but this does not imply that the actions call for justification. The notion of 'justification,' he reminds us, "suggests there is some reason to suppose that the action was done for some socially unacceptable reason," and this is only one context in which it is appropriate to ask for a man's motive. The word 'motive' is appropriately used, Browne insists, when we wish to (1) justify or excuse an action, (2) discredit an action, (3) mitigate an agent's guilt in performing an action, (4) praise the action, or (5) explain an action, without assessing it in any way (Browne, p. 35ff.).

Browne's objections to Peters' account are well put. Actually, Peters' comments on 'motives'--written some ten and twelve years after his initial work--suggest a change of heart. But he overstates his case in the other direction. He writes that "we only talk about motives in certain contexts . . . when we are demanding explanations of actions . . . we do not ask for motives for feeling cold, indigestion, or mystical visions" (ME109; EEm177; italics mine).

My own view is that we most often ask for a man's motive when we
suspect that a person has done something socially unacceptable--when we
feel that what the man has done stands in need of some justification.
Now as a result of asking or searching for a man's motive, we may in
fact, receive answers which serve to justify, excuse, discredit, praise,
or explain a man's action. But in asking for a man's motive, I believe
we most often expect that the action will be justified. In those cases
Browne selects ('What was the man's motive in giving up his legal prac-
tice just when he was becoming successful?' and 'What was his motive in
making that odd bequest in his will?'), we would ordinarily employ the
word 'reason' in place of 'motive,' I suggest, if we did not anticipate
that the man did something socially unacceptable. Further, we would
use the term 'motive' in those situations where we did anticipate that
he did something socially unacceptable. Browne's argument, then, does
not quite fit with my understanding of the contexts in which it is
appropriate to ask for a man's motives although I grant that we often
ask for a motive in situations which require some explanation. Browne's
main point, however, is that the concept of 'motive' is essentially
explanatory. The question of when we typically ask about motives is
not part of his analysis of the concept, but rather concerns the occa-
sions on which it is natural to want an explanation of a particular type.
Knowing why a person in fact did something is often central in determin-
ing whether he was, from his point of view, justified.

Browne is correct, I believe, to concur with Peters that we
normally ask for a man's motive when the action is a relatively important
one, and when we wish to determine the reason or set of reasons why the

man acted as he did. He is also correct to say, along with Peters, that the notion of a 'motive' loses force if we assert that we have motives for everything we do (CM,27). The term is only appropriately used with respect to certain intentional actions.

2. Motives as a Special Class of Reasons

Motives, asserts Peters, are reasons "of a directed sort." To say of a man that he acted for certain motives is to say that his action was directed towards some goal or end. The following locutions provide us with some clues that the man acted for certain motives, that his actions were directed towards some goal or end: 'He acted <u>for the sake of</u> . . . ,' 'He acted <u>in order to</u> . . . ,' 'He acted <u>for the purpose of</u> . . .' But not all reasons of a directed sort can be called motives. For even though acting on habit and acting because of certain character-traits suggest 'directedness' (and in the case of habits, a stereotyped directedness), these actions do not imply directedness towards what Peters calls particular goals or ends. Neither are all reasons for action motives, Peters suggests. We often do things for their intrinsic interest, or because a certain mood overtakes us. Whereas it seems proper for us to say in these circumstances that we act for certain reasons, it would be inappropriate to label these reasons motives. Motives are "operative reasons"--the reasons which actually move us to act in a directed fashion towards certain goals or ends.

In contrasting acting for certain motives, with acting because of certain character-traits, Peters is right to say that his account differs from Ryle's account of motives (Ryle, 1957). Ryle claims that motives imply the directedness of actions "of a dispositional sort" (CM,33).

But it makes sense, Peters argues, to say that a person acted from a certain motive, yet acting from this motive is not sufficient evidence of the person's tendency or disposition to act similarly under similar circumstances or antecedent conditions. Browne, too, takes Ryle to task for saying that to explain an action by assigning a motive is to explain the action by bringing it under the law-like hypothetical proposition that the agent is a man who tends to do the sort of thing the motive indicates: that the man's motive is the sort of thing the man would do in similar circumstances. Like Peters, Browne correctly argues that it makes sense to say that a man can act from a motive on one occasion only without this necessarily being evidence of a disposition to act in this way. In other words, a man can act out of vanity, generosity, revenge or kindness without being a vain, generous, vengeful or kind man (Browne, op. cit., 41ff.). We expect a vain man, however, to act out of (the motive) vanity at least some of the time, a generous man to act with generosity, a kind man to act kindly. Otherwise we would not ascribe character-traits to people in the way that we do.

In short, certain character-traits imply acting for motives consistent with those traits, but acting with certain motives does not necessarily imply having those particular traits of character.

Peters points out Kohlberg's failure to distinguish between traits and motives (MD313). Nowell-Smith, it seems, is another who does not make this distinction: he uses the term 'traits' and 'motives' interchangeably (Nowell-Smith, 1954, p. 22ff.).

Without singling out Peters' argument, Browne presents some objections to the notion that motives are reasons directed towards certain

goals or ends. Browne presents what might be called a taxonomy of "intentional actions": (1) actions performed for their own sake, (2) actions performed for no particular purpose (actions performed because of certain dispositions, moods, emotions, or habits), (3) actions performed as a means to some further end to be achieved by the actions, and (4) actions performed in order to do or secure something that is not a further end. His example of a category (3) action is a man who married a woman in order to get her money; an example of a category (4) action is a man killing another for revenge. Categories (3) and (4) are the only actions, Browne suggests, where we can properly speak of motives for action. The "end" or "goal" of a category (4) action is the action itself, or, as Browne puts it, "Revenge is the man's motive in killing another man . . . revenge is not some further end to be achieved by the killing of the man" (Browne, p. 58).

Alston makes somewhat the same point when he says that in specifying what motivated a person, "we are not necessarily specifying any goal he was seeking to achieve or any further purpose in the interest of which he did what he did . . . the end of the action . . . is something which exists, if at all, at the same time as A and is simply another aspect of the 'piece of behaviour' of which doing A is one aspect" (Alston, 1976b, p. 400).

Browne's and Alston's remarks are salutary bits of advice for Peters. Although Peters claims that the "ends" of the action must not be construed "merely as terminating points of activity" but as "caught up," in a sense, in the action itself (CM,6), he often forgets his own remark and speaks of the ends and goals of actions as if they were

further to the action itself.   And his frequent use of the phrase 'means

and ends' suggests that he likes to see the term 'motive' used only where

there is some further end in terms of which the action is performed

(CM,45).

3.   Motives and Reason Why Explanations

Peters contends that if we are to explain a man's actions by refer-

ence to his motives, and if these motives "are tied, logically, to the

goal or end in terms of which he directs his behaviour," the goal spec-

ification is explanatory of what the man has done.   When we offer

'reason why' explanations of persons' behaviour, there are many kinds of

explanation open to us: we can say that a man acted as he did because

he was subject to happenings (e.g., he had a brain tumour), or because

he acted habitually, or because he was in a certain mood, or because he

acted for certain reasons.   In order to specify a man's motives, we

must get at the real reasons for his action.   The reasons why he acted

as he did may or may not coincide with his (alleged) reasons.

Peters seems not to have noticed that to speak of a man's real

reasons for acting may not always be to speak of what motives led him to

act as he did.   His real reasons for acting may have been because he was

subject to happenings, or that he was in a certain mood, or (to use an

example from Freud) that he had a mother-complex.

In any case, to determine what were a man's real reasons (motives),

Peters reminds us that we must not be content simply to ask the man what

his motives were.   For a man may adduce various motives for acting--

motives which were not the real reasons.   I will not be concerned here

with the problem of determining what a man's real reasons are for doing

what he does.   Nor is this the place to develop my belief that a man's

stated reasons are fairly reliable evidence of his real reasons.   Suf-

fice it to say that in correctly assigning a motive or motives to a

person, we are faced with the task of determining which reasons were

the operative ones for him--the reasons which were responsible for his

acting in the way that he did.

In determining what <u>are</u> a person's operative reasons, we would

probably also consider <u>why</u> this reason or set of reasons has been oper-

ative for him.   What set of conditions or beliefs has led the man to

act on these reasons and not on others?   In answering this question,

Peters writes, we must resist the temptation to say that a man's oper-

ative reasons were the ones that <u>caused</u> him to perform the action.   We

should look at Peters' reasons for saying this, but before doing that,

it is appropriate to discuss briefly what Browne, Alston, Davidson and

Abelson take to be features of "operative reasons" and to make some com-

parisons with Peters.

Browne argues that to explain an action by giving the agent's

motive is to explain the action by reference to the agent's reasons for

action.   This means explaining the action "in terms of the agent's

desires and information" (Browne, p. 60).   He claims that his analysis

is in partial agreement with that of Ryle, whose notion of a reason for

action, or motive, entails that the agent has certain desires, and that

he has certain related information.   As a contrast to Ryle, however,

Browne suggests that 'the agent's desires' can be further analyzed in

terms of either 'the agent's intention' or 'the agent's desire to . . .'

As Browne puts it, "when we explain an agent's action by giving his

motive . . . we are explaining that action in terms of the agent's reasons for action; and we do this by either reporting his intention or by reporting some desire of his."   That is,

> the agent's motive is always given in, or reducible to, one of
> the forms 'He did it to ∅,' or 'He did it out of a desire to
> ∅.'   These are the factors that moved him to act in the way
> that he did . . . that were responsible for his action.   The
> agent's reason . . . is of a special kind, namely a reason of
> the agent's that indicates the objective or goal aimed at.
>   (Browne, pp. 70-72)

Davidson's notion of a "primary reason" is similar to Browne's 'motive-explanation.'   Whenever someone does something for a reason Davidson writes, "he can be characterized as (a) having some sort of pro attitude toward actions of a certain kind, and (b) believing (or knowing, perceiving, noticing or remembering) that his action is of that kind."   The "pro attitude" in (a) can be his desires, wantings, urges, promptings or a variety of moral views, aesthetic principles, economic prejudices, social conventions, or public and private goals and values "in so far as these can be interpreted as attitudes of an agent directed toward actions of a certain kind."   These "attitudes," he says, are not necessarily convictions that these actions ought to be performed;   they can be permanent character traits or a passing fancy that prompts to action.   In our statement of an agent's primary reason for acting, we can include the pro attitude or the related belief or both, Davidson says, "although it is generally otiose to mention both" (Davidson, 1963).   Davidson's explication of a primary reason roughly parallels Browne's notion of a motive: Davidson's notion of a "pro attitude" is similar to Browne's "desires," and his notion of a "related belief" is similar to Browne's "related information."

Alston suggests that to give a motivational explanation of an action is to relate it in some way to a "desire" or "want." The problem of the nature of motivation, he continues "is the problem of determining how a want can give rise to an action." Alston points out the difficulty of analyzing such wants in Rylean terms, that is, in terms of behavioural dispositions to act in certain ways under certain antecedent conditions: "the dispositional account . . . of wants as dispositions . . . will be enormously, perhaps infinitely complicated." But more important than the issue of complexity, he says, is the fact that with respect to any one action A, "the desire for x will necessarily give rise to A, in appropriate circumstances . . . only on the assumption of further conditions which are either not formulable in terms of publicly observable facts, or are indefinitely complex or both" (Alston, 1967b, p. 408).

As an alternative to the behavioural disposition theory of wants, Alston presents the following: "wants give rise to actions," he says, "by virtue of the fact that it is a lawful generalization that given a desire for S and a belief that doing A is (or will lead to) bringing about S, there will be a tendency to do A, whether or not the agent actually does A being further dependent on what other action tendencies simultaneously exist, as well as on whether factors preventing any action at all are present." He wants his analysis to rest on some middle ground between the view that the motive or operative reason necessarily gives rise to some action, and the view that there may be factors which intervene between desiring the action and actually carrying it out.

A view similar to Alston's is put forward by Abelson in his attempt to clarify what it means to say there is a "logical bond" between motives and action. He says that "it is just plain silly" to say that this logical bond must be the relation of unrestricted entailment—that a motive for doing A must entail that the agent actually does A." The "true bond," according to Abelson, "is that of contextually limited entailment between motive and act." Assume, he says, that Jones wants, intends, desires or in some sense has a motive to do something. "What does this entail about what he will do?" It entails that he will do the action "provided no reason arises for his not doing so and provided nothing prevents him." He concludes that "a motive is indeed logically connected to an action, and not just through the way that it happens to be described, and not just to the concept of the action, but to its actual performance" (Abelson, p. 40). This amounts, I believe, to the assertion that a man will do what he has reason to do unless he has any reasons to the contrary.

Peters does not analyze these issues in the Davidson/Browne or Abelson styles; he merely states that there is a logical connection between motives and "doing" (EEm177; ME109). He makes an attempt to decipher the connection between 'motives' and 'wanting.' He says that we must understand the concept 'motive' to be conceptually connected with the notion of 'wanting,' not with 'wishing,' since 'wanting' implies "determinate ends" while wishing does not (ME112; CM63). Other than this, he offers no substantive remarks.

4. Motives as Causes

Peters says that he understands why some persons speak of a person's operative reasons (motives) in terms of causes. There is, he admits, some connection between the directedness of an action and "some inner springs" in the individual. Motives or operative reasons seem to act like "emotively charged reasons": the directedness of the action "appears to be set off by an emotional state." But to insist on a necessary connection between motives and emotional states which may give rise to motives, and to say this connection is a causal one, "is to confuse what is a logical point about motives with the postulations of antecedent states of emotion which initiates the directed behaviour" (CM,37). Psychologists concentrating on "drives" and "reaction tendencies" have frequently committed the error of supposing that motives are equivalent to these kinds of goal-directedness.

Motives "lie somewhere between reasons and cause," Peters suggests. "They refer to the goal towards which behaviour is directed but also to emotional states which set it off." And for many motives, of course, it is not obvious that an emotion-state initiated the directed action.

In these passages and in those previously quoted, Peters hesitates to call the reasons which get a person to act, the _causes_ of the person's action. In this he differs from Wilson, who claims without hesitation and without analysis, that reasons cause actions (Wilson, 1972). Browne's conclusion that desires (hence reasons and motives), cannot be causes is based on a much more solid analysis than Abelson's. Browne and Abelson, however, both share Peters' reluctance concerning this particular designation of the term "cause." Davidson, by contrast,

argues that <u>because</u> we talk of reasons as primary or operative ones--those reasons which move a person to act--we should, in consistency, see these reasons as the causes of actions. Clearly, Davidson interprets the notion of "cause" much more broadly than does Peters, who prefers to restrict the term to discussions of "mechanistic" or "physicalist" principles: principles which might be explanatory of, for example, neurons firing in the brain.

It is understandable why Peters would not want to analyze "reasons for acting" or "motives" in terms of causes, since his entire anti-behaviouristic program was geared to finding some alternative to the causal (mechanistic) account of human behaviour. But we know that he must believe reasons to be efficacious, in <u>some</u> sense, in the bringing about of certain behaviour; otherwise his writing on action and reasons for action would be unintelligible. Our belief that reasons are <u>responsible</u> in some sense for actions should not lead us to conclude that reasons can be causes. But it should lead us to regard Peters' statements that reasons and motives cannot be causes as conjecture since he doesn't seriously consider any alternative account of "cause."

In summary, Peters' analysis of the concept 'motive' stands up reasonably well. The features he selects as characteristic of 'motive' are quite sound. 'Motive' is used in contexts where conduct is being assessed, and where there is a breakdown in conventional expectations. The term is used to refer to a reason of a directed sort. And it states the reason why a person acts, a reason that is operative in the situation to be explained. The motive may coincide with a person's stated reason for acting, but it must be <u>the</u> reason why he acts.

On the other hand, Peters' analysis of 'motive' displays a certain sloppiness in his treatment of the goal or end towards which the motivated behaviour is directed. He pays little attention to the conditions (beliefs of the agent) which make a reason an operative one, and he only glances at the claim that reasons are the causes of actions.

B. Peters' Account of Moral Motivation

Having answered the first question raised at the beginning of this section, namely, 'What does the notion of a "motive" mean for Peters?', I now turn to the second one: 'What does Peters' analysis of "motive" contribute to our understanding of moral motivation?'

1. Moral Motives

Writing on his "aspects (facets) of the moral life," Peters repeatedly points to the importance of developing the right motives. He takes his cue from Hume who said that there must be "some motive to produce right actions, as distinct from a sense of the action's morality" (RC20,99; ML377). Peters refers to the development of desirable motives as an "important level of life" (RC91). He also calls desirable motives "goals of life," goals which "point to purposes not confined to particular activities or roles" (RC17; CP289,300). His examples of motives in the moral life are a curious lot: ambition, benevolence, envy, jealousy, greed, love and respect (RC17,23,28). This list includes examples of "vices" and "virtues" and motives like ambition which are not easily classifiable as either. He surely intends only virtuous motives to be necessary to being moral. I suggest, therefore, that we view his list simply as examples of motives, rather than as examples of motives necessary to the moral life.

