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# Cultural Diversity in the Morality of Caring: Individually Oriented Versus Duty-Based Interpersonal Moral Codes

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*This article argues that there exists not one universal morality of caring contrasting with the morality of justice but, rather, alternative types of interpersonal moralities that reflect the meaning systems emphasized in different cultural groups. Both the superogatory view of interpersonal morality held by Lawrence Kohlberg and the morality-of-caring framework developed by Carol Gilligan are shown to be culturally bound. Research conducted among American and Hindu Indian populations supports the claim that an individually oriented interpersonal moral code develops among Americans, stressing personal freedom of choice, individual responsibility, and a dualistic view of individual motivation. In contrast, a duty-based interpersonal moral code develops among Hindu Indians, stressing broad and socially enforceable interpersonal obligations, the importance of contextual sensitivity, and a monistic view of individual motivation. Issues for future research are identified, and implications of these alternative interpersonal moral codes for other domains of interpersonal functioning are suggested.*

In recent years, increasing attention has been paid in research on moral reasoning to interpersonal morality—that is, to obligations to be responsive to the needs of family, friends, and others with

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whom one has a communal relationship. Dominated by the model of Lawrence Kohlberg, early work in this area linked morality exclusively to justice and either ignored interpersonal responsibilities or treated them as superogatory expectations that can be understood within a justice framework (Kohlberg, 1981; Kohlberg, Levine, & Hower, 1983). More recently, research on this topic has been dominated by the model of Carol Gilligan (Gilligan, 1982; Gilligan, Ward, & Taylor, 1988), which posits the existence of a morality of caring that differs from that of justice and is gender related.

In this article, I will argue that alternative types of models are needed to account for the perspectives on interpersonal morality emphasized in cultures stressing independent as contrasted with interdependent cultural views of the self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Focusing on a comparison of American and Hindu Indian cultural viewpoints, I will posit that the type of interpersonal moral code emphasized among Americans may be considered *individually centered*, in its view of interpersonal commitments as matters of personal decision making and in its concern with weighing of responsibilities to others against responsibilities to self. In contrast, I will assert that the type of interpersonal moral code found among Hindu Indians may be considered *duty based*, in its view that interpersonal responsibilities are mandatory in character and based simultaneously on one's position in the social whole and on one's nature.

The article is organized into three parts. In the first section, I critically review the two major approaches to interpersonal morality reflected in current psychological theory—that is, (a) the view of interpersonal responsibilities as superogatory expectations, as elaborated by Kohlberg and others (e.g., Higgins, Power, & Kohlberg, 1984; Nunner-Winkler, 1984); and (b) the view of interpersonal responsibilities as part of a morality of caring, a position proposed

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by Gilligan (1977, 1982). I assert that neither perspective adequately takes into account cultural variability in conceptions of the self and as a result may be culturally bound. In the second section, after describing certain key differences distinguishing cultural conceptions of the self, I forward the argument that qualitatively distinct interpersonal moral codes are found among Americans as contrasted with Hindu Indians and discuss research that I have conducted with other researchers bearing on this theoretical claim. Finally, in the last section, I consider some directions for future theory and research.

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON INTERPERSONAL MORALITY**

### **THE MORALITY OF SUPEROGATORY EXPECTATIONS**

Until recently, virtually the only framework for understanding interpersonal responsibilities was as a form of superogatory expectation. Applied first to cases of beneficence, a logical argument was forwarded as to why such concerns lack the full moral force associated with justice obligations (Gert, 1988; Kant, 1797/1964; Urmson, 1958). This argument centers around the problem of limiting the scope of positive obligations and thus in subjecting them to social rules. Whereas justice obligations (e.g., "Do not harm others") can be met merely by refraining from violating another's rights, beneficence obligations (e.g., "Help needy others") prescribe acts of commission that go beyond the other's rights. They thus must be limited in scope to avoid overtaxing the agent's resources. However, even when beneficence obligations are qualified to apply only in cases involving little self-sacrifice, they are still seen as too unbounded to formulate in a rulelike manner (Rawls, 1971; Sidgwick, 1874/1962). As Gert (1988) notes, given the many ways of helping others and the unlimited needs that exist, agents would find themselves unable ever to relax if they were expected to help all needy others whom they could aid at little cost. For this reason, it is argued that beneficence has a contrasting status to that of justice. Whereas justice obligations can be formulated as socially enforceable duties, beneficence obligations can be

formulated only as broad maxims, which guide but do not dictate conduct. Whereas a failure to uphold justice is considered to represent a moral vice, a failure to display beneficence is considered to indicate only a lack of moral virtue.

In later years, the concept of superogatory expectations has been extended to encompass role-related commitments (Kohlberg et al., 1983; Higgins et al., 1984). In this view, interpersonal responsibilities are seen as based on collective norms that develop within role relationships or other social groups and that involve obligations to be responsive to the needs of others within these networks. Based on a valuing of group commitments and ideals, role-related responsibilities are assumed to entail that loyalty, trustworthiness, and caring be displayed to members of the relevant in-group. This type of orientation is illustrated in the following explanation given by a 10th grader from an alternative high school in explaining why she would help her peers:

“Because you have a responsibility to the kids in this school, even if you don’t like them all that much, you are in school and you’re with them every day, you know, you are supposed to think of them as part of the school and part of the community, so you should do it. . . . Anyone who is in Cluster (School) knows they should help out . . . there is a general feeling and everyone knows that.” (Higgins et al., 1984, p. 93)

It is maintained that although role-related responsibilities are stronger than justice obligations in that they require more than merely refraining from harm, they are also weaker in that they do not constitute duties. Reflecting this lesser moral status, interpersonal responsibilities are assumed to be subordinate to justice obligations in cases of conflict.