The motives or principles of benevolence, respect for persons and justice, Peters believes, must "become operative" in a person's life. These motives he calls "rational passions"; they derive from non-neutral appraisals of a situation. These principles (motives) must become a person's own; they must actually "move him to act" (CP295).

2. Appraisals

Let us look more closely at this "non-neutral appraisal" of which Peters speaks. There are two reasons for doing so: to see if Peters' notion of an appraisal contributes to his explication of an "operative reason," and to see what distinction Peters makes between motives and emotions, which latter topic is the subject of discussion in the concluding section of this chapter.

Motives and emotions, Peters says, "relate to our feelings and are intimately related to our cognition--our ways of understanding situations." The feeling is inseparable from the cognition, he says. What this means is that "we could not identify such feelings without reference to the understanding of the situations which evoke them" (LE49; RC80). The feeling aspect of these states of mind pick out features which are of importance to us (RC80,87; ME110; LE49; RP162). There is, he says, "a movement of the mind towards or away from the object or situation in respect of the way in which it is characterized" (EE112). These features "are sources of pain and pleasure, harm and benefit."

He calls these feeling/cognition states "appraisals," or frequently "non-neutral appraisals." He says that he would have used the term 'judgment' instead of 'appraisal,' if it had merely been a matter of judging devoid of the feeling aspect (LE49).

Motives, he believes, derive from "non-neutral appraisals" and are intimately connected with what we do. This does not mean that the person who acts for particular motives "is necessarily subject to strong feelings or is in a turbulent state." But there must be something in common, he suggests, "between being moved to act and being subject to feelings" (RP157). When a person acts out of envy or jealousy, "his non-neutral thoughts about someone having something that he wants become connected with a variety of action patterns, the purpose of which is to remedy the situation in some way" (RC80).

Emotions, likewise, "derive from non-neutral appraisals." When these thoughts are connected with "things that come over a man, which may get him into a state or affect his perception, judgment and manner of acting," we speak of this man as being subject to or assailed by (a particular) emotion. Emotions, Peters says, "are passive phenomena" (ECP; EPss; RC80,87; EEm; EE110). A person is subject to—that is passive in the face of—the emotion jealousy or the emotion envy if he sees situations in a certain light without doing anything about these feelings.

In addition to motives and emotions, Peters continues, there are appraisals not connected with things that we do or with things that come over us: "there are appraisals that function as motives and as emotions . . . which do not necessarily lead to action or even tendencies to action" (ME112). In the case of remorse or regret, he says, "we simply view a situation under the aspect connected with the appraisal" (ME110).

3. Educating the Motives

It makes sense, he says, to speak of educating the motives and the emotions because of their "intimate relation to cognition" (EE32; EI93). Although motive/appraisals and emotion/appraisals can be, and often are, irrational or unreasonable, both can be influenced by or controlled by reason (RC84ff.). That is, we can make and can learn to make appropriate appraisals about persons and situations. He offers little meat, however, on what are appropriate appraisals for the various motives and emotions, claiming only that learning to make appropriate appraisals is a necessary part of one's moral education.

Peters' writing on "appraisals," as it stands, is relatively uncontroversial. He is correct to say that both motives and emotions are based on forms of cognition--on beliefs. These beliefs reflect what is of importance to the believer; hence the beliefs are often accompanied by heightened feelings. Peters' views here are surely an advance over those which display ignorance of the belief or cognitive element of both motives and emotions. He objects to those empirical studies of the emotions which interpret emotions solely in terms of the facial expressions or changes in the autonomic nervous system that frequently accompany "emotional reactions." Peters correctly reminds us that a man who acts out of jealousy acts because of his belief that someone is taking liberties with another to whom he thinks he has a special relationship, and that a man who acts out of envy acts because of his belief that someone has something to which he feels he is entitled.

4. Moral Motives and Moral Motivation

The reader who searches through Peters' writing for comment on the "motive/appraisals" peculiar to the moral motives of respect, benevolence and justice will come up with little. Peters offers next to no analysis of the beliefs the moral agent must have, or the feelings which should accompany these beliefs in order that moral concerns are, for the agent, genuinely motivating.

As I have said in Chapter 3 (pp. 93ff.), Peters believes the development of the imagination is important in furthering the motives of compassion and concern for others, but he conducts no analysis of imagination and presents only a few leads for educators wishing to develop this ability in others. If this "imaginative ability" can be roughly translated into perceiving what the effects of one's actions on others will be, such perception (imaginative ability) is no doubt necessary but not sufficient for an agent to be motivated by moral concerns. One must be disposed as well to act on the information one has about other persons--the information gained via the imaginative enterprise (perception). As many have said, including Peters, perceiving the effects of one's actions on another does not necessarily result in moral concern for others. Put into the language of "wanting" and "desires" in terms of which Browne, Alston, Davidson, and Abelson write, and about which Peters makes a few remarks, the agent who is motivated by moral concerns must want that others' wants or desires (interests) be fulfilled, at least not impeded, as much as he wants his own wants or desires to be fulfilled or at least not impeded. And he must act on those wants. Again, in the parlance of many moral educators like Wilson, an agent, to

be moral must be committed to considering others' interests impartially with his own. This commitment must be "borne out" in action. On some occasions, indeed in many, such a commitment may require the agent to put aside his own wants or interests so that others' pursuit of their wants will not be impeded.

To be motivated by moral concerns, then, the agent must view others as the same, in some sense, as himself; a commitment to equality seems basic to being moral. But what is this "viewing" of others as the same as oneself? And how is an acknowledgement that others are in some sense the same as oneself of motivating interest to the moral agent?

Much of what Peters and others have said bears repeating here. As an empirical statement, the notion that we are "all the same" can be easily disconfirmed (Williams, 1969; Komisar & Coombs, 1964). The similarity the moral agent sees between himself and others, presumably, is based on other grounds, on features of himself and others which have some normative or moral claim, for example that the agent and these others all have rights. These morally relevant criteria provide the deliberating moral agent with grounds--reasons--for acting towards other human beings in certain ways and not in others.

Nagel suggests that for an agent to see a reason as a reason for action "is to see that reason as possessing motivational content." For an agent "to be led by certain reasons . . . is to accept those reasons as a justification for doing or wanting that which it is judged one should do or want" (Nagel, p. 65).

But motivational content, Nagel writes, is not motivational efficacy. It is an undeniable fact, he says, "that someone may acknowledge

a reason for action and fail to act." There are many ways "the effects
of a reason" may be blocked. First, a reason for acting may be blocked
by a countervailing reason or reasons; in this case we call the first
reason for acting a _prima facie_ reason. The countervailing reasons hold
the motivational content.

But these countervailing or sufficient reasons for action, although
possessing motivational content, may not have motivational efficacy for
the agent. The agent may only be paying lip service to the view that
these reasons are reasons for him. And there may be other causes of
the failure to act on sufficient reason. "Weakness of the will, coward-
ice, laziness, panic are all failures of this type, and each represents a
subtle variety of motivational interference." But the fact that approp-
riate action or desire may be prevented in these ways, Nagel says, "does
not cast doubt on the claim that a judgment of practical reason does
possess motivational weight." Nagel then formulates a "description of
the motivational component" of reasons for action:

> The belief that a reason provides me with sufficient justifica-
> tion for a present course of action does not necessarily imply
> a desire or a willingness to undertake that action; it is not
> a sufficient condition of the act or desire. But it is suffic-
> ient, in the absence of contrary influences, to explain the
> appropriate action, or the desire or willingness to perform it.
> (Nagel, p. 67)

In assembling Peters' thoughts on the motivational content and the
motivational efficacy of reasons for action, we do not find an account
which differs substantially from this portion of Nagel's account.
Nevertheless, it is clear that Nagel addresses the question of motivation
more directly than does Peters, whose account is quite scattered and
hence loses much of its force. Peters speaks, rather vaguely, as I have

said, of a "logical connection" between motives and action: he too under-
stands that reasons serve as motives of agents' actions. He realizes as
well that many factors can and do prevent the agent from acting on what
he may believe to be a justifiable reason for acting. In the next
chapter, in fact, we will look at Peters' contention that 'virtues of the
will' are necessary to get the agent to carry out in practice what he has
deemed to be a course of action supported by good reason.

Peters devotes no attention at all to the question whether moral
rules and principles can or cannot be motivations for acting; he simply
assumes they can be. As well, he might have clarified his understanding
of moral motivation by considering the sense in which moral principles
have the "directedness" he thinks is characteristic of motives.

We may already safely conclude that Peters gives inadequate atten-
tion to the notion of a prima facie reason for action and sufficient
(countervailing) reasons for action. Recall here the critical remarks
we made in Chapter 3: there we revealed Peters' failure to deal ade-
quately with the notion of "conflict of principle," and his attendant
failure to explore the notion of justifying decisions made when two
principles (reasons) conflict.

* * * * * *

In Part II of this chapter, I have looked at Peters' analysis of a
motive in order to see what light it sheds on his notion of moral moti-
vation. Although there does not seem to be any inconsistency between
his earlier work on 'motives' and his later work on 'moral motives,' he
does not draw on his own earlier work to make clear what he means when

he talks of moral motivation.   Of those three features of a 'motive' which he set out: motives as operative reasons, motives as directed towards goals, and motives as explanations and justifications, it is the second feature--the goal-directedness--which stands in need of reinterpretation for the notion of moral motives.   For it is not clear what Peters would mean if he said that persons who act for _moral_ motives have directed their actions towards certain goals.   And it is not clear how this "directedness" differs from the "directedness" suggested by 'acting habitually.'

III. Emotions

In Chapter 2, I pointed to a difficulty in Peters' account of morality concerning the interplay between reason and feeling.   As I mentioned there, Peters periodically interprets 'reason' in morals in the way Hume did: reason can discover what is true or false, but reason ("by itself") cannot move one to act.   At the same time, he asserts that "we must abandon the contrast between reason as an inert capacity and passions which move us to act" (RP160; EE314).

He frequently says that the ability to reason about moral matters must be "supplemented" by an ability to experience compassion or concern for others.   But section II of this chapter showed that Peters does believe moral reasoning can move one to act: if reasons become a person's motives, if reasons "become personalized, become one's own," then reason will lead to action in accordance with those reasons.   This "lead to" does not mean an _entailment_ between having particular motives and acting on them; Peters admits that there may be interfering factors between

having a motive and acting on that motive. But he does speak of a "close conceptual connection" between motives and "doing." One gathers, then, that on Peters' account, if an agent is motivated to do certain things, he will in fact do those things barring any tendencies (e.g., reasons) against doing them. To reason in morals, then, is to be "moved" by certain considerations: the considerations of harm and benefit to other persons. Peters expects that his notion of a motive-appraisal will capture the double-sided notion of being aware of and caring about those circumstances in which others are harmed and helped. He therefore insists that fostering in others the motive-appraisals of benevolence, respect and justice is an important part, perhaps the most important part of a person's moral education.

In this last section, I fill out Peters' picture of the conceptual connection he sees between 'reason' and 'feeling' by attending to his treatment of the emotions and their "place" in the moral life. To clarify his understanding of the concept 'emotion,' I add some details to the account of emotion-appraisals begun in the previous section, then assess Peters' remarks on the importance of such emotion-appraisals to moral judgment and action.

A. Emotion-appraisals

Fear and anger, Peters writes, are the emotions which have drawn the most attention from behavioural researchers (B63; EEm; ME109). No doubt this is because these emotions, more than some others, are accompanied by noticeable changes in "visceral reactions" and changes in the autonomic nervous system. There are, of course, many more emotions which invite examination: joy, sorrow, jealousy, envy, pride, wonder,

shame, guilt and remorse.   These emotions, as well as fear and anger, "consist in seeing situations under aspects that are agreeable or dis-agreeable, beneficial or harmful in a variety of dimensions."   There is, says Peters, a connection between emotions and a class of cognitions called 'appraisals':

> Fear is conceptually connected with seeing a situation as
> dangerous, envy with seeing it as thwarting, pride with
> seeing something as ours or as something that we have had
> a hand in bringing about.
>
> (ME105; EE32)

For the various emotions, "something comes over people or happens to them when they consider a situation in a certain kind of light"; Peters' term for this is "passivity."   There is no conceptual connec-tion, Peters maintains, between emotion and action.   But if an agent sees something in a certain light and it becomes connected with what he does, the appraisal becomes a motive-appraisal.   There can also be a strong de facto connection between emotions and action: emotions can "disrupt, heighten and intensify motor performances."   Emotions, he maintains, can affect the manner in which a person acts, rather than his reason or motive for so acting.   The person's manner of acting "is affected by the person's consideration of aspects of the situation." A person's emotions, in other words, "can speed a person on his way or can deflect him from his path."   Such appraisals can function, then, as motives and emotions at the same time.

In addition, there can be and often is, a de facto relationship between perception, memory and judgment on the one hand and emotion on the other.   In such cases, Peters writes, the emotion-appraisal "acts on the person so as to cloud or distort, or heighten or sharpen the

assessment that he is making." The appraisal "takes the attention away from or clouds over the relevant features of the situation," 'relevance' here being defined in terms of "whatever criteria are involved in the type of judgment that is being made." The emotion can as well "go along with the criteria of relevance," and can serve to enhance or sharpen the judgment (ME112; PC259).

People often speak of the emotions and the emotional states or reactions of persons as unreasonable or irrational, he says, and they frequently are (RP160). But to speak of them in these ways suggests, also, that we can speak of them as reasonable or rational: standards of "appropriateness" can be reached. To say that an emotional reaction is irrational, Peters says, is to say that the person experiencing the emotion has no grounds for feeling the way that he does; to say an emotional reaction is unreasonable is to say that there are some grounds, but not sufficiently good grounds, for his feeling that way. In spite of the fact that we can speak of emotions as "rational" or "reasonable," there is, nevertheless, a tendency for emotion-appraisals to be "unreasonable" or "irrational." The appraisals "are often made rather intuitively and urgently, with little careful analysis of the grounds for making them" (RP160; RC85,94; ME110).*

Peters points out that appraisals connected with both motives and emotions "are very closely connected with a form of social life into which we have been initiated . . . in which we view ourselves and others in a certain light" (PU401). The emotions jealousy, envy, pride,

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*See also (Dearden, p. 83).

ambition, guilt and remorse all presuppose social concepts such as 'rights,' 'claims,' 'possession' and so on. Other cultures may not have the same interpretation of these concepts as we do. This remark serves to point out in another way, Peters' belief about our passivity in the face of many of our emotion-appraisals: the milieu in which we were raised is in large part responsible for our beliefs. Some of these emotion-appraisals are unreasonable, some irrational, others reasonable or rational. To develop the appropriate appraisals—the ones "rationally" based—is often a difficult undertaking, because we have learned to react or have been conditioned to react in stereotyped ways. And, says Hirst, "emotional response is not infrequently the outcome of certain dispositions to believe what in fact we know to be irrational or unreasonable" (Hirst, p. 68). To go against irrational or unreasonable emotions then, may be to go against the grain of a particular cultural trait and our own perverse tendencies. There may be limits, Peters suggests, as to how much a person can re-learn appraisals. Behavioural research, he recommends, is important in helping to determine what these limits are.

B. Comments on Peters' Analysis of 'Emotion'

Peters' analysis of the concept 'emotion' in terms of an appraisal or evaluative feature is similar to other philosophers' analyses of 'emotion.' Dearden writes that emotions have an "inner, feeling side to them" but are also "linked to objects and states of affairs which are seen in a certain evaluative light" (Dearden, p. 80ff.). Hirst says that all emotions are necessarily tied to beliefs, "for what makes an emotional experience what it is is dependent on some understanding,

appraisal or belief about the significance of the situation for the person himself. To fear, hate or love is only possible as a result of some self-referring grasp of the state of affairs" (Hirst, p. 68).

Alston, on the other hand, considered it important to point out the insufficiency of the evaluational theory of the emotions (Alston, 1967a, p. 479). He begins by listing what various people would take to be typical features of emotion-states: (1) the cognition of something (evaluation) as in some way desirable or undesirable, (2) feelings of certain kinds, (3) marked bodily sensations of certain kinds, (4) involuntary bodily processes and overt expressions of certain kinds, (5) tendencies to act in certain ways. "Theories of emotion," he says, "differ as to which of these constitute the emotion and which features are causes, effects or concomitants of the emotion."

After arguing that none of features (2) to (5) are essential to all emotion-states (e.g., fear, anger, jealousy, envy, shame, etc.), Alston addresses the question whether feature (1), the cognition or evaluation of something, is the common, that is, necessary feature of all emotions.