*A critique.* The present approach to interpersonal responsibilities may be criticized as failing to recognize the extent to which the status of interpersonal responsibilities is contingent on cultural expectations rather than given in experience. In particular, I would argue that the superogatory status of interpersonal responsibilities is not explicable merely in terms of intrinsic differences between positive and negative injunctions but, rather, derives, at least in part, from the rights-based view of morality assumed in this framework (Miller, 1991).

The claim that it is impossible sufficiently to qualify the scope of interpersonal responsibilities rests on admitting only a small set of qualifications as acceptable (e.g., low cost to the agent and the existence of a communal relationship). However, as I have discussed elsewhere (Miller, 1991), a wide range of other qualifications could also be added that would further reduce the scope of interpersonal responsibilities and thus make them susceptible to social regulation. Equally, it must be recognized that all social rules contain implicit qualifications that serve to delimit their scope, with justice rules similar to interpersonal responsibilities in this respect (Nunner-Winkler, 1984). The need for contextual qualification then would not seem to necessitate that interpersonal responsibilities be accorded only a superogatory status rather than the fully moral status accorded justice.

Rather, I would maintain that the view of interpersonal responsibilities as superogatory may derive not from intrinsic properties of experience but from the individualistic assumptions made within this framework. Within the Kohlbergian approach and the Kantian tradition on which it is based, the assumption is made that moral precedence should be given to individual rights and freedom of choice (Dworkin, 1977; Frankena, 1973; Kohlberg, 1981). As reflected in the Rawlsian conception of the veil of ignorance, individuals tend to be conceptualized as inherently autonomous beings who voluntarily enter into role relationships as a means of protecting their individual interests. These assumptions appear to result in a reticence to subject obligations that do not directly promote or protect individual rights or interests to social regulation, because such regulation is seen as constraining individual freedom of choice (L. C. Becker, 1980). They also imply a hierarchy of obligations, with duties that derive from one's status as an autonomous individual considered more fundamental than duties that derive from one's position in the social order.

To the extent that an underlying emphasis on individual rights and autonomous individualism underlies the superogatory view of interpersonal responsibilities, it suggests that the status of interpersonal responsibilities is culturally grounded. Cultures or subgroups that do not emphasize individualistic conceptions of the self then might be expected not to treat interpersonal responsibilities as superogatory but rather to accord them an alternative moral status—one that cannot be subsumed within a justice framework.

## THE MORALITY OF CARING

This assumption that conceptions of morality are based on conceptions of self forms the basis for Gilligan's critique of the Kohlbergian position (Gilligan, 1982). It also is central to her groundbreaking thesis that there exists a morality of caring that is independent of the morality of justice and linked to a "connected" view of self—a view that, she assumes, is more characteristic of females than of males.

Gilligan's critique of the morality of justice rests on the argument that such a model is based on an "autonomous" view of self and, as such, fails to account for all of morality—in particular, for conceptions of morality that reflect a connected view of self. The morality of justice is seen as emphasizing the application of impartial rules, principles, and standards and as consonant with a self that is experienced as detached from others. However, it is regarded as an inadequate framework from which to understand caring. Within a justice framework, caring is assumed to have a subordinate status relative to justice rather than being treated as a distinct concern that may be given precedence over justice. A superogatory interpretation of caring is also viewed as applying a rule-based perspective to a domain in which it is inapplicable, with caring portrayed as based on "heteronomous and reified moral norms" rather than as governed by "standards of authentic relationship" (Gilligan & Wiggins, 1987, p. 295).

The morality of caring, in Gilligan's view, is based, not on social role expectations or formal rules but on feelings of caring that develop in the experience of relationships with others. As illustrated in the view of responsibility held by 11-year-old "Amy," below, a caring response is considered as one that is highly sensitive to contextual circumstances and that is oriented toward balancing the needs of all parties involved:

"Well it really depends on the situation. If you have a responsibility with somebody else, then you should keep it to a certain extent, but to the extent that it is really going to hurt you or stop you from doing something that you really want, then I think maybe you should put yourself first. But if it is your responsibility to somebody really close to you, you've just got to decide in that situation which is more important, yourself or that person." (Gilligan, 1982, pp. 35-36)

Amy may be seen to approach caring as a personal decision that should take into account both the desires of the self and those of others.

The connected view of self assumed to underlay a caring perspective is one that stresses both interpersonal interdependence and individuality. Emphasis is placed on displaying responsiveness to others while maintaining a sense of self that is based on more than just the expectations of others. This stance is illustrated in the response of a college student, "Claire," who describes herself "in the process of seeking to 'discover what's me' as beginning to 'get rid of all these labels and things I just don't see on my own':

"I'm trying to be myself alone, apart from others, apart from their definitions of me, and yet at the same time I'm doing just the opposite, trying to be with or relate to—whatever the terminology is—I don't think they are mutually exclusive." (Gilligan, 1982, p. 53)

From the perspective of a connected self, interpersonal relationships should allow for individuality, with the ideal family, for example, being one "where everyone is encouraged to become an individual and at the same time everybody helps others and receives help from them" (Gilligan, 1982, p. 54).

Drawing on attachment theory and on recent psychoanalytical formulations (Bowlby, 1969, 1973, 1980; Chodorow, 1974), Gilligan's account of the origins of the connected versus autonomous selves emphasizes the formative influences of early experiences of inequality and connection. As a girl develops, she is seen as maintaining both an attachment and an identification with her mother. Attachment thus becomes central to her sense of efficacy and self-esteem. This stance, however, is viewed as becoming problematic in adolescence, a time when a woman finds that her connected self conflicts with the autonomous self valued in the larger culture. In contrast, it is maintained that a boy holds an attachment to his mother but identifies with his father. Experiencing inequality in relation to his father and desiring to overcome this status, the boy is seen as developing a self that emphasizes independence and autonomy—a self congruent with the values of the larger culture.