We do distinguish between shame and embarrassment, he says, "by reference to how the subject perceives the object of the emotion. Shame, for example, takes the object to be something which is his fault . . . such evaluations can obviously be judged as more or less reasonable, realistic, or justified." Even though we can argue that the presence of such evaluations seems to be what makes bodily states and sensations emotional, nevertheless, he says, we cannot identify emotions with evaluations alone. "An evaluation can be either emotional or

unemotional; two persons can see a situation as equally dangerous yet one can be much more frightened than the other--the degree of fright can vary without a variation in the perceptual evaluation." As well, evaluations are central not only to emotions, but to attitudes like love and hate, dispositions like desire and aversion, and qualities of character like benevolence and courage. Hence, he concludes it is necessary to see emotions as evaluations (appraisals), to which may be added any of (2) to (5): feelings, bodily sensations and/or tendencies to act in certain ways.

Alston presents a straw-man argument. He sets it up in such a way as to suggest that features (1) to (5) could somehow be considered as the one necessary feature of all paradigmatic emotions, then argues that (1) the cognition or evaluation, in the end, must be conjoined with some other feature so as to distinguish emotion-evaluations from the evaluations peculiar to attitudes, dispositions and qualities of character. But it would be odd for anyone to suggest that (1) was the only necessary condition of an emotion; most people would maintain that some feeling, or some tendency, or some bodily upset, accompanied cognitions peculiar to the various emotions. Peters' notion of an appraisal seems to capture the sense of believing something, and being affected in some way by the belief.

Moreover, Alston's remark that some persons feel things more strongly than others, does not count against his argument that "evaluations" alone could not provide the only necessary condition of an emotion. It does point out that some persons' evaluations or appraisals are based on stronger beliefs than those of another appraiser. But the

variation in the strength of feeling says nothing about whether we should

or should not consider the evaluative component to be the only necessary

condition of an emotion.

Against those who argue that not all emotions involve an evaluation

of something (an "object"), Alston correctly points out, however, that

the so-called "objectless emotions" (nameless dread, vague apprehension

or anxiety and general irritation) are not central or paradigm cases of

emotion; hence analysis of them should wait until we are clear about

the evaluation-objects of the central cases.   Abelson agrees that

emotions like "vague anxiety" are not central cases of emotions, but

says that we might just view these emotions to be directed toward

indefinite rather than definite objects (Abelson, p. 57ff.).

Thus far, we have seen that Peters' analysis of an 'emotion'

attends exclusively to the 'appraisal element' of emotions: believing

certain things and being affected by them in some way.   Emotion-

appraisals are cognitions which have to do with what the appraiser

believes is of value: emotions affect him in some way.   As we will see

in this next section, Peters' notion of an emotion-appraisal is useful

when we speak of the emotions of others who may be affected by the

agent's actions and when we speak of the agent's own moral emotion-

appraisals.

C. Peters, Emotions and Morality

A consideration of the role emotions play in moral judgment and

action can lead in two rather obvious directions, both of which elicit

a few comments from Peters.   The first direction considers what knowledge

of other persons a moral agent should have to make well-founded

judgments; the second considers what knowledge a moral agent should have of himself in order to know and act on the judgments he makes. The first direction, considering what knowledge moral agents should have of others, can again be divided into two related categories: (a) general knowledge of persons and (b) knowledge of particular persons. The second direction, considering what knowledge moral agents should have of themselves, can be divided into (c) self-awareness of enabling and inhibiting emotion-appraisals, and (d) emotion-appraisals like shame, guilt, remorse, indignation and resentment—the so-called "moral emotions." All of these categories suggest areas of concern for educators wanting to improve the moral competencies of people.

Regarding the knowledge of other persons which is essential to a moral agent's judgment and action, I will give some indication of the sorts of things Peters intends. If we put aside, once again, Peters' view than an agent's own self-development or self-perfection is a matter of moral concern, and concentrate instead on what he takes to be the main thrust of morality—the avoidance and prevention of harm to others—it follows, logically, that the agent's ability and disposition to avoid harm to others must be due, in part at least, to the agent's knowledge of others' states and conditions. In consistency with his general viewpoint about morality, then, Peters must hold that, to be moral, agents should have a goodly amount of knowledge about the recipients or prospective recipients of the agents' actions.

I have taken the liberty of dividing such knowledge into two categories, although it is not clear that Peters would separate them in this way. I have done this because it seems clear to me that the

decisions moral agents must make and act on are generally of two kinds:
those for which we have little opportunity to know in great detail or
with any detail at all, the particular feelings, interests, desires,
wants or beliefs of persons who may be affected by actions we take, and
on the other hand, those for which we "take into account" the feelings,
interests, desires, wants and beliefs of particular persons (this does
not rule out knowing what are general features of persons, but could
probably be considered a sub-set of general knowledge about persons).

When I say general knowledge about persons to be affected by
agents' decisions and actions, I mean knowledge (beliefs) about what
persons are likely to feel or do, or what they would feel or do in
certain circumstances if, for example, their wants or interests are
ignored or deliberately violated in some way. Examples of this would
be the decisions moral agents must make regarding foreign aggression in
Vietnam, or, closer to home, decisions about local government policies
affecting various groups of the population: East and native Indians,
heroin addicts, the elderly, religious cultists, the unemployed. The
competent moral agent making well-founded moral decisions on these cases
must have, not only some sense, but a clear sense of how persons are
likely to feel if certain governmental decisions are taken and acted
upon. Another way of saying this, I believe, is to say that having the
concept of these others as persons is, at the least, to know what things
will bring these persons unhappiness and unnecessary pain: those actions
which promote not justice, but injustice.

In a moral agent's personal relations, as well, he must not only be
aware of what other persons' feelings are likely to be--what persons

generally might feel--but also what particular desires and aversions persons have with whom he comes in contact: in his relationships with the opposite sex, with his children, and at his work and leisure.

Certainly a great part of this knowledge of persons in the agent's daily life and in his resolution of moral problems, is knowledge gained via or simply is knowledge of these persons' emotion-states. As Peters and Hirst both say, the existence of emotional responses is a very effective indicator of the existence within persons of certain beliefs or attitudes (Hirst, p. 68). Abelson, in essential agreement with Peters and Hirst, puts it this way:

> To attribute an emotion like anger, love or jealousy . . . to another is to explain his present and likely future actions in terms of the way he envisions his situation, the way he interprets his bodily agitations (if any), the goals he pursues, the relative values he places on those goals, and the rules of action that, for him, link means and ends. In brief, ascribing an emotion to a person is short-hand for an extraordinary amount of information about him, which may help explain why adequate psychological understanding is so difficult to achieve.
>
> (Abelson, p. 60)

It is not clear, however, to what extent (how) the competent moral agent must consider or take into account the emotion-states or likely emotion-states of persons with whom he has close contact or who may be affected "from afar" by the agent's actions. This uncertainty is further compounded when we realize that many persons' emotion-appraisals are unreasonably or irrationally held. Does the agent's knowledge of other persons, gained via the recognition of their emotion-states or via imagining their probable feelings, present him with a _prima facie_ reason, or a sufficient reason, or no reason at all perhaps, for deciding what to do one way or another? It is difficult, of course, to

answer this question apart from analyses of particular cases. But as

well, Peters must provide a more comprehensive moral theory than he does

in order to answer these questions and analyze particular cases.

Certainly it is not clear what knowing other persons' emotion-states

actually _says_ to the moral agent who wants to know what he should do.

Peters does not enter this debate--he does not say in what way knowledge

of other persons' emotions is relevant to moral decision-making; he

simply says this knowledge is relevant.

It seems easier, on the other hand, to see the relevance of the

moral agent's knowledge of his _own_ emotion-appraisals to his moral delib-

eration and action, although there are problems here too which Peters

leaves largely unattended. There are all sorts of cases, says Peters,

where a person judges something to be the right course of action, but

fails to carry it out "because he gets side-tracked by emotions like

fear, or hesitates because of jealousy" (EE32; PC259; also Hirst, p. 68).

If a moral agent knows that he is envious, or jealous, or angry, or

proud--if he can correctly identify his own emotion-states--and if he

knows that these feelings are due to particular cognitions or beliefs he

holds, it is conceivable that he could "do something about" those ones

he may conclude are unreasonably or irrationally held. He could try to

assess the adequacy of the grounds for feeling in the way that he does;

he could attempt to "eradicate false beliefs" and in so doing modify his

appraisals (RC100; EEm). He could attempt, in short, the education of

his own emotions (Hirst, _op. cit._, p. 13).

Actually, Peters does not hold out much hope that such education

of one's emotion-states will proceed by self-examination, for "the

determination to examine the facts of the matter, to base our appraisals
on well-grounded beliefs, is not a disposition that comes naturally to
most men" (EEm). And he states this even more strongly: the emotions
jealousy, anger, envy, pride (what he calls the 'self-referential emo-
tions'), are "extremely unamenable to education." Perhaps the only way of
changing irrationally or unreasonably held emotions into rational emo-
tions "is by encouraging the 'self-transcending emotions': love, awe,
a sense of justice and respect" (DR135; EEm189). These emotions enable
a person to act on what he knows or judges to be right; these, he says,
are the emotions which must function as a person's motives.

Peters does not say how these emotions enable a person to act on
what he judges to be right. And certainly, with respect to awe, at any
rate, it is not at all clear how this could be so.

Peters is probably right to say that most people would not find it
easy to re-appraise the beliefs upon which their emotion-states are
based. But it is not only because this is a "disposition" unnatural to
men; it is also because it is often quite confusing to people what is
and what is not a 'rationally-held' emotion-appraisal. Peters does not
examine what are appropriate or correct emotion-appraisals. I concur
with Williams when he says that this is one issue which "cries out for
examination":

> What should be feared or hoped for . . . is obviously, to some
> extent, a matter in which disagreements of value between soci-
> eties and individuals come out. Equally this is a central
> matter of moral education. If such education does not revolve
> round such issues as to what to fear, what to be angry about,
> what--if anything--to despise, where to draw the line between
> kindness and a stupid sentimentality--I do not know what it is.
> (Williams, 1965, p.20)

Unless an agent can decide when he should be angry or when he should have feelings of "love, awe, and respect," it makes little sense for Peters to recommend that the impact of one's self-referential emotions be lessened by the encouragement of the self-transcending emotions of love, awe and respect.

Of course, Peters makes the distinction between anger as a 'self-referential emotion' and moral anger or indignation. The latter, like the other moral emotions of shame, guilt, remorse, resentment, give the agent some indication of the rules and principles he holds. These emotions, too, must be based on appropriate appraisals and should come to function as an agent's motives:

> To writhe with sympathy, to fume with moral indignation, to squirm with guilt or shame, (are) more desirable than to be incapable of such feelings. But it is surely more desirable still that these appraisals should function as motives for doing whatever is appropriate. This is particularly important in the context of dealing with tendencies to action which issue from undesirable motives such as envy, hatred and lust.
>
> (EEm189)

Guilt, he says, may be due to our fear of punishment or our anticipation of disapproval from someone we view as an authority. On the other hand guilt may be experienced when we have internalized some moral rules and principles; it is this guilt which is the more desirable kind (DR147; EEm184; PC260).* Guilt of this second type, and the other moral emotions of shame, indignation and remorse provide at least _prima facie_ reasons for acting in particular ways and not in others. The trick is to know when one's anger or indignation originates with rationally-held _moral_ beliefs, and when one's anger is due only to one's

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*On this, see (Hirst, _op. cit._, p. 68).

beliefs about what should or should not have happened to oneself. Peters' discussion of the emotions and the moral emotions sets the stage for a consideration of this topic, but he leaves it to the reader to sort out when an emotion is a moral emotion, and when that moral emotion provides a prima facie or sufficient reason for acting.

Finally, in Peters' treatment of the moral emotions, he expresses agreement with Rawls' thesis that the moral feelings of shame, remorse and guilt are necessarily connected with the "natural attitudes" of self-esteem, compassion and love. Feeling shame depends upon a developed sense of one's own self-esteem; love is exhibited in a tendency to feel guilt or remorse in certain circumstances. A child's self-esteem and ability to love, Peters maintains, "which lays the foundations for the later development of (his) guilt and remorse when moral concepts are introduced," are established early on in a "right relationship" with the mother (PC259,61). Regrettably, Peters gives no attention to the influential role the father does, or could play in helping to maintain both the mother's and the child's sense of self-esteem and "ability" to love.

* * * * * *

In Part III of this chapter, I have looked at Peters' analysis of the concept 'emotion,' and the role he sees for the emotions in the moral life. A key feature of his concept of an 'emotion' is the 'appraisal' or belief of the person who has the emotion-appraisal. When he speaks of educating the emotions as an essential task of moral educa-tion, he says that many of these appraisals or beliefs cannot be changed

or re-learned.   Nevertheless the impact of the inhibiting emotions might be lessened by encouraging other "positive" appraisals or beliefs.   He avoids saying, however, what beliefs or appraisals persons should make if they are to be morally educated: that is what they should feel guilty about, or angry about or indignant over.

CHAPTER 5

Character and Virtues

  Virtues connected with the will--for example,
  courage, integrity and perseverance--are con-
  nected with rationality, with consistency and
  with the maxim that to will the end is to will
  the means.
                   (RC28-9)

  The purpose of this chapter is to determine to what extent the

notions "virtue" and "character" add to or clarify Peters' account of

moral judgment and action. Do these notions provide a unifying theme

for the picture he presents? Is his sense of "character" consistent

with his other views? Perhaps more importantly, do his notions of

"virtues" and "character" provide cues to the moral educator whose

tasks are, first, to enlarge peoples' understanding of moral matters,

and second, to help dispose them to act on the judgments they make?

I. "Virtue" and Virtues

  "Virtue" is an unfashionable term these days: it suggests rigid

adherence to narrow social expectations. We have come to associate the

term either with certain historical times--the reign of Queen Victoria

for instance--or with religious/theological positions, in which partic-

ular behavioural codes having to do with sexual conduct or personal

piety were or are recommended and in some degree enforced.

  Victorians, for example, thought men and women "good and virtuous"

if they acted in accordance with standards all good ladies and gentlemen

would accept. "Vice" was used to signify the falling away of men and women from those standards. For women especially, the terms "virtue" and "vice" were used to evaluate their sexual conduct. Vices were evil, virtues good--with little room between the two extremes.

An etymological examination of the terms "virtue" and "vice" would no doubt be interesting, as would historical accounts of their current narrow interpretation in our language. This, of course, is not essential here. What we can do, however, is to see how far Peters' use of the term "virtue" and his encouragement of particular virtues is based on, or is at least consistent with his view of moral conduct.

Given Peters' claim that his view of morality differs from a view based on particular codes of conduct (see Chapter 2), it is rather ironic that he would choose to use the term "virtue" at all. His use of this term suggests that he may have adopted those presuppositions about moral conduct against which he has set his own "rational" view of morality. The question should at least be asked whether the virtues Peters selects have a rational foundation, regardless of the status of the term "virtue" in our language.

Of course Peters may just be using "virtue" as a technical term to indicate what he thinks are praiseworthy acts and dispositions. But if this is so, the term does not seem to do any _special_ job in his account of morality. He simply believes that there _is_ a good rationale for encouraging those behaviours he calls virtues; he implies that the reasons for promoting these virtues differ from reasons given by those who demand adherence to specific codes of conduct.

Part of my task, of course, is to assess whether his grounds for

promoting these virtues--particularly the self-control virtues--are coherent and rational. We must also look at Peters' notion of 'character,' for in his scheme, the notions 'virtue' and 'character' are logically related to each other.

Virtues, according to Peters, are of four kinds.

<u>Category 1</u>: the highly specific virtues or <u>habits</u> such as punctuality, tidiness and honesty. These are connected, he says, with specific types of acts; "they lack any built-in reason for acting in the manner prescribed" (see Chapter 4). Recall, however, his statement that the so-called "habits of perception" are not virtues (Chapter 3, p. 94).

<u>Category 2</u>: the virtues such as compassion, benevolence and concern for others which serve as <u>motives</u> for action.

<u>Category 3</u>: the more "<u>artificial</u>" virtues, such as justice and tolerance "which involve more general considerations to do with rights and institutions, and which require much in the way of thought."

<u>Category 4</u>: the virtues of a "higher" order, such as courage, integrity and perseverance, "which must be exercised in the face of counter-inclinations." These are the virtues of "<u>self-control</u>" (MD318).

Peters' classification of virtues raises several difficulties, among them the rather arbitrary way he selects examples of (1) habit-traits, (2) motives, (3) artificial virtues, and (4) self-control traits. Can any of the specific virtues or habits he names be motives? Could justice or tolerance be motives? Might benevolence and concern for others be correctly considered dispositional traits? The answer

to each of these questions, I believe, is 'Yes.'