Gilligan's account of the origins of the connected versus autonomous selves portrays them as universals:

[T]he different dynamics of early childhood inequality and attachment lay the groundwork for two moral visions—one of justice and one of care. . . . Although the nature of the attachment between child and parent varies across individual and cultural settings and although inequality can be heightened or muted by familial and societal arrangements, all people are born into a situation of inequality and no child survives in the absence of adult connection. Since everyone is vulnerable both to oppression and to abandonment, two stories about morality recur in human experience. (Gilligan & Wiggins, 1987, p. 281)

Although it is maintained that the experiences that give rise to caring as contrasted with justice orientations are not necessarily gender specific, they are assumed to be gender related.

*A critique.* Gilligan makes a valuable theoretical contribution to psychological theory in expanding normative models concerning the possible endpoints of development. Her work highlights the need to treat the domain of interpersonal morality as distinct from that of justice. However, I would argue that the model presented by Gilligan lacks sufficient sensitivity to the role of enculturation processes in development (Miller, 1991). In part as a consequence, there is little recognition of the extent to which the connected view of self and the associated morality of caring may be reflective of certain modern Western cultural assumptions and inadequate as characterizations of conceptions emphasized in groups that maintain alternative cultural viewpoints.

Gilligan's account of development stresses the importance of deep universals of experience (Shweder, 1984), such as the phenomena of mother/child attachment, while downplaying the impact of cultural factors that may qualitatively affect the nature of these experiences, such as conceptions of the child or of attachment (Harwood, 1992; Harwood & Miller, 1991; Miller, 1984, 1988; Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984). The most important environmental influences on development are presumed to be ones that are common across all cultures—that is, experiences of attachment and of inequality. In turn, cultural belief systems are viewed as having no impact on development, apart from their relationship to gender.

This failure to treat culture as an independent influence on development, I would assert, limits both the generality and explanatory adequacy of Gilligan's approach. The theory appears ill

equipped to explain the distribution of morality cross-culturally. Extending the logic of Gilligan's argument to diverse cultural groups, it would be expected that concepts of self and morality would be more similar among individuals of the same gender from different cultures than among individuals of different genders from the same culture. Such a claim, however, appears contradicted by the extensive anthropological and psychological evidence documenting marked culturally based differences in the views of self held among individuals from the United States as contrasted with from various non-Western cultures (e.g., Geertz, 1974; Heelas & Lock, 1981; Huebner & Garrod, 1991; Miller, 1984; Ostor, Fruzzetti, & Barnett, 1982; Shweder & Bourne, 1982).

In turn, I would assert that if Gilligan's theory is treated as applicable only to American populations it appears incomplete in that it fails to consider the ways in which gender-related experiences may be affected by the larger cultural context in which they occur. It cannot be assumed that whereas American males' views of self and morality are both shaped and supported by the individualism of the larger culture, American females' views of self and morality develop autonomously and only stand opposed to the values of the dominant culture. Just as the morality of justice developed among Americans reflects the individualism of the larger culture, it would be expected that the morality of caring developed among Americans also reflects aspects of this individualism.

## IMPLICATIONS

I have argued that both the morality of supererogatory expectations, as portrayed by Kohlberg and his associates, and the morality of caring, as portrayed by Gilligan and her colleagues, pay insufficient attention to the role of cultural factors in development. In presupposing certain Western individualistic cultural views of the self, both theories appear potentially culturally bound.

Taking into account Gilligan's important insight that views of morality are linked to conceptions of self (Gilligan, 1982) as well as evidence that conceptions of self are culturally variable (Markus & Kitayama, 1991) leads to the expectation that the types of interpersonal moral codes arising among American populations emphasizing an individualistic cultural view of the self will differ

qualitatively from those arising among populations emphasizing a more interdependent cultural view of the self. The following section attempts to characterize some of this posited cultural diversity, making reference to empirical studies that I have conducted with other researchers among American and Hindu Indian adults and children.

## **INDIVIDUALLY ORIENTED VERSUS DUTY-BASED INTERPERSONAL MORALITIES**

### **CULTURAL VARIATION IN CONCEPTIONS OF THE SELF**

Although there is considerable heterogeneity in views of the self within different Western and non-Western cultures as well as within different subgroups in any particular Western or non-Western culture (Murray, 1993), certain broad differences have been documented to distinguish the modern Western view of self emphasized in American populations and the view of self emphasized within many Asian cultures (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985; Dumont, 1965). Characterized at a global level in terms of such labels as "individualistic" versus "collectivist," "independent" versus "interdependent," "egocentric" versus "sociocentric," and so on, these contrasting cultural conceptions of self have been shown to affect social attribution, affect, motivation, and many other areas of individual psychological functioning (Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Miller, 1988; Shweder & LeVine, 1984; Shweder & Sullivan, 1993; Stigler, Shweder, & Herdt, 1990; Triandis, 1989, 1990). A thorough exposition of the modern Western cultural views of the self emphasized among Americans and of the cultural views of the self emphasized in traditional Hindu Indian communities is beyond the scope of the present article. However, I will attempt briefly to identify a few of the key differences in these cultural conceptions that may be expected to affect the interpersonal moral codes emphasized among American and Hindu Indian populations.