The problem with his classification scheme is not just that we may see reason for grouping his examples differently than he does. The major problem lies with his assumption that motives comprise a different logical category than either of the others; in particular his assumption that motives (acting for certain motives) differs from acting because of certain traits. His classification scheme is thus rather odd from two points of view: (1) the fact that he sets out four categories of virtues would suggest that his categories represent long-term or enduring dispositions to act in particular ways (traits), yet he includes motives among these categories, and (2) the fact that he separates motives from the other categories of dispositional traits.

We saw in Chapter 4, Part II (Motives), that Peters thinks it makes sense to say that a person acted from a certain motive without implying that this motive is evidence of the person's tendency or disposition to act similarly under similar circumstances or antecedent conditions. At the same time, we should remember that one of Peters' key ideas is his insistence that moral motives be developed in persons. His favourite phrase is that moral principles (e.g., respect, compassion and concern) "must become personalized . . . must become a person's own." This indicates that he believes that acting for moral motives is acting from, or on account of, an enduring disposition or trait. Now, we might say that a person could act from a moral motive of respect, for example, on only one occasion. That is, it does not seem to be a logical contradiction to say that a person could act with respect or benevolence and still not be considered a respectful or benevolent man.

But it is inconsistent, I believe, to say that a man has "personalized" the principles of respect and benevolence, and to say that this man has not developed dispositions or traits to act for moral motives.

Peters' classification of the virtues suggests that he believes motives differ from the other traits, even though he says that _principles_ can be traits:

> To call something a 'trait' of character is simply to suggest that someone has made a rule, for example, of honesty or justice —his own. Whether a rule, which can also be regarded as a trait of character if it is internalized, is a principle depends on the function which the rule or consideration, which is personalized in the trait, performs. To call justice or concern for others a principle is to suggest that backing or justification is provided by them for some more specific rule or course of action.
> (MD313)

But the only examples Peters gives of _principles as traits_ are _justice_ and _honesty_. He goes on to say that there still "are important differences between virtues which are motives and those which are character traits." These motive-virtues—concern for others and compassion—develop earlier in a child's life than do justice or even honesty. "Concern for others . . . can get a foothold in a persons' moral life earlier than justice, because it is not necessarily connected with rules and social arrangements, as is justice" (MD313). From this, I conclude that Peters believes that motives such as compassion and concern can be dispositional traits, but they differ from habit-traits of honesty and justice, and they differ from the self-control traits of persistence and determination. Habit-traits and self-control traits, he says represent "internalized rules widespread in society" and the manner in which people stick to lower-order rules. 'Motives,' however, is a term that we use "to ascribe purposes to people of a _personal_

rather than specifically institutional sort" (ME94).

I will leave aside, now, questions about his categorization of virtues, and motive-virtues, and concentrate instead on categories (1) and (4): habit-traits and self-control traits.

II. Character-Traits

Peters calls categories (1) and (4) traits, that is, long-term or enduring dispositions to act in particular ways. Motives, I have concluded, can be dispositional traits. But motives, Peters says, are "teleological" concepts: they are conceptually connected with "goals." Categories (1) and (4) traits, on the other hand, are "non-teleological" in the sense that they indicate "the type of regulation a person imposes on his conduct whatever his goals may be" (CM5; PC245).

Within the class of traits, the self-control traits are "content-free," he says, while traits of the social-rule variety are not (MD314; CM5; PC251). Moreover, both categories of traits differ from those traits we associate with a person's temperament, nature or personality (PU400; PC245; TC135).

A. The Social Rule Variety of Character-Traits

The first group of virtues, habits or character-traits--about which we have spoken in Chapter 3 (pp. 80ff.)--"embody" or "represent" the "internalization of social rules" (ME94; EE57; MD314; PU400; RC17). They are not connected with any social role, but "affect the manner in which an individual conducts himself within a role as well as in his non-institutionalized relationships with others" (CP289). Peters now expands this category to include the character-traits (habits; rules)

of unselfishness, fairness, honesty, punctuality, considerateness, thrift, tidiness and chastity.   It is with reference to this group of traits, he says, that we often speak, "in a non-committal sense," of a man or woman's character.   'Character,' here, refers to the sum total of the traits a person exhibits, "the part of the social code which is stamped upon him" (TC135).

B. Self-Control Character Traits

1. Self-Control and the Will

The self-control category of traits--Peters' fourth category of virtues--are those traits or dispositions to act which also affect the manner in which a person adheres to rules or follows certain purposes (RC17,20; CP289; CM5,32). But he calls these traits the _self-control_ virtues since "they _must_ be exercised in the face of counter-inclinations."   There would be no point in marking out the _social-rule_ variety of traits, he says, "if there did not exist, in general, inclinations which they regulate or canalise" (PU400).   But while the social rule traits _may_ be exercised in the face of counter-inclinations, they need not be.   The notion of self-control, however, logically demands a context of temptation.

The "self-control traits" he mentions most frequently are determination, integrity, conscientiousness and consistency.*   To this list he adds enterprise, courage, persistence, perseverance, incorruptibility and resoluteness.**   Except for some passages on the notion of consistency, and some speculation about how he believes courage is

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*(RC17,20; CP289,292,298; MD314; ME94; EE34; PU400; EEm190; DR134).

**(RC20; PU400; DR128; CP289; MD314; EE34).

developed (MD327), Peters does not analyze these traits in any detail;
nor does he pay much attention to selecting those situations for which
he thinks each is appropriate.

These "self-control" traits, Peters continues, "are linked with
the will." In a rather ambiguous move, he says that the connection
between these traits and the will is one of necessity: "part of our
understanding of a 'principled morality' is that people should stick to
their principles in the face of temptation, ridicule and the like."
"Moral agents should have these traits," he continues, "if they wish to
carry out what they see as just" (MD314).

Given what Peters has said about moral motivation, we must try to
determine the status of this present claim. Does Peters mean that it is
merely desirable that moral agents have these traits? Probably more
than this. Does Peters mean that unless persons have these traits, they
cannot carry out what they see as just? This latter, strong, claim sug-
gests at least two different interpretations, one of which is more
plausible than the other.

2. Interpretations of Peters' Claim

    (a) as a conceptual claim

We might interpret Peters' claim that moral agents should have the
"self-control" traits, first, as a comment on what it means to act on
their moral judgments. If agents acted on their judgments, then on
this interpretation, these agents must have "exercised their wills,"
their self-control. But if this is his meaning, Peters must also
believe, to be consistent, that a person's motives or operative reasons
are not sufficient, are never sufficient in themselves to move that

person to act.   The person who acted morally must not only have been

motivated to act because of moral concerns but must also have overcome

some counter-inclination or counter-motivation to act in this way.

To interpret Peters' claim as a conceptual claim, however, seems

a bit forced, and lands Peters with a rather perverse view.   The very

presence of the word "should," rather than "must," would seem to rule

out any conceptual point about acting on judgments.

Let us turn then to a second, more plausible interpretation of

Peters' claim that moral agents should have the virtues of self-control

in order to do what they see is just.

(b)   as an empirical claim

The common-sense or "natural" way to interpret Peters' claim is as

a general empirical claim about the difficulties moral agents may face,

in fact usually <u>will</u> face, when they come to act on their moral judg-

ments.   I examine some of these difficulties--what Peters calls

"counter-inclinations"--in section 3 below.

In the face of these difficulties, the agent may have conflicting

motivations: motivations which tell him that he ought to do X, and

motivations which tell him not to do X or to do Y instead.   His motiva-

tion to do X (e.g., to act with fairness) may prove to be insufficient

to move him to act on X.   If, then, the agent "wishes to carry out what

he sees as just," most or all of the time, he should be a person who can

exercise self-control over his counter-inclinations or counter-motiva-

tions.

To say, however, that the moral agent should be one who can

exercise self-control is to suggest that he have <u>enduring dispositions</u>

(traits) to exercise self-control. If we make the claim that agents cannot do what they see is just unless they have these traits of self-control, this claim could plausibly be offered as a conceptual point about the nature of these traits. That is, incorruptibility just _is_ the ability to withstand corrupting influences, determination just _is_ the disposition to act even in the face of difficulty, courage just _is_ the ability to overcome fear to do what is just.

To make analytic or conceptual points about the nature of these traits does not _imply_ that original motivations to do X must always have been insufficient to get the agent to act on X. There would be plenty of cases, surely, in which an agent's original motivations would be sufficient to get him to act without his overcoming particular conflicts or counter-inclinations. On many occasions the agent's ability or disposition to exercise his self-control may not even be tested. In other words, to say that an agent cannot be moral all the time without self-control is to make a conceptual point about self-control, not a conceptual point about the agent's moral motivation. And to say that an agent cannot be moral all the time is to make an empirical point about moral motivation: an agent motivated by moral concerns frequently encounters opposition, and frequently these motivations of his are insufficient to move him to act.

If, however, we say that moral agents should have self-control traits in order to overcome counter-inclinations and act on what they see is just, we must pick out what traits of self-control these are. For surely not all instances where the agent encounters opposition and where he exercises the "virtues of self-control" are relevant to his

being just or fair to others.   Peters' failure to differentiate between
traits that are required for being moral from those that are not, causes
some difficulties as I will show below.

3.   Counter-Inclinations

Peters distinguishes two kinds of counter-inclinations.   I call
them (a) outside influences, and (b) inhibiting physical and emotion-
reactions.

(a)   outside influences

Peters' phrase for these influences is "inclinations social in
character."   They include (i) bribes and flattery, and (ii) the indi-
vidual's susceptibility to group example or pressures: "taking one's
colour from the company one keeps" (PU401; DR128; TC135; MD327).
Presumably, what distinguishes category (i) from category (ii) is the
purposeful or intentional aspect of category (i) actions.   There are
intentions behind category (i) actions--intentions of others to get
agents to do and think certain things--which are either absent in the
case of category (ii) influences, or which are less directly "inferred."
Regarding category (i) influences, Peters says "a man who is at the
mercy of his passing inclinations is a man whose behaviour shows very
little sign of being rule-governed."   He distinguishes this from
category (ii) actions: "a man whose behaviour is rule-governed but
whose rules are those of the company he keeps" (PC251).

Before looking at these influences in more detail, we should remark
on Peters' sense of "autonomous moral agent" for this notion is central,
I believe, to his account of the agents' abilities and dispositions to
overcome or resist these influences.

Peters believes that "independence of judgment" is a character-istic of the autonomous moral agent (CP292; PU410). In Peters' view, being morally autonomous entails, at the least, being able to resist "corrupting" influences. In addition, the "autonomous moral agent" acts on his choices and carries out his tasks with what he calls "authen-ticity" or genuineness. Peters usually speaks of the authentic choices the agent makes for himself. But he seems to suggest that autonomous agents will make authentic choices in respect of their moral (inter-personal) conduct as well--that is, in respect of their acting on moral rules and principles.* Let us consider now Peters' reasons for press-ing his case for "autonomy and authenticity" as ideals of human conduct.

As I noted in Chapter 3 (p. 117), Peters presents an alternative to a style of living which he thinks lacks colour and verve. He seems to despair of persons who display a kind of "second-handedness" in their choice of personal goals and in the means they choose to reach these goals. These people live life, "as a kind of toil," he observes, or in a way which suggests they need approval. Peters' autonomous moral agent, by contrast, chooses and acts in an authentic manner: he carries out his duties with dedication, his reactions are "his own," he is

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*To Peters the notion "autonomous moral agent" suggests having a passionate commitment to reason, to truth. It means the development of, or commitment to what Peters calls the "rational passions": the love of consistency and hatred of inconsistency, impatience with irrelevancy, abhorrence of the arbitrary, determination to "look at the facts," etc. (MD329; 330). But he seems to suggest that "this passionate regard for reason" means as well, a passionate regard for those considerations which moral (interpersonal) principles make relevant: a sense of jus-tice, respect for others, consideration of their interests, freedom and truth-telling. The connection he sees between an agent's passionate commitment to the norms of practical reason and his commitment to moral principles is what I am concerned with here.

genuinely committed to his goals (CP297; PU410). As well, the auton-

omous moral agent, on Peters' conception, "pursues the human excellences

. . . with creativity, wisdom and autonomy . . . (his pursuit of these

excellences) depends on the development of (his) rational capacities"

(RC17).   Clearly, Peters interprets "moral" in the phrase "autonomous

moral agent" to mean the awakening of the agent's sense of his own

personhood--his own personal fulfillment--and Peters includes here the

development of the agent's rational capacities.   Peters wants people,

he says, to put considerable personal effort into "making something of

themselves" (PU401; PC246; CP292).

What is not clear in Peters' account, as I have indicated, is the

connection between the sense of "moral" linked to some kind of personal

fulfillment or effort, and the sense of "moral" as a category of actions

of an "interpersonal sort," in particular, those which are harmful or

helpful to others.   If Peters assumes that a "self-fulfilled" autonomous

agent acts morally in respect of others' interests, his assumption, it

seems to me, is just wrong.   It is possible to think of autonomous

adults, exercising independence of judgment by making choices in an

"authentic" or genuine manner, living their lives in "creative" fashion

--but who do not act morally in the sense of avoiding and preventing harm

to other persons.   Now it is possible, of course, that both self-

fulfillment and respect for others are, for Peters, necessary conditions

of being a rational, autonomous moral agent.   But if this is so, the

question can still be put to him whether he would consider an agent to

be rational and autonomous if that agent was "self-fulfilled" but not

respectful towards others.   At any rate, Peters' discussion of counter-

inclinations the agent should overcome in order to be moral gives evidence

of his concern that agents be both "self-fulfilled" autonomous agents and

that they act so as to avoid harm to others.

Let us look more closely at these influences. People who use

techniques of bribery and flattery no doubt have reasons, some rationale,

for engaging in these activities: reasons usually having to do with their

own self-interest. Peters expects that the moral agent will be able to

recognize subtly coercive pressures and will be both able and disposed to

withstand such influences for reasons of a higher order, e.g., justice and

fairness. To resist these influences, the agent may see reasons why

others might approach him with bribes or flattery, but the moral agent

must not consider those reasons as reasons for him to act in the way the

briber or flatterer wishes. The reasons (intentions) behind a briber's

or flatterer's actions, I think Peters would say, must not even become

prima facie reasons for the agent in his deliberation about what to do.

That is, to resist bribery it is necessary that the agent not let his

desire for the good offered as a bribe override his legitimate reasons

for acting. Of course, Peters expects that the agent would not engage

in acts of bribery or flattery himself.

Peters' point about resisting this kind of outside influence is

well-taken. It is good advice for those susceptible to such influences,

especially those whose role-duties demand fairness and impartiality in

assessments of persons. Thus, with respect to moral matters (where

"moral" is interpreted in the avoidance-of-harm sense), there seems to

be little difficulty with Peters' claim.

Acting on his advice, is, however, another matter; especially if

we interpret the notions 'bribery' and 'flattery' more broadly than simply "crossing the palm with money" or "complimenting a person." Techniques akin to bribery and flattery are evident in advertising commercials and media images as well; no doubt these are influences moral agents should recognize and at least make some attempts to resist.

But suppose an agent did not resist the bribery which he or others associated with advertising commercials or media images. Suppose that in another situation, the moral agent did not resist the flattery of his friends. Could we correctly say that he was not an autonomous agent? Could we correctly say that he was not an autonomous moral agent (harm sense)? If our agent "succumbed" to the lure of advertisements, or flattery, we may or may not have sufficient evidence for saying he was not an autonomous moral agent (self-fulfillment sense), since there is obviously here a matter of degree. On the other hand, we may have no grounds at all for saying our agent was not morally autonomous in respect of actions of his which affected others. If, as well, he lived his life in a "second-hand way," as a kind of toil, or in a somewhat colourless fashion, we would have insufficient grounds for claiming that he was not an autonomous moral agent (harm sense), although we might say he was not autonomous (self-fulfilled sense).

With respect to the cases of bribery and flattery, we could only say of an agent that he was not autonomous morally (harm sense) when, under the influence of bribes and/or flattery, he acted immorally (unfairly) to others. Peters' claim, then, that people should overcome these outside influences or must be more creative in their lifestyles in order to be or act moral should be suitably qualified or interpreted to

take account of those cases where it is not wrong (all right) to allow oneself to be influenced by others' actions, and those cases where acting because of those influences does harm to others.

Peters' second category of outside influences he calls "taking one's colour from one's company." In this category he puts "those men who have no generalized or thought-out principles, about, for example, being honest" (PC251). First, there are those men who have no settled principles . . . those who act in accordance with a principle such as 'When in Rome live like the Romans'; he calls these "chameleons." Second, there are those men who, "as a matter of policy, act on a principle such as 'One ought always to follow those rules that others follow' or 'One ought always to follow the rules laid down by the Church, the leader or the local community group'."

Both kinds of conformist attitude indicate to Peters a lack of "autonomy." This is evident in the way Peters describes the cases. But it isn't clear what Peters means when he says that persons should resist these influences in order to be moral. If Peters intends that individuals should resist group pressures or example to avoid hurting others, then we could agree with him that these influences ought to be resisted. On the other hand, if Peters believes that conforming attitudes ought to be resisted as part of the individual's quest for personal autonomy (in making his own mind about matters), this claim has a different status. As he has described his cases, Peters has no grounds for claiming that individuals should resist these conformist attitudes in

order that they "act morally" (avoid harm).*

If Peters had discussed in more detail the notion of 'conformity' we would have a clearer indication of what he intends.   It is not clear whether he understands 'conformity' to be <u>antithetical</u> to 'rational, autonomous morality.'   If he does so consider it, then he would have adequate grounds for saying that if agents conform to the group they are with, they cannot be rational, autonomous agents.   This would follow from what it <u>means</u> to be 'rational and autonomous' and what it <u>means</u> to be 'conformist.'   But this would be a not very enlightening conceptual claim.   On the other hand, Peters could mean, not that conformity is antithetical to morality, but that it indicates a lower-level of personal independence and decision-making capability, which may lead the agent to commit harmful acts to others.   If Peters means this, then a person who was a conformist would need to reach another "higher" stage of autonomy in order to be fully rational and in order to avoid those actions which harm others.

But to say, as Peters does, that moral agents should overcome conformist attitudes in order to be moral is not very illuminating.   An agent's conformist attitudes may not always, indeed may <u>never</u> lead him to commit harmful acts towards other persons.

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*Peters' comment is reminiscent of critical remarks levelled by some adults against the hippie and youth communities of the late '60's: 'they all think alike . . . they even dress alike . . . obviously not an individual among them.'   But surely hippie and youth resistance to ordinary custom was some evidence of their "culture's" individuality of expression.   The "look-alike" garb of jeans and beads indicated a "conformity to norms," but a conformity brought about by a desire for anonymity, or a search for some refuge against an exasperated and hostile public.   If the individual's hue was similar to his company's colour, it was understandable, surely, and not reprehensible.   The essence of this example I owe to D. G. Brown.

At this point, I shall assess Peters' treatment of "outside influences" for the "practice of morality." Why should we be concerned about how to interpret Peters' claim that people should overcome counter-influences in order to be moral (act morally)? The importance, I think, is this: if Peters wants to claim that people should exercise self-control (counter these influences) in order to be moral, then we must know what sense of "moral" he intends (self-fulfillment or avoidance of harm), in order to know what traits of character he is suggesting agents should have.

Of course, it is not necessary that Peters must mean one sense of 'moral' or the other. He could mean both. He could say that agents should overcome all kinds of counter-inclinations (including conformity) in order to "be moral" and mean by that that they should be self-fulfilled and respectful towards others. What is not clear, however, is what rides upon his suggestion. What implications follow from his claim that agents should exercise their self-control in order to be moral? What must the community do, if anything, to or for agents who do not have the "virtues" of self-control Peters thinks they should have?

In discussing the virtues of self-control, Peters does not address the question of what happens--what the community's responsibility is--in those cases where agents do not exercise their self-control. I offer below some general remarks on this topic.

The notion 'morality' suggests, at least, that morality ought to be enforced: that interference in people's liberty is justified where those persons have committed or are about to commit immoral (wrong) acts. The wanton murderer is caught and punished; the tax evader is made to

pay his taxes. We usually agree that the community has some grounds for

interfering with the liberty of persons who perform wrong acts. But

limits to that authority to enforce morality are determined, as it were,

by the kind of commitment a community has to the protection of the liber-

ties of its members.

The balance we draw between the enforcement of morality and the

protection of liberties, to a large extent, says what kind of society we

will have. On the one hand, we could be committed to a strong principle

of enforcing morality and committed to a weak principle of liberty. On

the other hand, we could be committed to a strong principle of individual

liberty, and committed to a weak principle of enforcing morality.

Another alternative and a more desirable one than either of these, I

suggest, is a commitment to a strong principle of enforcing morality and

commitment to a strong principle of liberty.*

But it is essential when acting on either of the various combina-

tions of strong and weak principles of morality and liberty to know when

an action is a wrong one, and to know whether agents' interference in that

action will or will not produce further harm. Whereas we consider it

right--justifiable--to interfere with agents who do not exercise their

self-control in those cases where their lack of self-control leads to

their committing immoral (wrong) acts, we require more justification, or

a different kind of justification to decide whether we should interfere

with agents who have not developed traits of personal "self-control,"

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*I am grateful to Professor D. G. Brown for the ideas I have pre-
sented in this section. The statements I have made here reflect his
own scholarship.

i.e., those who in Peters' terms have not reached the stage of autonomy. The heroin addict, the motorcycle gang member, the grey-suited businessman who owns three cars, may each in his own way illustrate some lack of "self-control" and some lack of "autonomy." What Peters does not discuss are the grounds for interfering with agents' liberties when these agents lack "self-control."

As I have detailed in Chapter 2 (pp. 75ff.), Peters selects the Principle of Freedom (Liberty) as one of his five fundamental principles of morality: an agent must not interfere with another agent's conduct (restrict his liberty) unless this second agent is harming or is about to harm another. This is Peters' (or rather Mill's) general outline of a principle of freedom: it provides one ground for interfering with agents' liberties, namely, when those agents are harming others. But Peters does not discuss when it is right to restrict another agent's liberty if one is committed both to enforcing morality and protecting liberty. Neither does he consider those circumstances in which the community might justifiably interfere with agents' liberties (1) for the agents' own good (justified paternalism) or (2) for the good of the community.

This puts us in the difficult position, here, of trying to imagine when Peters would consider it justifiable for agents to interfere with other agents' liberties when these others do not exhibit self-control. Whereas many in the community might like to severely restrict the liberties of those agents who do not or have not exercised self-control, my view is that only in very rare casses is paternalistic interference in adults' actions justified.

This brief discussion of outside influences, liberty and morality

raises important issues for the moral educator. He must decide what can and should be done to help persons resist these outside influences in order that they are disposed to act on their good moral judgments. As well, the moral educator should make his students aware of those circumstances in which it would be right and those circumstances in which it would be wrong for the community to interfere with agents' liberties. The moral educator, then, must be clear about what self-control virtues he should promote in his own students. He should strive, as well, to make his students aware of their responsibilities vis-a-vis other agents who lack "self-control."

Peters does not speak of "enforcing morality," although he considers various justifications for punishing persons who transgress rules about not harming others (EE276ff.). Nor would Peters want to enforce self-development given his commitment to liberty. But if he insists that agents should exercise self-control in order to do what is just, he must surely have some views about what, if anything, should be done to bring others to exercise their self-control.

I turn now to another of the counter-inclinations Peters believes agents should overcome in order to be moral: inhibiting physical and emotional reactions.

(b) inhibiting physical and emotion-reactions

As we saw in Chapter 4, Peters gives some attention to those inhibiting physical and emotional reactions which he thinks the moral agent should overcome in order to act on what he judges to be right. In this category, Peters mentions counter-inclinations "which come from (the agent's) consciousness of heights or from his stomach" (PU401; DR128; TC135).

In speaking of moral dilemma situations, we usually come to some agreement that moral agents should counter their feelings of fear, nausea, dizziness: to save a drowning person, to disentangle a drunken woman from a chaotic situation, to rescue a child from a tree-top. The agent in these situations has to decide when he <u>must</u> overcome his feelings in order to do a "greater good," and when, for reasons of self-interest, i.e., prudence, he need not. In deciding what morality requires of an agent— and this includes, I believe, the ways in which the agent might exercise prudence so as to perform the moral act—much depends upon what means are available to him to provide the needed help or prevent the harm. Assessment of these means undoubtedly includes the agent's evaluation of his own physical reactions, aversions, inabilities, phobias—conditions which could possibly worsen already delicate situations.

I am not suggesting that any phobia, any aversion, any inability be considered an "excusing condition" for agents who do not act. My only point here is that Peters might have qualified his claim about overcoming inhibiting physical reactions to account for the various abilities and dispositions of agents to overcome such reactions.

Recall from Chapter 4 that Peters mentions what he thinks are the most promising means for overcoming the inhibiting emotions of fear and anxiety. He doubts whether these feelings will be controlled or overcome by "self-control": "by the agent saying 'no' to temptation, by his standing firm, or by his being impervious to social pressures." He suggests that developing in the agent the "positive motivations of the self-transcending sentiments" (love, awe, benevolence, respect) is just as important (efficacious) in helping him to overcome inhibiting physical

reactions as is "the development of his prudence." What Peters leaves

unsaid is how this could be the case: how is it possible that a person's

feelings of love, respect, especially awe could overcome that person's

fears and anxieties in moral dilemma situations?

C. Deciding and Acting

To this point, I have discussed two categories of inclinations

which Peters believes moral agents should overcome in order to act morally.

In the case of outside influences, the agent might be corrupted or tempted

by others to do what is wrong, even though the agent may himself know what

is right and wrong. The agent might also adopt wholesale others' rules

or ways of living instead of choosing his own style of life in an auton-

omous, authentic, first-hand way. In the case of inhibiting emotion

reactions, the agent may be deflected or inhibited from doing what he knows

is right. 'Weakness of will,' he says, "is explicable in terms of emo-

tions such as fear, anxiety and lust, which disrupt peoples' well-meaning

intentions" (EEm190).

These two categories, however, do not exhaust the possible kinds of

inclinations agents might or should overcome in order to act morally. A

third category consists of those "disinclinations" to follow through or

act on the judgments agents make. Now, Peters does not speak of these

"disinclinations to act" as a "category" of influences to be overcome;

but he does frequently mention agents who do not act on their judgments.

He speaks of the self-control, persistence, and consistency which he

believes moral agents should exhibit--consistency and persistence in

carrying out their policies or plans. It seems to me that there are

many sorts of reasons why agents do not act "justly," reasons which have

neither to do with their being subject to others' corrupting influences, nor with inhibitions arising from particular emotion-appraisals such as fear and anger. I will discuss these reasons here. As well, I look at Peters' notion of 'consistency.'

Peters says that many kinds of factors might account for "the gap between judgment and action" (PC259). Here follows a survey of these factors, some of which appeared in the previous two sections.

First, Peters brings up the case of the "wicked man" who knows in general what he ought to do, and who has the judgment to see that a rule applies to his particular case, yet ruthlessly does what he knows is wrong. This man simply wants to do something else much more; he feels too little remorse or guilt to resist corrupting influences. Second, there is the "evil man," who has a code and pursues it in a determined fashion; this code however consists in harming others (e.g., thrashing his children; keeping his wife in subjection). Third, there is the man of "weak will," Peters says, who knows what is right and who wants desperately to do it, but because of his emotional instability cannot always do it. He is the man "who either seems constitutionally lacking in persistence or who seems to be a constant victim to various forms of passivity. He may be beset by insecurity, unconscious wishes or strange moods" (PC262). Fourth, there is the "psychopath," says Peters, who can only speak of what he ought to do "in an 'inverted commas' sense." Moral language ('right,' 'wrong,' 'ought,' etc.) "does not really bite on his behaviour." This man cares very little about doing what he ought to do: "he is impervious to his obligations . . . wickedness isn't even a possibility for him."

Peters believes that there are lessons to be learned from his descriptions of these persons. In the first case, the moral agent should learn to resist temptations; he should allow his own conscience to indicate what there are good (perhaps overriding) reasons for doing. In the second case, the moral agent must come to adopt reasons for acting which take others' interests into account rather than those which don't. In the case of emotional instability (what he calls weakness of will), agents should either learn to say 'no' to these moods or feelings, or else overcome them by cultivating "the more positive sentiments of love, benevolence, respect, awe." From Peters' description of the psychopath, moral agents should come to understand that to use moral language (making judgments of 'right' and 'wrong,' 'I ought . . .') is a serious business. To use moral language seriously is, in some sense, to commit oneself to acting on it--to be genuinely motivated by the concerns the language represents; as Peters puts it, "to be committed to its point."

Peters believes that if an agent is sincere in his use of moral language, he will come to act on the judgments he makes:

> The general function of words like 'right' and 'wrong' is to move people to act. If there is no such disposition to act in a particular case, we would say that the person is using the term in an external sort of way or that he is not sincere, or something similar to that.
>
> (MD329)

But surely an agent could sincerely make moral judgments (using the language of 'good,' 'ought,' 'wrong,' 'right,'), and still not act on his judgments. An agent's sincerity in using moral language, in other words, does not entail that the agent will act on his judgments. If a person uses moral language like 'right' and 'wrong' and does not

seem disposed to act in a particular case, there are other possible explanations than Peters' explanation that this person is being insincere in his use of moral terms or that he is using these terms "in an external sort of way."

We might be tempted to say that the agent failed to act on X or Y because he was weak willed, or because he was fearful, or that panic over-took him or that he had overriding evil intentions, but we do not need to explain the agent's failure to act on these ways.

Moral agents, too, may fail to act on their judgments of 'right' and 'wrong' because they do not know how to act on their judgments. This lack of knowledge is common, I believe, among those who see the moral wrongness of a particular government policy but who do not know how to express their disapproval of it. Of course, among those who believe a policy to be immoral, many simply do not have the determination or persistence to find out what they could do actively to oppose it. But there are others determinedly and persistently opposed to a public policy who are still unclear about what they can do about it. There appears to be, in other words, some gap between the judgments they have made and their knowledge and disposition to act on those judgments.

Could not the agent, also, see that many courses of action offer prima facie reasons for acting—for which he could sincerely say 'X is permissible to do, so also is Y permissible to do,' and yet see that neither X nor Y provide him with an 'all things considered' right-thing-to-do? The agent might simply find it difficult to resolve conflicting obligations, or to make a choice between X and Y if both X and Y are morally permissible acts.

Certainly we do have difficulty choosing between conflicting

reasons and obligations. On Peters' own account, anyone who adopts or

sees the point of his five fundamental principles (freedom, truth-

telling, consideration of interests, respect for persons and equality),

and who attempts to "put these into practice" in determining when a moral

rule may be justifiably overridden, for example, will face indecision for

at least some of his deliberations.

Peters' answer to the problem of resolving conflicts of principle,

as we have seen, is to say that the agent must exercise his 'judgment';

the agent must simply decide "in terms of these principles," then act on

his decisions. This advice is good, perhaps, for those agents who would

endlessly deliberate about what to do without ever getting around to

acting "on what they see to be just." But it is not particularly

enlightening for those who see the complexities of moral dilemma situa-

tions, and for those who see the conflicts between their various obliga-

tions, especially if these persons are convinced that there must be some

criteria in terms of which they can weigh competing considerations.

To conclude, Peters is correct to say that persons can be deflected

from doing what is right by others' corrupting influences. He is cor-

rect to say that persons can be deflected from doing what is right by

adopting a "bad code." Persons can be inhibited from doing what they

see is right, as well, by their inhibiting emotion-states. They may

also be impervious to the seriousness of using moral language (that it

involves their own behaviour). I have suggested as well that agents'

failure to act may be explained by agents' indecision in the face of

their sincere and honest attempts to resolve complex moral problems: by

their inabilities to resolve what may be conflicts of principles. As well, I suggest, agents may not know how to act, in the public realm for example, on the sincere moral judgments they may make.

Are my "additional cases" examples of "weakness of the will"? Although I believe Peters unwisely limits weakness of the will to cases of emotional instability, I would say that my cases do not necessarily demonstrate such a weakness. One case calls attention to another kind of "gap" between judging and acting--a gap due to the enormously difficult decisions moral agents must make. The other case has to do with insufficient knowledge about how to act on moral decisions.

Peters speaks frequently of overcoming counter-inclinations by developing self-control and by being consistent. By consistency he seems to mean "acting in accordance with the beliefs an agent has or the judgments he makes." Consistency, he says, is "sticking to a principle or pursuing a policy or plan" (DR128). He says this form of consistency "is possible for people who adhere conscientiously to a simple code," and is possible as well for people "with a complicated morality if they care . . . if they are passionately devoted to fairness, freedom and the pursuit of truth, respect for persons, if they are concerned whether others suffer" (CP298).

Surely he is right to say there is a difference between knowing right and wrong and caring (MD329), and surely he is right to say this type of consistency and caring is an "important positive type of motivation" (CP298). In saying these things, however, Peters implies that if agents "know what is right and wrong" and if they care about others, they will be able to decide and act on complex moral problems they face.

In my view, more is required of the "competent moral agent": first, an ability and disposition to appreciate the positions of others who may be affected by the agent's actions, and second, a fuller grasp of moral theory to help him balance the conflicting claims and interests of those persons whose positions he "appreciates."

My statement here may be denied by those who claim I am making it too difficult for ordinary citizens ever to attain "moral competency." That may well be. My suggestions offer, however, "levels of attainment" towards which the "average" moral agent can strive. Once we have a picture of what "moral competency" looks like, we can decide what moral educators might do to help average persons attain at least some of the competencies (knowledge, abilities and dispositions).