*Modern Western cultural conceptions of self.* As theorists have noted, the self-sufficient individual tends to be accorded para-

mount value in modern Western thought (Dumont, 1965, 1970; Lukes, 1973). In this view the individual is treated as prior to and more fundamental than the social order, with the social order existing only as a means for the realization of individual ends:

[E]ach man is conceived as presenting in spite of and over and above his particularity, the essence of humanity. . . . This individual is quasi-sacred, absolute; there is nothing over and above his legitimate demands; his rights are limited only by the identical rights of other individuals. He is a monad, in short, and every human group is made up of monads of this kind. (Dumont, 1970, p. 4)

Such a concept of the self, as I noted earlier, underlies the social contract perspective of John Rawls (1971) and Lawrence Kohlberg (1981), with their views of a fair moral system as one premised on the position of an autonomous asocial individual and of society as an "artificial" construction designed fundamentally to serve individual needs. This individualistic emphasis leads to a certain tension between the individual and the group, with social obligations that do not protect individual rights considered to have the negative effect of restricting personal liberties:

Liberalism teaches that there is something natural, fundamental and inescapable about people's right to liberty. Consequently, the duty to respect other's liberties (though derivative) is equally natural and inescapable. But an obligation to work for the benefit of others is seen as artificial rather than natural and as something which—if it can ever be justified at all—must be subordinate to the demands of liberty. (L. C. Becker, 1980, p. 39)

The Western cultural view of self under consideration here also may be seen to be dualistic, with sharp distinctions drawn between nature and culture, self and role, affect and cognition, matter and mind, and so on:

An analytic framework that equates "self/individual" with such things as spontaneity, genuine feeling, privacy, uniqueness, constancy, the "inner life" and then opposes these to mask, role, rule or context is a reflection of dichotomies that constitute the modern Western self. (Rosaldo, 1985, p. 146)

In this culturally based view, social expectations tend to be seen as external forms that constrain the true underlying self:

The basic conception of self in the Western culture can be very briefly outlined thus: in each human being, there obtains an inner core which is separable and different from everything else. In such a culture, when one speaks of finding oneself, one means that one should look inside oneself, get in touch with an inner self that is there inside oneself and peel everything away that surrounds this core. To such a self, even its own actions can appear strange. (Balagangadhara, 1988, p. 100)

Finally, this cultural conception of self not only tends to embody a tension between the self and the role but also to draw a sharp distinction between the self and the context. As Geertz observes, the "Western conception of the person" represents "a dynamic center of awareness, emotion, judgment and action organized into a distinctive whole and set contrastively both against other such wholes and against its social and natural background" (Geertz, 1974, p. 225). Placing value on both the unique and the universal, the ideal self is seen as different from others, yet as able to act consistently and to resist situational pressures (Ramanujan, 1990).

As I discussed earlier and as noted by other critics, the Kohlbergian approach to morality reflects these Western individualistic cultural assumptions about the self (Miller, 1991; Shweder, 1982; Shweder, Mahapatra, & Miller, 1987; Simpson, 1974). Such assumptions underlie, at least in part, the primacy accorded to individual rights, the claim that a role-based morality is necessarily subordinate to a morality of justice, and the emphasis on universal moral rules.

Although Gilligan's approach rejects these various tenets of the Kohlbergian perspective, I would assert that it embodies, in somewhat different ways, this modern Western cultural view of the self. Gilligan's perspective may be seen to emphasize the importance of the individual, for example, in its stress on weighing individual needs and desires against interpersonal responsibilities and on maintaining a sense of individuality within social groups, such as the family. As reflected in the illustrative example of Claire, the connected self portrayed in Gilligan's account also is dualistic, with a core genuine self seen as underlying societal labels. Finally, although valuing contextual sensitivity, the connected self is portrayed as having firm boundaries, as evidenced in the ability to resist external pressures and to feel whole apart from others' expectations.

Within psychology, emphasis is typically placed on the differences between the perspectives of Kohlberg and that of Gilligan, with Kohlberg's theory seen as based on an individualistic or *Gesellschaft* cultural view and Gilligan's approach seen as based on a collectivistic or *Gemeinschaft* cultural view (Haste & Baddeley, 1991; Snarey & Keljo, 1991). Without overlooking the differential emphases of the two frameworks and the contrasting predictions generated within each, I am arguing here that both perspectives need to be seen as grounded in individualistic cultural assumptions. In some cases, the two perspectives draw on different aspects of the type of modern Western cultural view of self under consideration here, with Kohlberg emphasizing the centrality of individual rights and Gilligan emphasizing the tension between the self and the role; in other cases, however, they draw on similar aspects, with both approaches valuing individual freedom of choice and emphasizing internal loci of control for conduct.

With both the Kohlbergian and the Gilligan perspectives tapping somewhat contrasting aspects of this modern Western cultural view of the self, it would be expected that both perspectives are necessary to account for the interpersonal moral orientations emphasized among American populations. In addition, it would be expected that the two perspectives have more in common with each other than either does with a perspective that is based on more interdependent cultural views.

*Hindu Indian cultural conceptions of self.* In contrast to the concept of the autonomous individual in modern Western thought, Hindu Indian culture tends to conceptualize the person as inherently part of a social body. Central to this view of self is the concept of *dharma*, which denotes simultaneously moral duty, code for conduct, right action, and inherent character (Kakar, 1978; Marriott, 1990a; Weightman & Pandey, 1978). It is assumed that *dharma* inheres in all living things and that acting in accord with *dharma* not only ensures the smooth functioning of the social and natural order but also represents the means for realizing one's true nature. As Kakar observes: "*dharma* is the means through which man approaches the desired goal of human life" (Kakar, 1978, p. 37). Unlike in Western conceptions, which tend to portray individuals as naturally autonomous and duty as a restriction on this freedom,

Hindu Indian conceptions tend to portray individuals as naturally social and duty as congruent with individual inclinations:

Traditional India regards duty as emanating from one's nature—one can't help doing it—while the Western idea of duty requires a struggle against oneself, and the idea of "glad concurrence" is far less prominent in Western attitudes to duty than is the image of bitter medicine. (O'Flaherty & Derrett, 1978, p. xix)

Differing from Western conceptions of self, Hindu Indian views tend to be monistic, with no sharp distinction drawn between the self and the role, much less between material and spiritual nature or between the person and the surround (Balagangadhara, 1978; Marriott, 1976, 1990a; Misra & Gergen, 1992). As Marriott observes in characterizing Indian thought about social relations,

[T]he assumption of the easy, proper separability of action from actor, of code from substance (similar to the assumption of the separability of law from nature, norm from behavior, mind from body, spirit or energy from matter), that pervades both Western philosophy and Western common sense . . . is generally absent. (Marriott, 1976, pp. 109-110)

In maintaining a belief in *karma*, actions are seen as simultaneously the results as well as the causes of actors' particular natures. One's social position or role then is not regarded as masking the true self but as reflecting and embodying aspects of the self.

Finally, in Hindu Indian culture, the self is characterized as a relatively "open" entity who is highly vulnerable to the effects of the surround (Marriott, 1976, 1990b). In contrast to the Western stress on autonomy, emphasis is placed on interpersonal interdependence, with the assumption that it is "natural both to take care of others and to expect to be cared for" (Kakar, 1978, p. 83). This approach to the self differs from the modern Western view described in its valuing of the "context sensitive." *Dharma*, for example, is considered to be contextually dependent, with duty relative to one's culture, historical time, life stage, innate dispositions, situational state, and so on (Kakar, 1978). As Ramanujan (1990) observes, in this view there is no conception of a universal human nature from which to deduce universal moral laws.

## **INDIVIDUALLY ORIENTED VERSUS DUTY-BASED INTERPERSONAL MORAL CODES**

### **Theoretical Overview**

It has been seen that Hindu Indian cultural conceptions of self differ markedly from either the autonomous view of self informing the Kohlbergian account or the connected view of self assumed in Gilligan's model. It would be expected then that the type of interpersonal moral code emphasized among Hindu Indians would differ qualitatively from that portrayed by Kohlberg and others in the theory of superogatory interpersonal morality or from that portrayed by Gilligan in the theory of the morality of caring and that these qualitative differences would reflect Hindu Indian cultural views. Specifically, I argue that the type of interpersonal moral perspective emphasized among Americans needs to be understood as representing an individually oriented moral code. Our research (Bersoff & Miller, 1993; Miller & Bersoff, 1992, in press; Miller, Bersoff, & Harwood, 1990; Miller & Luthar, 1989) indicates that this type of code encompasses aspects of both the superogatory and morality of caring frameworks. In contrast, I maintain that the type of perspective emphasized among Hindu Indians needs to be understood as representing a duty-based interpersonal moral code. The studies that we have conducted reveal that this latter type of code does not conform to either of these two existing frameworks.

In labeling the interpersonal moral perspective emphasized among Americans as individually oriented, I do not mean to imply that this code embodies a self-centered position. Rather, I have selected this label to highlight the centrality given to individual needs, desires, and volition in the approach and the grounding of the approach in certain Western cultural views of the self. Although the nature of the interpersonal moral code emphasized among Americans is not rights-based per se, it forms part of a cultural system in which highest priority is accorded to individual rights (Shweder, 1982) and in which, accordingly, there is a minimalist view of interpersonal moral obligations (Miller et al., 1990). Our research indicates that emphasis is placed on the agent's right to self-determination and to self-actualization. It is viewed as both

natural and normatively desirable that individuals should be oriented toward meeting their own needs and pursuing individual satisfaction and happiness. As our studies demonstrate, although Americans regard it as legitimate to have socially enforceable moral rules around issues that directly further the rights and interests of the individual, such as matters of justice, they are reticent to subject to social regulation matters that do not directly promote individual rights and interests, such as interpersonal responsibilities.

Reflecting the modern Western cultural emphasis on the asocial and autonomous individual as the fundamental social unit, an individually oriented moral perspective emphasizes a contractual conception of interpersonal commitments. Relationships tend to be regarded as voluntary associations intended to serve mutual need fulfillment. Emphasis is placed on balancing one's own needs with those of others, with relationships in which the agent subordinates his or her own needs to those of others seen as undesirable. In our research, we have observed that a sharp distinction, if not opposition, also tends to be drawn between the self and the role, with Americans tending to view societal expectations as external impositions on the true or genuine self. With the emphasis on voluntarism, the commitment to respond to another's needs is regarded as arising out of the agent's affective caring for the other or from some other form of personal motivation. Although an individually oriented interpersonal moral code allows the agent considerable freedom of choice, our evidence indicates that it is associated with a precariousness in interpersonal ties. Bound by choice and not by duty, agents are regarded as having considerable discretion about whether or not to display interpersonal responsiveness.

An individually oriented interpersonal moral code tends to be linked to a relatively rule-oriented and decontextualized style of moral judgment. Our studies indicate that this is not because of an assumption that justice invariably takes precedence over interpersonal concerns but because of the view of the person as a bounded entity able to resist contextual influences. We have observed that, in emphasizing internal loci of control for behavior, there is a tendency to hold agents accountable for conformity to moral rules rather than to locate responsibility for behavior on situational factors beyond the agent's control.

By comparison, in labeling the type of perspective emphasized among Hindu Indians as duty based, I am seeking to underscore

the Hindu Indian view of interpersonal responsibilities as obligatory rather than as voluntarily assumed. I should emphasize, however, that the Hindu Indian conception of duty differs from the comparable American notion in that it represents a monistic concept, reflecting both one's nature and the requirements of the social order, and extending through all forms of life, rather than only of persons (Kakar, 1978; Marriott, 1976; Vasudev & Hummel, 1987). Doing one's duty is experienced as both meeting social requirements and as realizing one's nature, with duty regarded as highly differentiated across persons having different social statuses and roles. The studies that we have undertaken indicate that, in viewing persons as inherently part of a social order rather than as autonomous, Indians have little reticence about treating interpersonal responsibilities as matters for social regulation.

In contrast to the tendency within an individually oriented framework to view the contract as the prototypical form of social relationship, there is a tendency within a duty-based view to treat familial relationships as prototypical (Shweder et al., 1987). Interpersonal interdependence and paternalism are emphasized, with concern directed to the requirements of the social whole and to the processes of interdependence, exchange and transformation occurring both between and within persons. Our research suggests that, although individual happiness is not a goal per se, the system tends not to be experienced as oppressing the individual or as requiring that individual needs be subordinated to the requirements of the social order. Rather, individuals tend to view themselves as realizing their own essential natures (*dharma*) and as attaining spiritual merit through meeting social role and status expectations. We have observed that, although allowing agents relatively limited freedom of choice, this type of interpersonal moral code is associated with an expansive and relatively noncontingent view of interpersonal commitments.