III. Peters on the Development of Character

Having commented now on Peters' two categories of character-traits --the social-rule variety and the self-control variety--I will put together Peters' picture of the development of character. One of the chief tasks of moral education, he says, is to aid in developing peoples' character, by which he means persons who 'have character.'

A. Senses of 'Character'

To begin, Peters quite rightly says that the concept 'character' "is a systematically slippery concept" (TC135). We speak of 'character' in the following ways. In the first place, he says, we speak of a person's character in terms of the sum total of his traits: ones like honesty, considerateness, punctuality, sincerity or laziness. He calls this the "non-committal sense," although it is not perfectly clear what

he means by this (FT237; TC135).   Usually when we say that a person is

honest or sincere or lazy we are positively or negatively evaluating

what he does or does not do.   We are not necessarily evaluating his

conduct, however, from the moral point of view.   Wm. Hare, I believe,

is correct to suggest this (Hare, Wm., 1978).   If Peters takes "non-

committal" to mean evaluation but not necessarily _moral_ evaluation, then

I am in agreement with him.   In all probability, Peters means that the

notion 'character' is non-committal, not that 'honest,' or 'sincere'

are.   The notion 'character' is non-committal when compared to 'having

character' which means having a good thing.

Second, Peters says, we speak of 'character' in the way character-

ologists do: in terms of "certain arrangements of traits in persons, for

example, a penurious man, or pedantic person."   Freud appears to have

adopted this sense of 'character' in his writing on the subject, says

Peters, since he was concerned with the range of traits which persons

display in a distorted or exaggerated manner.

Third, we can speak of a person's character in the sense of 'having

character.'   Here, he says, we are referring "to a type of consistency

the person imposes on his other traits by his adherence to higher-order

principles such as those of prudence or justice" (FT238; PC247).

B.   'Having Character'

Peters explicates the notion 'having character' in terms of the

inner effort individuals must make: his favorite terms for this quality

are "effort," "personal choice," "decision," "control," "consistency,"

even "integrity."   The person who 'has character,' he says, is one who

has his own distinctive style of rule-following;   'having character'

suggests "the type of regulation (he) imposes on his own conduct." A

man who 'has character' differs from one who "merely exhibits particular

character-traits like honesty or truthfulness"; those who are honest or

truthful "may (still) be at the mercy of their vacillating inclinations"

(PC249).

Peters thinks that persons who display certain character-traits do

not necessarily 'have character.' As well, he believes that persons who

'have character' need not have any particular character-traits, certainly

not ones we would call moral traits or habits.

> When we say that a man 'has character,' we are not simply referring
> to the sum total of his traits . . . a man who has integrity of
> character is not credited with any definite traits . . . whatever
> traits he exhibits there will be some sort of consistency and con-
> trol in the manner in which he exhibits them.
>
> (TC135)

This is in line with Peters' statement that the "self-control

traits" are content-free: "they prescribe no particular rules or

purposes" (MD314). But let us see what this view leads to in Peters'

account.

Peters remarks that persons might 'have character' in the sense

that they have their own distinctive styles of rule-following. But

these distinctive styles "do not necessarily imply any particular rules

or content" (PC250). The notion 'having character,' he says, is

compatible with a wide variety of types of character. In fact, Peters

continues, a person could have character--be persistent, have style--

and "still be bad" (TC135; PC250). By this Peters does not just mean

that a person who had character could act badly or "be bad" on one or a

few occasions; he means that a person might 'have character' and be

<u>evil</u>. On Peters' account, Hitler is one we could say 'had character.' Although Peters does not speak in terms of necessary conditions, his one necessary condition for 'having character' seems to be this: "persons must be consistently rule-governed and must adapt their rules intelligently in the light of their supreme principles" (PC252).

A man who acted consistently in the light of his supreme principles --a person who 'has character'--may present an appearance of inconsistency to the world, Peters avers. But this is because he "follows rules which seem to him to have some point; he modifies them intelligently according to differences in circumstances, and the point (of what rules he chooses) is determined by the man's adherence to certain higher-order principles" (TC135).

Are these principles Peters' five fundamental principles? If they are, would Peters speak of a person who 'had character' who was evil? Probably not. Are these principles whatever principles the person who 'has character' chooses to act on? If this, then these principles could be ones like 'I will only do whatever gives me the greatest personal pleasure' or 'I choose to do that which brings the greatest pain to minority groups.' Peters' sense of 'having character' is compatible with choosing principles which cause or which do not prevent harm to other persons.

C. Moral Education and Character Development

What, then, are we to make of Peters' suggestion that an important aim of moral education is to develop persons who 'have character'? To answer this question, let us review what Peters says is the "complex task of moral education," where he speaks of this as character-

development.

Peters says, first, that moral educators should be concerned with what character-traits they would like people to have, that is, what social rules they would like to see "stamped upon" individuals' behaviour. Second, educators should be concerned with how children learn to apply rules: how they learn to "discriminate and use their judgment." And third, Peters says educators should be concerned with developing childrens' characters in the sense of their 'having character.' What methods, then, does Peters, select for the accomplishment of these tasks?

He says that 'training character' is an important way to look at the development of character, since this latter notion consists in developing the self-control traits and the inculcation of social rules (MD328). The notion of 'habituation' is an important one, too, especially for the development of the "self-control" virtues. The child, he says, "must learn to stick up for principles of 'fair play' in the face of group pressures." It may be necessary, he says, for children "to be tempted, or made fearful." The more familiar children become with such situations, "the more likely they will be led to control their immediate responses." Habituation, he says, "may help to lay down a pattern of response that may be used in the service of more appropriate motives at (a child's) later stage" (MD327).

To develop particular traits of the social-rule variety, the "stamping metaphor," he says is an appropriate one. The notions of 'drill' and 'authority' are also appropriate. 'Training of character,' he says, "suggests efforts to ensure reliability of response in accordance with a code." But this, he admits, would be a rather limited sort

of operation, since it would not suggest any endeavour to get trainees to understand the 'reason why' of things. Moral 'education,' in contrast to 'moral training,' is a question of "tackling peoples' beliefs" (EE34; TC138).

To develop character, Peters says, the notion of conflict is an important one. "The child must learn to choose from among many possibilities," he says, and this he will learn to do if he is introduced to various rules and made to face conflict-situations (EE198; TC137). The child must also be exposed to adult-exemplars "who can give practical reasons for their principles." We must remember, he says, that the individual's character is "his own distinctive style of rule-following"; the emphasis is on the individual, "but the way he acts is drawn from a public pool" (EE57). A man's 'character,' he says, "represents his own achievement" (EE57; PU400).

The question which can be put to Peters is this: if he sees that one aim of moral education is character development, and if he sees that the best way to do this is by (a) stamping a code upon the child, (b) teaching the child to make "discriminations" about where this code (the rules) should be applied, and (c) encouraging the child to make up his own mind and stick to his decisions, what emphasis does he give to these three? In his insistence that a social code be "stamped upon" the individual, and that "training" is an important method to use to do that, he implies that unless educators do that, they will have omitted an important part of developing a child's character. This indicates to me a rather restricted analysis of what peoples' characters consist in. He could just as well have presented further analysis of what educators

might do to develop people who _are_ characters.

The "natural sense" for 'character-development' includes developing desirable character traits, to be sure. But we should not assume that desirable character traits will result from "stamping a social code" upon people.

In emphasizing as he does the individual's own choice of principles and rules in the face of conflicts he is made to face, and in drawing attention to the fact that a person could 'have character' and be bad, Peters' aim for moral education as character development is rather confusing. He is open to the charge that the goals of moral education/ character development would be attained if the autonomous choices made by agents led them to act on principles of prudence rather than principles of morality. If he does not mean this, then he should have provided moral educators with a notion of character to which they could appeal, and which they could consistently apply. Probably Peters intends that character development is only one aim of moral education, but he does not say what priority should be given to developing persons' character and what priority should be given to preventing harm to others, for example.

* * * * * *

In this chapter, I have examined Peters' notion of virtues, particularly those he calls the "self-control" virtues, and his notion of character. The self-control virtues, he says, are those which are exercised in the face of counter-inclinations. He mentions two kinds of counter-inclinations: outside corrupting influences and inhibiting

emotion-reactions. He does not distinguish between those influences which may result in an agent's acting unjustly or unfairly, and those which, if adopted by the agent, indicate his conformist attitude to the group. I have suggested that the agent need only exercise self-control over these influences if his not doing so results in harm to others. Getting clear the sense of "moral" Peters intends is important for the community in respect of its commitment to enforcing morality and in its commitment to the protection of liberty.

After mentioning the inhibiting emotion reactions and the ways Peters thinks these may be overcome by the agent, I looked at "disinclinations to act on judgments" by exposing Peters' view of the "gaps" between judgment and action. I pointed out that he is wrong to say that an agent will act on sincerely made moral judgments. There may be, in fact, many ways of accounting for "failing to act." One of these may be the agent's indecision in the face of conflicting principles; another may be his not knowing how to act on the sincere judgments he makes.

I turn then to Peters' notion of 'having character' and his views on the development of character as a goal of moral education. 'Having character,' he argues, is compatible with being bad (evil); a necessary condition of 'having character' is having the self-control virtues of control and consistency. A person who 'has character' is one who makes up his own mind, and who makes his decisions in the light of principles he sees have some point.

CHAPTER 6

Moral Education and Research

In the last ten years, educators have assembled many kinds of moral

education materials and programs for use in schools; as well, educators

have become active participants in what is known as "moral education

research." Many of these educators believe that students can become

educated into morality or moral thinking just as other educators believe

students can become educated in science, history and mathematics. For

many moral educators, moral education means initiating students into the

form of discourse called moral discourse in such a way that these

students will be disposed to act morally. Their hope is that students

of moral education will learn to be moral.

Educators who see persons' initiation into moral thinking and

behaviour as the goal of moral education have occasionally acknowledged

Richard Peters' contribution to the field, but have not used his discus-

sions of morality and moral education in any overt way as the basis for

their school programs and research. As we have seen in this thesis,

however, Peters believes that initiating persons into moral thinking

will help dispose them to act morally. Peters' work represents, in

fact, one of the few recent attempts of philosophers of education to

give a comprehensive account of what it is to reason in morals and what

it is to be disposed to act for moral reasons.

Peters has not made many practical recommendations for moral

education in the schools, nor has he considered it his responsibility to select problem areas for empirical research study. Although he occasionally refers to research studies, his own work is almost entirely concerned with conceptual issues in moral education.

There is, it should be said here, a particular richness to Peters' writing on moral education: in the range of topics he covers and in his many examples. But if we are to decide what school programs or research hypotheses are at least consistent with his views, we should trace out what are his best-supported theses: those suggestions most likely to yield concrete proposals for the "practice" of moral education.

In Chapters 2 to 5, I have presented a systematic account and criticism of Peters' views on a range of topics: moral rules and principles, the form and content of morality, moral motivation, the role of the emotions in the moral life, and the virtues of self-control. Here I further condense his views in order to suggest leads to educators working in the field. I do this, first, by noticing what constructive leads come from Peters' account; second, by drawing attention to those areas of his account which require conceptual and empirical work, and third, by outlining specific projects for curriculum builders, teachers and researchers.

I. The Contribution of R. S. Peters to Moral Education

A. The Development of "Settled Dispositions"

As we saw in Chapters 3 and 4, Peters believes that morally educated persons must have "settled dispositions" to act in particular ways. He calls these settled dispositions "habits"; they are ways of acting

automatically. But the notion of 'acting automatically' is a problematic notion requiring further investigation. He does not say what happens when two such "automatic" habits or dispositions come into conflict. Nor does he say whether it is logically impossible for them to conflict.

Peters is correct to stress the development of <u>settled dispositions</u>. Part of being moral, surely, is having some character-traits or dispositions which "embody" the basic social rules: honesty, unselfishness and considerateness. Peters does not analyze in any detail, however, the notion of a "moral rule"; and this is a task to which educators could fruitfully turn their attention.

Peters does not present convincing arguments, moreover, for many of the social-rule character-traits he believes persons must have in order to be moral. Being honest, unselfish and considerate are closely connected with being moral; it is easy enough to agree with him that these traits are requirements of morality. Rules of punctuality, politeness, tidiness and chastity, on the other hand, are not requirements for being moral. These latter rules suggest standards of behaviour--standards of social "gracefulness" perhaps--but educators should not confuse them with moral standards, as Peters seems to do.

Educators (teachers and parents) who set out to develop the social-rule variety of character-traits in children should learn to distinguish, then, between long-term dispositions or habits which have centrally to do with morality and those which don't. Somewhat paradoxically, educators may have to teach youngsters to be polite or tidy on specific occasions, as part of teaching them to act with considerateness and unselfishness.

Teaching children some forms of politeness as part of teaching them to be considerate to others, differs, however, from teaching children to conform to rules of politeness, punctuality or tidiness.   Children must learn to sense when it is appropriate for them to be punctual or polite or tidy--that is, when their being punctual, polite or tidy will prevent harm, hurt or discomfort to persons other than themselves.   But children should not be required to internalize rules of punctuality, politeness and tidiness as "settled dispositions," in order to be moral.   As well, initiating children into some socially-accepted forms of politeness may actually prevent them from seeing other people as persons whose rights and interests ought (morally ought) to be taken into account.*

Before he attempts to impart these rules to others, then, the educator should learn to discriminate between those forms of politeness which, if acted on, respect other people as persons and those which don't.   If the educator insists that children be tidy, punctual or polite on specific occasions, he must do so in such a way that children will come to see punctuality, politeness and tidiness as empirically necessary to their avoidance and prevention of harm and discomfort to other persons.

Educators should also develop programs for introducing the child to the concepts which form the basis of those rules which can justifiably be called _moral_ rules.   Lying, cheating, bullying, stealing, for example, can take many forms.   The child should come to see which actions of his would constitute stealing or lying or promise-breaking,

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*See Chapter 4, Part I.   I suggest there that the "polite act" of opening doors for women may prevent others from seeing women as persons.

so that he might refrain from these actions. Although Peters says that the child's possession of many concepts (e.g., 'property,' 'self,' and 'others') are prerequisites to the child's grasp of the concept 'stealing,' for example, he does not say what concepts are prerequisites to learning the other moral rules (MD325).

Moral educators would do well to examine closely the moral-rules to see which concepts are prerequisite to the child's obedience to these rules. This work would be useful to educators interested in developing elementary school curriculum materials in moral education. Given the recent literature on the subject of promising, for example, moral educators could choose this as a beginning topic for their conceptual, curriculum-development and empirical work.

B. The Development of Motives (Principles)

Peters argues that moral principles (e.g., justice, concern, compassion, benevolence and respect) should become a person's own motives or operative reasons. He gives two reasons why he thinks persons must come to act on moral motives; first, he believes that a person must have moral motives in order to apply moral rules intelligently; second, he believes that having moral motives is necessary to assessing properly the validity or justification of the moral rules. (See Ch. 3, p. 90.)

Having moral motives, Peters suggests, is not the same thing as "showing sensitivity or concern for others." A child can learn to be sensitive and caring, he says, but these feelings may not be the child's own reasons (motives) why he does some things rather than others. Peters says that if we help to develop a child's sensitivities early on

in his life, these sensitivities may become the child's operative reasons
(motives) when the child grows older (when the child "has learned to
reason"). One of the best ways to develop these sensitivities, he says,
is by developing the child's imagination in an atmosphere of reason-
giving.

I have earlier pointed to my difficulty in accepting Peters' state-
ments about the development of the child's sensitivities along with his
statements about the inability of children to let these sensitivities
(concern, caring) become their operative reasons (Ch. 3). In my view,
it is odd to talk about developing a child's concern or compassion for
others by providing him with reasons for action, without also believing
that the child is learning to adopt those reasons of compassion and con-
cern "as his own." It is not a logical contradiction, perhaps, to say
that a child is compassionate and caring on specific occasions, and that
he has not developed a long-standing disposition to act with compassion
and concern. And it may not be a logical contradiction to say that a
child has these sensitivities and that he does not act for reasons of
compassion and concern. But since our grounds for saying that a
person shows compassion or is compassionate come from our observations
of what that person does, it does seem logically odd to say that a child
has sensitivities and that he does not act for reasons of compassion and
concern.

If Peters' claim is that young children can learn to be compassion-
ate and caring and that they may or may not act out of motives of
compassion or concern when they are older, certainly he is correct. All
sorts of factors can and do intervene between the early signs of

compassion in children and their later actions and reasons for action. But if Peters' claim is that children can learn to be compassionate and must (logically must) be older to let these considerations become their reasons for acting, it seems to me that he is just wrong. I believe that children can learn at an early age to apply rules intelligently in the light of the principles of respect for persons and the consideration of others' interests, for example. This is only in part an empirical claim about what I have seen children do; it is also a claim about the grounds we must have to say that children feel compassion or respect, or that they are sensitive to others' feelings. We make inferences about their mind-states from their behaviour.