In presupposing a relatively open conception of the person, a duty-based interpersonal code tends to be linked to a contextualized style of moral judgment. It is assumed to be both natural and normatively desirable that behavior be sensitive to situational influences. Value is placed not so much on consistency in following moral rules as on being able to take into account and adjust to changing circumstances. Our evidence indicates that there is a tendency to locate moral responsibility for behavior relationally by reference to processes occurring between persons and the sur-

round, rather than to focus on the autonomous individual as the locus of responsibility.

## **EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE**

Reviewed below are studies that we (Bersoff & Miller, 1993; Miller & Bersoff, 1992, in press; Miller et al., 1990; Miller & Luthar, 1989) have conducted examining five key differences that I am positing, distinguish the duty-based code found among traditional Hindu Indian populations from the individually oriented interpersonal moral code found among American populations. I list the differences as distinct propositions, followed by discussion of specific evidence in support of each.

In our studies, we assess moral judgment in terms of the distinct domain approach developed by Turiel and employed extensively in recent research (see reviews in Turiel, 1983; Turiel, Killen, & Helwig, 1987). This approach shares the same formal definition of morality maintained in the Kohlbergian framework. However, moral judgments are assessed in terms of individuals' responses to short-answer criterion probes, rather than only in terms of their open-ended justifications of their reasoning. In drawing a sharp distinction between the form and content of morality, this methodological approach makes it possible to assess whether individuals apply the formal properties that define an issue as moral (e.g., the properties of being important, objective, socially enforceable, etc.) to content issues other than justice or individual rights. The criterion probe technique also has the advantage of being less dependent on linguistic fluency than is the Kohlbergian methodology. For example, studies that have employed this type of methodology have documented that even preschool and early elementary school aged children are capable of distinguishing between moral, conventional, and personal issues (Nucci, 1981; Smetana, 1981). It is then less likely that cross-cultural differences observed in moral judgment can be explained in either cognitive or linguistic terms when employing this type of methodology than when employing Kohlbergian assessment techniques.

The various studies to be described were undertaken among middle-class American children and adults sampled from the Greater New Haven, Connecticut, area and among middle-class and lower-class Hindu Indian children and adults sampled from Mysore City in southern India. The American sample was composed primarily

of individuals of non-Hispanic European background who tended to maintain relatively liberal social beliefs and practices. In turn, the Indian sample included individuals who tended to maintain relatively traditional Hindu Indian social beliefs and practices. It should be stressed that the results obtained need to be viewed as limited in generality to these types of populations assessed in each culture. It appears possible, for example, that responses that are more similar to the present American pattern might be found among Indian populations, such as the Anglo-Indians, who maintain more Westernized cultural values (Miller, 1984). Equally, responses that are more similar to the present Hindu Indian pattern might be found among American populations that maintain orthodox religious views or who are from other ethnic backgrounds.

In all of the investigations under consideration, comparisons revealed few, if any, effects of socioeconomic status. No sex differences were observed in any case.

H1: Interpersonal responsibilities are broader in scope in duty-based interpersonal moral codes than in individually oriented interpersonal moral codes.

H2: Interpersonal responsibilities tend to be considered socially enforceable obligations in duty-based interpersonal moral codes and as matters for personal decision making in individually oriented interpersonal moral codes.

To compare perceptions of the stringency and scope of interpersonal responsibilities, we presented a sample of American and of Hindu Indian adults and children with hypothetical scenarios in which, for selfish reasons, agents failed to help someone who was experiencing either life-threatening need (e.g., the need for mouth-to-mouth resuscitation), moderately serious need (e.g., the need for aspirin to relieve a migraine headache), or minor need (e.g., the need for a small sum of money to purchase a movie ticket) (Miller et al., 1990). In a between-subject manipulation, we portrayed the agent's relationship to the needy other as either that of (a) parents to their 10- to 12-year-old child, (b) adult best friends, or (c) adult strangers. In this and all of the other studies to be described, culture-specific versions of the scenarios were used, with interviews among the Indian sample conducted in the local language of Kannada by native researchers.

Moral reasoning was assessed based on responses to objective obligation and legitimate regulation criterion probes. The objective obligation question assessed whether the act under consideration was considered obligatory—for example, “If people do not want to give other people directions in situations like this, do you think they still have an obligation to give them directions anyway? We mean here more than an obligation that exists just because of a rule or law.” In turn, the legitimate regulation question assessed whether it was legitimate to sanction persons for engaging in the behavior. For example, subjects were asked to sort each behavior into one of the following two categories: (a) “It is alright to try to stop or punish, in some way, a person who acts like this.” (b) “This is the person’s own business. It is not alright to try to stop or punish, in some way, a person who acts like this.” It was explained that “stop or punish” included not merely legal punishment but also nonlegal sanctions such as shunning or snubbing.

In conformity with past theoretical definitions (Nucci, 1981; Shweder, 1982; Turiel, 1983), responses to these two questions were employed to classify subjects’ responses:

- a. Behaviors regarded both as governed by an objective obligation and as legitimately regulated were considered moral issues.
- b. Behaviors regarded as governed by an objective obligation but not legitimately regulated were considered personal-moral concerns.
- c. Behaviors regarded as neither governed by an objective obligation nor legitimately regulated were considered matters of personal choice.
- d. Behaviors regarded as legitimately regulated but not as governed by an objective obligation were considered social conventions.