Of course, if Peters believes that children can develop sensitivities early in their lives but that they are unable to "make use of" these feelings to assess the justification or validity of social rules, then surely he is correct. In order to assess the validity of moral rules, considerable knowledge and experience is required of a person-- likely more than children have.

Regarding Peters' concern that moral motives be developed, an enormous amount of work can be done by educators to develop materials whose aim is to increase children's, adolescents' and adults' compassion and sensitivity to others. This could include the development of a "body of literature," the encouragement of dramatic productions, and the organization of activities which involve children in community work. I assume that these activities would be efficacious in increasing sensitivity, but there is probably no guarantee that involvement in these activities does help to develop a persons' sensitivities to others.

In addition to developing curriculum materials for use in the schools, educators must themselves learn how to show respect for others with whom they are in discussion, and they must somehow develop respect for persons of all colours, of both sexes, of every age--if they do not already have this respect. Children, adolescents and adults might prefer to model their behaviour after these educator/exemplars.

Part of the educator's responsibility, too, in developing others' senses of compassion and caring is to provide good analyses of those social conditions (school, home and community) which promote a child's sense of his own self-respect and his respect for others, and analyses of these conditions which systematically destroy human spirit and potential for acting with compassion. The educator should not stop with "analysis" of these conditions, of course: he must work hard to improve those conditions.

Peters' specific suggestion that children's sensitivities to others can be heightened or increased by exposing children to the sight of suffering may be a good one, although I do not have any empirical evidence to confirm or deny this, and Peters provides none. The educator might couple the child's exposure to suffering with suggestions to the child about what may have caused the suffering, and suggestions about what the child and others could do to alleviate suffering and prevent suffering. This teaching could be combined with discussion about "significant harms," e.g., those circumstances in which hurting others is permissible (e.g., to extract a tooth or remove a sliver), and when such hurting is not (e.g., cheating, lying, promise-breaking).

In getting students of all ages to view matters "from the moral

point of view" and to help them to be motivated by moral concerns, the educator should aim to improve the reasoning skills of his students by introducing them to ways of evidencing the empirical beliefs which bear on their moral decisions, teaching them to spot errors of deduction in their own and others' reasoning, and teaching them what moral principles can be used as premises of their arguments (Metcalf, 1975). These tasks must be carried out with considerable care and sensitivity, however, so that students will come to see moral reasons and the "conclusions" of moral arguments as genuinely motivating reasons for acting, rather than as opportunities for them to "score points" in debate.

Recall from Chapter 3 my statement that Peters devotes little attention to an analysis of the so-called "local" or "relative" rules. As I suggested there, these rules are more like issues an agent must decide than standards of behaviour to which the agent must become habit-uated. Peters' list of local rules displays some short-sightedness about what moral issues agents do, in fact, face. Moral agents might have to decide whether to smoke or gamble, whether to conserve water, whether to become a member of a trade-union, whether to be usurious in money-lending. But these issues are not nearly as common or serious as those moral issues which arise when immigrants and other minorities are discriminated against, nor as important as the "morality" of living in unprecedented affluence while millions, at home and abroad, live at subsistence levels. If agents (students) are to learn to "reason well" on moral matters, they should be challenged by issues which "touch their own lives" to be sure, but issues for which the consequences to others are of great seriousness, i.e., those consequences which deprive others

of liberties and opportunities and respect.

The educator's selection of "issues" (local rules), to my mind, is a matter of great importance in planning moral education programs for persons of all ages. Students must be made aware of those situations which have serious moral consequences; they must see that moral questions arise and moral debate takes place in contexts where peoples' claims, interests and wants are at stake. Unless students come to see in what circumstances it is important for them to "take the moral point of view," they will probably not come to see moral considerations as reasons why they should act in certain ways and not in others.

C. The Role of the Emotions

If a person (student) is to develop "moral motives," he must come to see others in some sense as the same as himself. Part of the agent's knowledge or awareness, as Peters points out, is his ability to recognize his own emotion states and those of others. Being motivated by moral concerns is not just knowing that others experience pain, or not just knowing that others can become frustrated, angry and despairing if their desires are thwarted; being morally motivated is, as well, caring or appreciating that others can and do experience these emotions. The fact that other persons experience certain emotions--fear, anger, frustration--should provide the moral agent with at least a prima facie reason why he and others should refrain from acting in ways that cause unhappiness and pain. And the fact that the agent himself experiences certain emotions (e.g., anger, jealousy) should provide the agent with prima facie reasons for not committing harmful acts to others. That is, if the agent knows that he is jealous or angry and if he is aware

that states of jealousy and anger often lead agents to hurt others, he must not allow his anger or jealousy to become reasons for or against any action toward others. In particular, he must not let these emotion-states be reasons for harming others.

If, however, the agent recognizes his own emotion-appraisals as those of his own conscience (his internalization of rules and principles) --e.g., moral guilt and remorse--then these feelings should provide him with at least _prima_ _facie_ reasons for doing certain things: acting so as to put right those situations in which he has acted badly.

In moral education work, the subject of the emotions and the moral emotions is of great importance and is ripe for much interesting conceptual and empirical work. As I have pointed out in Chapter 4, however, knowing that "the emotions" (one's own and others') are relevant to moral thought and action is not to say how they are relevant. The problem for educators and moral agents is knowing how to balance the conflicting claims (interest; beliefs) of persons whose emotions they can both "read" and appreciate. Short of having a more complete theory of the moral relevance of emotions, the educator might simply have to take his clientele as far as they can go in understanding and appreciating their own and others' emotion-states. This, combined with introducing students to complex dilemma situations (issues), for which students' knowledge of the protagonists' emotions _is_ relevant, may be as much as the educator can do to assure his students that the emotions are adequately "represented" or taken acount of in their moral reasoning.

D. Conflicting Claims, Rules and Principles

Peters' recommendations for the resolution of conflicting claims, rules and principles are weak. Educators should be aware of this weakness in his account, and should try to face the question of what it is to justify decisions made when principles and rules come into conflict.

Peters claims that conflicts between rules can be resolved by the agent's appeal to moral principles. The rule 'Do not lie,' for example, can and should be overridden, he says, in those cases where telling the truth will hurt someone. He says that the principle of consideration of interests "stands as an ever-present corrective to moral rules when they conflict."

As we have seen in Chapter 3, however, Peters interprets the principle of consideration of interests in various ways; hence, it is not clear in what way Peters thinks that this principle provides a "corrective" for conflicts-of-rule. Moreover, he does not make clear why he chose this principle over the principle of respect for persons or the principle of freedom.

Another problem arises, as I have mentioned frequently, with Peters' account of resolving conflicts of principle. 'Judgment,' he says, is learned from those who have it. This is an interesting (and probably true) account of how a person's sense of discrimination develops, but it does not tell us what this discrimination is. By what criteria does the moral agent determine who has 'judgment,' or 'the best judgment,' so that he might model his behaviour after that person or persons? If the agent believes that no one in his company 'has good

judgment' on moral matters, or if he is uncertain what this judgment is,
can the agent learn to apply principles according to some criteria?
Can the agent, for example, determine if, for "moral" reasons, he should
override another individual's autonomy (conflict between respect for
persons and freedom) in order to do what is "in that individual's best
interest" or to do what is "in the public interest"? These are not
easy questions to answer, of course, but neither are they remote from
the kinds of decisions moral agents face.

    E. Self-Control

Peters' writing on the "self-control virtues" presents us with some
difficulties. He is unsystematic in his treatment of this group of
"virtues," leaving them almost completely unanalyzed. The problem for
the reader is to determine what Peters means when he speaks of these
virtues as virtues of "self-control"; further, what Peters means when he
says that an agent should exercise self-control in order to act morally.

Peters says that the moral agent should resist bad or corrupting
influences (like bribery), that he should resist flattery, that he should
"be his own person," that he should overcome inhibiting emotions like
fear and anger, that he should use moral language with sincerity, that he
should determinedly and persistently act on the moral judgments he makes
--all this, apparently, in order to "act on what he sees to be just."

Obviously, Peters' examples of "self-control virtues" are of many
different kinds. Although we can probably agree with him that some
"self-control" is a desirable, even necessary trait of the competent
moral agent, Peters' treatment of this class of virtues illustrates some
confusion about what may be required of individuals in order that they

be well-developed or self-fulfilled (autonomous and rational), and what

may be required of autonomous moral agents, where "moral" means acting

so as to avoid and prevent harms to others.

The educator must at least be aware that the claim 'individuals

should exercise self-control in order to be moral' can be variously

interpreted. He must learn to discriminate between those virtues which

may be essential to persons' self-fulfillment and those which are essen-

tial for persons to act on moral judgments, i.e., those judgments to do

with the avoidance and prevention of harm to persons.

In classroom discussion, the teacher could point out to his stu-

dents that the community might consider it their moral responsibility to

intervene in individuals' affairs if individuals are not exercising self-

control. He could point out the dangers of intervening in individual

liberties and rights. The educator could help his students to see in

what circumstances it seems morally justifiable for the community (other

moral agents) to interfere with persons' liberties (when those persons

are themselves harming others), and when it is probably not morally

justified for the community to interfere with persons if these persons

are "pursuing their own interests." To conduct these discussions well,

of course, the teacher must have a fairly sophisticated grasp of the

notions of morality and liberty. In other words, teachers must be ade-

quately prepared to lead such discussions; and this suggests the

preparation of curriculum materials for both teacher-education and

school classroom work.

To help his students overcome "inhibiting emotion-appraisals," the

educator might point out to his students those situations (in literature

and in current affairs) where individuals and groups overcame their fears and anxieties to do what they thought was right. The teacher might also engage his students in discussion of their own fears and anxieties. But it is uncertain whether these activities would have the desired effect.

I do not agree with Peters, however, that children must be _made_ fearful or purposefully tempted to do what is wrong as part of teaching them to overcome these inhibiting inclinations. In my view, there are numerous situations in the child's life which _are_ fear-inducing or which _do_ tempt him, without educators deliberately making a child feel fearful or tempted. Praising the child for resisting these influences is, however, another matter: the educator's praise might help the child to overcome his fears and develop his courage. This, however, is an empirical problem; and as Peters suggests, it could do with some study. In general though, I share Peters' skepticism about what educators can do to help students overcome their fears and anxieties in order to get them to act on their moral judgments.

In getting students to follow through or act on the moral judgments they make, educators should know of the factors which typically intervene between persons' moral judgments and their dispositions to act on their moral judgments. They should know, for example, that persons can be deflected from doing what they think is right by peer pressure, and that they can be inhibited by their lack of courage in the face of danger.

In addition, educators should be aware that making decisions about moral matters is often an extremely complicated and demanding business, and that often, persons' "failure to act" can be explained by their difficulties in coming to "all-things-considered" moral judgments. This

being the case, the educator should devote time to helping students make well-grounded decisions on moral matters. One way to do this is to help students evidence the empirical questions which bear on the moral problems he asks students to face. For most moral problems, this is a long and arduous task; and certainly teachers and students can never claim to have "all the evidence." But teaching students how to evidence their empirical beliefs could show the student that he should not "take a position" on an issue unless there are good grounds for the position he takes.

When teachers and students are satisfied, however, that they do have sufficient evidence to "make well-grounded decisions" on moral issues, they should make those decisions, then explore the ways both teachers and students can act on those decisions. For some issues, e.g., discrimination against East Indian residents by local neighbourhoods, students should be shown how to channel their energies into helping those persons discriminated against, rather than aiding those persons who are causing harms. For other issues--those which arise because of particular government policies--students can be introduced to ways citizens can propose legislation and register their protests against legislation they believe will have morally unacceptable consequences for segments of the population. This information and action would be a start, at least, on the students' political education; and it would serve to show students that to act on some moral decisions may mean engaging in politics and governmental affairs.

II. Remaining Conceptual and Empirical Issues in Peters

Having given a general outline of what things educators might do

using Peters' analysis of morality and moral education, I turn now to

those conceptual and empirical issues from Peters' account which require

more work.   While I believe that educators can proceed at once along

the lines I have outlined in the previous section, it should be clear

that there are a number of emphases in Peters' account requiring consid-

erably more conceptual and empirical study.

A. Conceptual Issues and Peters' Account of Morality

1. The Scope of Moral Education

In Chapter 2 (pp. 41ff.), I offered several interpretations of

Peters' claim that the initiation of persons into worthwhile activities

is a moral matter.   Two of these interpretations--the general or

"ethical education" view, and the requirements-for-avoiding-harm view--

offer different emphases for the scope of moral education.   The fourth

(ethical education) interpretation makes moral education virtually

coextensive with general education, while the fifth restricts moral

education to helping persons avoid harm to others.   I suggested that if

educators adopt the fifth (narrower) sense of moral education, they may

consider that getting persons to become initiated into at least some

"worthwhile activities" is an empirically necessary way of getting these

persons to be "morally educated" (avoidance of harm sense).

Throughout this thesis, I have interpreted all of Peters' claims

about morality and moral education in terms of the narrower view of

moral education.   This reflects not only my own view about what moral-

ity is and what moral education should be about, but this approach is

consistent with Peters' statements that his primary concern is with "rules and principles of an interpersonal sort." As we saw in Chapter 5, however, Peters vacillates between talk of those virtues necessary to becoming autonomous, rational agents and those virtues necessary to the prevention of harms. I suggested in that chapter that it is possible to think of persons who are autonomous and rational, and who are not disposed to avoid and prevent harms to others.

Much work could be done to uncover the grounds for saying that morality (and moral education) should be concerned, centrally, with avoiding and preventing harm. This is not to say that such an undertaking should hold up (impede) conceptual, curriculum-development and research work consistent with the avoidance-of-harm view. But an investigation of these grounds (in the writing of J. S. Mill, for example), would prepare educators to defend the narrower conception of 'morality,' when it is opportune for them to do so. This would be better, in my view, than adopting the avoidance of harm sense, without knowing the grounds for this choice.

In my experience, discussions of morality and moral education in terms of the avoidance and prevention of harms to persons usually lead to considerations of <u>giving benefits</u> and <u>helping others.</u> Moral educators would do well to be clearer than they are on the conceptual connections between the notions 'preventing harms,' 'not causing harm,' 'helping,' 'giving benefits.' Cases which distinguish these notions would be helpful.

2. Moral Rules and Moral Motives

The second topic requiring more conceptual work, as I have said in Part I of this chapter, is the subject of 'moral rules' and those concepts which are central to the moral rules. Part of this analytical work could center on the differences there are between moral rules and legal rules (laws), customs, conventions and habits; another part of this work could address the question 'What does it mean to say that moral rules exist?'

Peters says that habits which embody the moral rules imply a kind of "directedness"; habits, however, do not imply particular "goals" towards which these actions (habits) are directed. On the other hand, the notion of a 'motive' (operative reason) implies both "directedness" and the notion of a goal or goals towards which an agent's actions are directed. Put into the language of "reasons," Peters' suggestion is that having habits (conforming to moral rules) is acting for certain reasons; these reasons, however, need not be the agent's "own." Having motives or reasons for acting, on the other hand, means adopting partic-ular reasons as one's own.

In my opinion, time could be fruitfully spent by educators in anal-ysis of the differences between the notions "acting for--in conformity with--(other's) reasons" and "acting for reasons of one's own." For this work, the literature on the differences between "conforming to a rule" and "obeying a rule" is relevant (Green 1967; McClellan, 1967).

3. The Concept of a 'Person'

In Chapter 4, I mentioned that if the agent sees that other people do experience emotions, that is, if he comes to see other people as

persons, he will likely refrain from these acts which are harmful to these persons. The concept 'person' requires some conceptual work, beginning with a review article outlining the approaches various writers have taken in their work on this concept. Some of the analytical work on the concept 'person' might center on the concept of an 'emotion.' Other work might center on the notion of a 'right,' in particular the arguments which have been put forward on justified and unjustified interference in persons' rights.

4. Moral Component Schemes

In recent times, groups of moral educators have put forward three different "moral component schemes": John Wilson of the Oxford project (Wilson, 1973), Paul Hirst of Cambridge (1974), and AVER of Vancouver, Canada (AVER, 1975).* These three lists of moral components--"the components of moral competency"--reflect what the authors believe are logically necessary abilities, knowledge, skills and dispositions of competent moral agents. The authors have drawn up these lists of moral competencies to enable educators to proceed with the conceptual and empirical work necessary for curriculum work and teaching: the lists represent the parcelling out of abilities and knowledge, etc., so that research and curriculum development in this field will proceed in a somewhat orderly fashion.

Apart from some comments on Wilson's list of components (see Brent, 1973), there have been no attempts to systematically examine and criticize these three schemes and the theoretical bases from which they

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*See Appendix.

have been constructed.   To engage in this conceptual task would be highly interesting and enlightening to others in moral education.

From Hirst's discussion of morality and from his list of moral components we see his attempt to build from Peters' account of morality. Wilson, on the other hand, explicitly acknowledges the work of R. M. Hare; this is particularly evident in Component PHIL (CC) (Hare, 1952, 1963).   AVER's components A and B are based on Singer's account of the Generalization Principle (similar to Peters' Principle of Equality or Justice) and Singer's account of the Generalization Argument (Singer, 1971).   AVER component D, however, reflects Hare's analysis of "imaginative role-taking" (Hare, 1963).

B. Empirical Issues and Peters' Account

1. The Question of Non-Rational Means

In Chapter 4, I looked at Peters' treatment of the "paradox" of moral education.   One version of the paradox was put as follows: 'What non-rational means aid, or at least, do not impede, the development of a rational form of morality?'   This question suggests that educators must balance the use of rational (reason-giving) means and the use of "non-cognitive" ("non-rational") means in morally educating persons. By "non-cognitive" or "non-rational" methods, Peters means the use of "conditioning aids," e.g., praise, blame, approval and disapproval. Peters stresses that some non-rational or non-cognitive means must be used as supplementary to the use of reasons, even as prerequisites to the (effective) use of reason, since he believes that young children cannot understand reasons.   They cannot act for their own reasons, he believes, until they have conformed their behaviour to others' reasons (rules).

What non-rational means, he asks, should be used to help the child become an autonomous moral agent?

He views this question as an empirical matter, since he leaves the working out of this idea to empirical researchers. Researchers, acting on his lead, might want to explore the question of how much punishment or how much praise will aid or impede children from becoming morally autonomous. But this question, they should know, is not an easy one to translate into operational definitions or empirical hypotheses. What constitutes "non-rational means" as opposed to "rational" means is ambiguous: the line between them probably cannot be neatly drawn. Reasoning with a child has some "conditioning" effects on the child. The child who is continually reasoned with likely has an increased respect for himself--at least an increased respect for his own powers of reason. Reasoning with a child about moral matters, then, might well have the same results as praising him for deeds he does well; moreover reasoning with him is often accompanied by praise, and sometimes is indistinguishable from praise.

If empirical psychologists see the question of non-rational means as a viable one for research study, they would do well to explore in some detail the notions of "rational" and "non-rational means" and the notion of mixed rational/non-rational means before they embark on their empirical work.

I find that another question, namely, 'What rational means help children to reach a rational form of morality?' suggests more fruitful lines of inquiry. In an attempt to answer this question, moral educators could explore the ways in which reasons could be presented to

children so that they both understand these reasons and come to act on them. Part of this work would involve detailed studies of the ways children reason about moral matters; another part would be teaching educators (teachers, parents) how to respond to children's moral claims and arguments. Such work would seem to me to be amenable to research work: hypothesis formation and field study.

2. The Question of Reasoning Abilities

Peters is caught up, to some extent, in the lock-step stage-developmental account of children's reasoning abilities adumbrated by Piaget and "confirmed" by the moral education researcher Kohlberg. Although Peters presents many criticisms of the Piaget/Kohlberg account of moral development, he relies on findings from this school of psychologists for the recommendations he makes about when and how a child can reason about moral matters. He repeatedly says that a child must conform his behaviour to rules before he can be obedient to them, although he does say that it is not a _conceptual_ truth that children conform because of the fear of punishment before they conform because of the desire for praise (PK150). Nevertheless, as we have seen, Peters strongly recommends that a child be habituated to rules before he can act for moral motives. He gives evidence that he believes a child cannot act from moral motives from an early age.

The question of "abilities to reason" should be of some concern to moral educators. But this question cannot just be _settled_ by empirical means unless a goodly amount of prior conceptual work is done on the notion of what it is to reason, and what it is to follow reason. The notion of following or acting for particular reasons cannot be

interpreted in the uncomplicated way of "giving what one thinks is one's reason for acting." If this were the sole criterion of what it is to act for one's "own" reasons, children would probably fail the test.

The question of what levels of competency adolescents and adults can reach in their reasoning is also an important and relevant question for moral educators. Educator/researchers might spend some time studying the ways in which adolescents and adults reason on moral matters so that these educators might see what reasoning errors are commonly committed. From this work, educators could begin to put together what should be done to get adults to eliminate these reasoning errors, particularly where their reasoning errors lead or could lead to significant harms for other persons.

III. Curriculum-Development and Research

In this country, there is now only a handful of teachers who are able to deal competently with moral issues when they arise in their classrooms. In order to set into motion any large-scale school moral education programs, therefore, many more teachers should be educated into moral thinking (Green, 1976). The suggestions I make below for the improvement of moral education in the schools center on the development of teacher-education materials. Some of these materials could and perhaps should include curriculum units for students with whom teachers would eventually be working.

Teachers should be given much practice in helping students to view issues and current problems from "the moral point of view." To do this, materials should be prepared showing both the teacher and the students

how to engage in moral reasoning. Part of this task consists in exposing teachers to the many different kinds of reasons people offer for the positions they take on moral issues; another part consists in helping them to distinguish moral from non-moral reasons. This survey of reasons need not be gleaned from empirical studies of the reasons people typically give, although it may be. Educators might follow Singer's suggestion (Singer, 1974), and set out the different ways people could reason about issues, accompanied by statements about what reasons are better than others and why some reasons are better than others.

Second, teachers should be introduced to the different ways in which an educator/teacher might deal with moral issues when they arise in the classroom, and the ways in which adults, for example, do and could engage in "moral discourse." The best way to do this, I believe, is through video-taped or filmed sequences which are accompanied by either video-taped or written analysis. Again, the preparation of these materials need not come from filmed sequences in real classrooms, although they may be. Studio productions are probably just as useful.

Third, teachers should be given some prepared lessons and curriculum units on topics in moral education,* so that they might see how to do short-term and long-term planning on particular topics. Teachers should also be encouraged to prepare their own moral education units, and to revise them in the light of systematic yet sympathetic criticism from those of more expert status. Teachers and teacher-educators might also work together to determine what parts of the existing school

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*As samples, see the AVER units on Prejudice, The Elderly, and War.

curriculum are suited for discussions of morality. Working together, these people might prepare lessons on moral concepts (e.g., 'rights') which could be used at various points in the structured curriculum.

In my view, it makes little sense to engage in large research studies of moral development, unless there are teachers who are well-prepared to handle moral discourse when it arises in their classrooms. At this time, I believe that it is wiser for moral education researchers to engage in short-term research and development projects designed to improve the moral competencies of teachers, parents and school counsellors.

This is not to say that work need lag on the preparation of materials to be used by children and adolescents in the schools. Much good work has been done here already. In preparing moral education materials for children and adolescents, educators ought seriously to consider writing good fictionalized accounts (e.g., books, short stories, plays) which feature persons engaged in moral reasoning. Educators could also encourage this kind of production from those who they are attempting to morally educate. This kind of assignment might well capture the "moral imagination" of both school students and their teachers in ways more effective than ordinary didactic/discussion methods.

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APPENDIX I

Richard. S. Peters; Some Biographical Notes

A. The Career of R. S. Peters*

Richard Peters currently holds the chair in Philosophy of Education

at the University of London Institute of Education.   He has held that

chair since 1962, to which he moved from his fifteen-year long position

as lecturer and reader in philosophy, psychology and education at

Birkbeck College, University of London.   He has written in the fields of

psychology, philosophy and education, and his influence, particularly

among professors and students of philosophy of education, has been

enormous.

His preoccupations with religion first started him on the doing of

philosophy.   But as he became initiated into the subject matter of

philosophy, his interest in the problems of philosophical psychology

grew.   His doctoral thesis, entitled "The Logic of Psychological Inquir-

ies," examined three major emphases in psychology: Piagetian develop-

mentalism, Freudian theory, and Behaviourism.   Peters was influenced

by the work done on human motivation and psychological explanation by

his thesis supervisor, Sir Alec Mace.   Peters' own work, however,

represented a significant departure from Mace's own point of view.   By

Peters' own account, the writings and personalities of Mace, Popper,

Ayer, Passmore and Ryle had considerable influence on him.

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*The information in this section was taken from the preface to
R. S. Peters (ed.) Psychology and Ethical Development. London: George
Allen & Unwin, 1974.

When he moved to the Institute of Education to work in the field of philosophy of education, he concluded that little significant work had been done on the concepts peculiar to the study of education, save that done by Louis Arnaud Reid and Michael Oakeshott of London and by Israel Scheffler of Harvard. Peters' abiding interest in problems on the borderline of philosophy and psychology was evident in his early writing on the concepts 'education' and 'teaching.' He continued to provide expository and critical comments on the three psychological theories which had interested him earlier, two of which--Piagetian and Freudian theory--he considered to be complementary to the other. He also wrote on the relationship between psychology and teaching. He presented criticisms of the theories of B. F. Skinner and Carl Rogers; in so doing he attempted some definition of his own position.

B. The Publishing Record of Peters

Beginning with the editorship of <u>Brett's History of Psychology</u> (1952) and his own book <u>Hobbes</u> (1956), Peters' publishing career has been impressive. He has co-authored two books, one with Benn in 1959, <u>Social Principles and the Democratic State</u>, the other with Paul Hirst in 1970, <u>The Logic of Education</u>. He has co-edited another with Dearden and Hirst (<u>Education and the Development of Reason</u>, 1972) and has been the sole editor of several others, among them <u>The Concept of Education</u>, (1967) and <u>The Philosophy of Education</u> (1973).

Accounts of ethical development have always interested Peters, he says, "in both theoretical and practical ways." Many of his papers, in fact, examine theories in the fields of ethical and developmental

psychology. He describes his work as "a philosophical approach to psychology: how man should live and how human behaviour should be explained."

His book Ethics and Education (1966) is widely known among educators, while his earlier book The Concept of Motivation (1958) is widely known among philosophers.

In 1974, twenty of his major papers on morality and moral education were collected together in an edited volume entitled Psychology and Ethical Development. This volume provided much of the primary source material for this thesis.

In 1971 and 1972, Peters delivered the Lindsay Memorial Lectures at the University of Keele. These lectures were published in 1973 as Reason and Compassion. Another collection of articles, Authority, Responsibility and Education, first published in 1959, has been widely used by those who teach the foundations of education. This book is now in its third edition. Recently, Peters' edited volume Dewey Reconsidered (1977), and his own volume Education and the Education of Teachers (1977) have been added to the list. As well, Peters continues to write numerous articles, book reviews, short essays and addresses.

APPENDIX II

KOHLBERG'S STAGES OF MORAL DEVELOPMENT

I. PRECONVENTIONAL LEVEL

At this level the child is responsive to cultural rules and labels of good and bad, right and wrong, but interprets these labels in terms of either the physical or hedonistic consequences of action, punishment, reward, exchange of favors, or in terms of the physical power of those who enunciate the rules and labels. This level is divided into two stages:

Stage 1: The punishment and obedience orientation. The physical consequences of action determine its goodness or badness regardless of the human meaning or value of these consequences.

Stage 2: The instrumental-relativist orientation. Right action consists of that which instrumentally satisfies one's own needs and occasionally the needs of others. Reciprocity is a matter of you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours.

II. CONVENTIONAL LEVEL

At this level, maintaining the expectations of the individual's family, group, or nation is perceived as valuable in its own right, regardless of immediate and obvious consequences. The attitude is not only one of conformity to personal expectations and social order, but one of loyalty to it, of actively maintaining, supporting, and justifying the order and of identifying with the persons or group involved in it. At this level there are the following two stages:

Stage 3: The "good boy-nice girl" orientation. Good behavior is that which pleases or helps others and is approved by them. There is much conformity to images of what is majority behavior.

Stage 4: The law and order orientation. An orientation toward authority, fixed rules, and the maintenance of the social order. Right behavior consists of doing one's duty, showing respect for authority, and maintaining the social order for its own sake.

III. THE POST-CONVENTIONAL, AUTONOMOUS, OR PRINCIPLED LEVEL

At this level there is a clear effort to define moral values and principles which have application apart from the authority of the groups and persons holding these principles and apart from the individual's own identification with these groups. This level has two stages:

Stage 5: The social-contract legalistic orientation. Right action tends to be defined in terms of general individual rights and in terms of standards which are critically examined and agreed upon by the whole society. An emphasis upon procedural rules for reaching consensus. This is the official morality of the American Government and the Constitution.

Stage 6: The universal ethical principle orientation. Right is defined by the decision of conscience in accord with self-chosen ethical principles appealing to logical comprehension, universality, and consistency. These principles are abstract and ethical, like the Golden Rule, and not moral imperatives like the Ten Commandments. At heart these are universal principles of justice, of the reciprocity and equality of human rights, and respect for the dignity of human beings as individual persons.[7]

(adapted from L. Kohlberg, "From Is to Ought: How to Commit the Naturalistic Fallacy and Get Away with It in the Study of Moral Development," in T. Mischel (ed.) Cognitive Development. New York: Academic Press, Inc., 1971, pp. 151-232.

MORAL COMPONENTS

A. <u>Wilson's Components</u> (John Wilson, <u>The Assessment of Morality</u>. NFER:1973,
pp. 38,39)

PHIL(HC)	Having the concept of a 'person'.
PHIL(CC)	Claiming to use this concept in an overriding, prescriptive and universalized (O, P and U) principle.
PHIL(RSF)(DO & PO)	Having feelings which support this principle, either of a 'duty-oriented' (DO) or a 'person-oriented' (PO) kind.
EMP(HC)	Having the concepts of various emotions (moods, etc.).
EMP(1)(Cs)	Being able, in practice, to identify emotions, etc. in oneself, when these are at a conscious level.
EMP(1)(Ucs)	Ditto, when the emotions are at an unconscious level.
EMP(2)(Cs)	Ditto, in other people, when at a conscious level.
EMP(2)(Ucs)	Ditto, when at an unconscious level.
GIG(1)(KF)	Knowing other ('hard') facts relevant to moral decisions.
GIG(1)(KS)	Knowing sources of facts (where to find out) as above.
GIG(2)(VC)	'Knowing how'—a 'skill' element in dealing with moral situations, as evinced in verbal communication with others.
GIG(2)(NVC)	Ditto, in non-verbal communication.
KRAT(1)(RA)	Being, in practice, 'relevantly alert' to (noticing) moral situations, and seeing them as such (describing them in terms of PHIL, etc. above).
KRAT(1)(TT)	Thinking thoroughly about such situations, and bringing to bear whatever PHIL, EMP and GIG one has.
KRAT(1)(OPU)	As a result of the foregoing, making an overriding, prescriptive and universalized decision to act in others' interests.
KRAT(2)	Being sufficiently whole-hearted, free from unconscious counter-motivation, etc. to carry out (when able) the above decision in practice.

B. Hirst's Components (Paul Hirst, <u>Moral Education in a Secular Society</u>,
London: University of London Press Ltd., 1974, p. 91)

A (i) Procedural knowledge or 'know-how' of the logic of rational moral judgments.
  (ii) Procedural knowledge of social skills and roles.

B (i) Propositional knowledge or 'know-that' of the fundamental moral principles.
  (ii) Propositional knowledge of the physical world.
  (iii) Propositional knowledge of persons, both self and others.
  (iv) Propositional knowledge of social institutions and roles.

C (i) Dispositions, conscious and unconscious, to think and judge morally.
  (ii) Dispositions, conscious and unconscious, to act in accordance with moral judgments.

D Emotional experiences in keeping with rational moral judgments which facilitate moral action.

C. AVER Components (Association for Values Education and Research,
"Canada Council Proposal for Moral Education
Research Grant," University of British Columbia,
Vancouver, Canada: AVER, mimeo., 1975, pp. 23-25)

A. Belief in or commitment to the generalization principle expressed in the following two formulations:
(1) if it is right for me to do X it must be right for <u>anyone</u> in similar circumstances to do X;
(2) if the consequences of everyone's doing X in a given circumstance would be unacceptable, then it is not right for anyone to do X in that circumstance.

B. Sensitivity to morally hazardous actions, i.e. actions about which consideration is needed to determine whether or not they fulfill the generalization principle.
This means that one must have the sort of sensitivity that alerts him to (1) actions that may have consequences for others that he could not accept for himself, and (2) actions which may have disastrous consequences were everyone to engage in them.

C. Inclination to determine the consequences of actions which are morally hazardous

D. Ability and inclination to put oneself imaginatively into the circumstances of another person and thus come to appreciate the consequences of a proposed (morally hazardous) action for the other person.

E. Ability and inclination to fill in the missing parts of an incomplete moral argument and to assess the validity of a moral argument

F. Disposition to seek justifying argument from others who propose morally hazardous actions

G. Resolution to do what one has decided is the right thing and to refrain from doing what one has decided is wrong

H. Skill in verbal and non-verbal communication

I. Ability and disposition to assess the reliability of authorities

J. Ability and disposition to assess the truth of empirical claims

K. Ability and disposition to be clear in the language we use in deliberating about moral issues.