The results revealed that Indians maintained a moral view of the incidents, with their responses showing virtually no variation related to need or role. With only one exception, over 90% of the Indians categorized not responding to another’s need as a moral violation—that is, as both governed by an objective obligation and legitimately regulated. This one exception involved the case of a stranger in minor need, which only 73% of the Indian adults categorized as moral and the remainder classified as a personal-choice issue. In contrast, with the exception of cases involving life-threatening needs ( $M = 93\%$ ), Americans less frequently categorized the breaches in moral terms ( $M = 36\%$ ), with their responses

showing marked effects of both need and role. Fewer Americans judged that there was an objective obligation to help or that it was legitimate to regulate helping as the level of need decreased and as the role relationship became more remote. Americans more frequently considered that the behavior was governed by an objective obligation than considered it as legitimate to regulate the behavior.

The results support the present claim that the perceived scope of moral obligations is greater in cultures emphasizing duty-based interpersonal moral codes as contrasted with individually oriented interpersonal moral codes. We observed that Indians assumed a general obligation to respond to others' needs, whereas Americans viewed this obligation as contingent on the nature of the relationship and magnitude of the need. The results also support the assertion that a more stringent view of interpersonal responsibilities is held in a duty-based interpersonal moral code than in an individually oriented interpersonal moral code, with Indians tending to view interpersonal responsibilities as subject to social enforcement and Americans tending to view them as matters for personal decision making.

It may be noted that the pattern of moral judgments observed among Americans conforms to trends that would be expected within both the superogatory and morality of caring frameworks—frameworks that portray interpersonal responsibilities as matters for personal decision making. However, the tendency of Indians to treat interpersonal responsibilities as socially enforceable does not appear explicable within either framework.

H3: Greater priority is given to interpersonal responsibilities relative to justice obligations in duty-based interpersonal moral codes than in individually oriented interpersonal moral codes.

To examine the priority given to interpersonal responsibilities relative to justice obligations, we presented a sample of American and Hindu Indian adults and children (third grade and seventh grade) with hypothetical breaches of either justice obligations or of interpersonal responsibilities, with the breaches ranging from ones with life-threatening consequences to ones with only minor consequences (Miller & Bersoff, 1992). In an initial session, we individualized the breaches so that they were perceived by the

subject as of equivalent importance. We then conducted a second session in which the breaches were pitted against each other in conflict scenarios, in which the only way to meet one type of obligation was to violate the other type.

An example of one of the conflict situations employed appears below:

Ben was in Los Angeles on business. When his meetings were over, he went to the train station. Ben planned to travel to San Francisco in order to attend the wedding of his best friend. He needed to catch the very next train if he was to be on time for the ceremony, as he had to deliver the wedding rings.

However, Ben's wallet was stolen in the train station. He lost all of his money as well as his ticket to San Francisco. Ben approached several officials as well as passengers at the train station and asked them to loan him money to buy a new ticket. But because he was a stranger, no one was willing to lend him the money he needed.

While Ben was sitting on a bench trying to decide what to do next, a well-dressed man sitting next to him walked away for a minute. Looking over at where the man had been sitting, Ben noticed that the man had left his coat unattended. Sticking out of the man's coat pocket was a train ticket to San Francisco. Ben knew that he could take the ticket and use it to travel to San Francisco on the next train. He also saw that the man had more than enough money in his coat pocket to buy another train ticket.

We presented two response alternatives following each scenario, with these alternatives mutually exclusive in that meeting one obligation entailed violating the other. For example, in the above case, we asked the subject which of the two alternatives Ben should undertake:

1. Ben should not take the ticket from the man's coat pocket—even though it means not getting to San Francisco in time to deliver the wedding rings to his best friend;
2. Ben should go to San Francisco to deliver the wedding rings to his best friend—even though it means taking the train ticket from the other man's coat pocket. (Miller & Bersoff, 1992, p. 545)

The results revealed that Indians more frequently gave priority to interpersonal considerations than did Americans. The greatest cross-cultural difference occurred in cases involving non-life-

threatening breaches, with on average 91% of the Indian adults giving priority to the interpersonal alternatives in contrast to only 46% of the American adults displaying this response. A similar, although less marked, cross-cultural difference was observed in cases involving life-threatening breaches, with 58% of the Indians and only 33% of the Americans giving priority to the interpersonal alternatives. We found no evidence that a distinct subgroup of subjects within each culture tended to favor justice responses and another to favor interpersonal responses.

In terms of moral assessment, Indians tended to consider the response alternatives that they endorsed as moral imperatives, regardless of whether these alternatives involved upholding justice obligations or fulfilling interpersonal responsibilities. In contrast, Americans tended to consider the response alternatives that they endorsed as moral imperatives only in cases in which the responses involved upholding justice. In cases in which the responses that they endorsed involved fulfilling interpersonal responsibilities, Americans tended to regard how to act as the agent's own business.

The results support the present claim that greater priority is given to interpersonal responsibilities relative to justice obligations in duty-based interpersonal moral codes than in individually oriented interpersonal moral codes. Indians both gave precedence to the interpersonal conflict alternatives more frequently than did Americans and treated such conflict resolutions as morally required rather than as matters for personal decision making. Such results suggest that in duty-based interpersonal moral codes, interpersonal responsibilities tend to be regarded in as fully principled terms as justice obligations.

It may be noted that the American pattern of results appears explicable, at least in part, in terms of both the superogatory and morality of caring frameworks. Consonant with the claims of the superogatory viewpoint, Americans gave priority to the justice expectations and portrayed this choice in moral terms. In turn, consonant with the morality-of-caring position, a sizable minority of Americans ( $M = 41\%$  of adults) were observed to give priority to the interpersonal expectations. However, the Indian pattern of responses did not fit either of these two theoretical frameworks. Indians not only tended to endorse the interpersonal over the justice alternatives (a stance that contradicts the superogatory

framework) but also tended to categorize this endorsed alternative as a socially enforceable moral duty (a stance that contradicts the Gilligan model).

H4: Individual inclinations tend to be seen as congruent with social expectations in duty-based interpersonal moral codes and as opposed to social expectations in individually oriented interpersonal moral codes.

We addressed the perceived relationship of social expectations to endogenous motivation in a study that examined attributions about helping in the context of the norm of reciprocity (Miller & Bersoff, in press). In a between-subject manipulation, we presented a sample of American and of Hindu Indian adults with hypothetical scenarios in which an agent helped an acquaintance either (a) spontaneously (i.e., after merely observing the other's need), (b) in response to prior reciprocity (i.e., after the other had helped the agent on a prior occasion), or (c) in response to a monetary payment (i.e., after the other had offered to pay the agent if help was given). Attributional measures were included that tapped subjects' explanations of the behaviors and their attributions regarding why the behaviors were performed.

The results revealed that Americans rated agents as more endogenously motivated to help the other and as deriving more satisfaction or pleasure from helping the other when aid was given spontaneously compared to helping in response to prior reciprocity. In contrast, Indians rated agents as equally endogenously motivated and satisfied under both conditions. This cross-cultural difference did not appear to have resulted from Indians' failure to view reciprocal helping as governed by social expectations, because all subjects placed more weight on social expectations in explaining behavior in the reciprocity condition than in the spontaneous condition. The effect also did not appear explicable in terms of social desirability effects: Indians showed no overall tendency to rate agents in more altruistic terms than did Americans, as would be anticipated by a social desirability process. Finally, evidence calling into question an interpretation focused on Indians' cognitive abilities to discount was observed in the tendency for Indians, like Americans, to discount helping performed in response to a monetary payment.

The pattern of attributions that we observed in this study support the present claim that individual inclinations tend to be viewed as congruent with social expectations in duty-based interpersonal moral codes and as opposed to individual inclinations in individually oriented interpersonal moral codes. Indians judged that social expectations neither detracted from the altruistic characteristics of acts of helping nor diminished the gratification involved. In contrast, Americans' attributions conformed to a hydraulic model in which acting to meet social expectations was inferred to be inversely related to endogenous motivation.

It may be noted that Americans' perceptions of the relationship between individual inclinations and social expectations is consonant both with the Kohlbergian view of interpersonal social expectations as undesirable constraints on individual freedom of choice and with Gilligan's portrayal of social expectations as in opposition to the genuine self. In contrast, the pattern of attribution shown by Indians is not explicable in terms of either theoretical model.

H5: There is a greater tendency to make contextual exceptions to the applicability of moral rules in duty-based interpersonal moral codes than in individually oriented interpersonal moral codes.

We examined the impact of context on moral judgment in an investigation comparing American and Hindu Indian adults' moral evaluations of naturalistically generated incidents, involving breaches of either justice or of interpersonal responsibilities (Miller & Luthar, 1989). We asked subjects not only to indicate their moral categorization of the behaviors but to assess whether the agents were sufficiently in control of their behaviors to be held accountable for them.

Results indicated that all subjects agreed in viewing the justice breaches as undesirable. However, Indians were more prone than Americans to indicate that the agents were unable to control their actions and thus should not be held morally accountable for them. Whereas agents were absolved of moral accountability in less than 3% of the cases by Americans, they were absolved of moral accountability in approximately one quarter of the cases by Indians.

The nature of the cross-cultural differences that we observed are illustrated in a comparison of a sample American and Indian response to the following justice item:

This man took some money from me as a loan and never paid me back. He kept telling me every day that he would return the money but he never did. His business is not doing well. Apparently, he suffered some financial losses. Finally, the man left the city. He went somewhere else without repaying the money I had loaned him. I don't even know where he is now. I think it was wrong of him not to have repaid the money.

An American subject who categorized the breach in moral terms explained this categorization as follows:

I think it's basically an ethical issue—that if you take something from someone that you try and repay it. They entered into a contract—it's a breach of contract. People should be expected to respect that principle. I think that this is certainly a big character defect. People like this are just not very realistic and they're probably generally not very responsible.

In contrast, an Indian subject who absolved the agent of moral accountability for the behavior justified this judgment in the following way:

I feel he should not be held accountable because he was facing a bad financial situation. The friend should not have expected that he repay. The friend should have told him "well you are not in a position to pay me now. You pay me when you are in a position to pay me." Then this man would not have left the city. The friend expected him to pay money which he could not do, so he had no choice but to leave the city. (Miller & Luthar, 1989, p. 254)

Consonant with the more bounded views of the person held in American culture, the American appeared to assume that agents should be capable of controlling their behavior in this type of situation and that it was a sign of a character defect if they could not. In contrast, consonant with the more open views of the person held in Indian culture, the Indian interpreted the agent's behavior as a natural and unavoidable reaction to situational pressures. Responsibility for the act was placed not on the agent but, at least in part, on others in the situation who were seen as insufficiently sensitive to the agent's plight.

We further explored the impact of context on moral judgment in a cross-cultural developmental study examining the reasoning of American and of Hindu Indian adults and children about hypothet-

ical justice breaches performed under potentially extenuating circumstances (Bersoff & Miller, 1993). The circumstances included agent developmental immaturity (e.g., a 10-year-old child throwing a rock at a statue after watching his elder cousin do the same thing), anger-based emotional duress (e.g., an adult assaulting someone who has made fun of his facial deformity), and fear-based emotional duress (e.g., an adult breaking into a locked cabin after being frightened by loud noises in the forest).

Again, Indians showed a much stronger tendency than did Americans to absolve agents of moral accountability for the breaches. Although a common pattern was observed for agents to be absolved of accountability most frequently in cases involving fear-based duress (United States  $M = 45\%$ ; India  $M = 85\%$ ), followed by cases involving anger-based duress (United States  $M = 23\%$ ; India  $M = 65\%$ ), and finally by cases involving agent developmental immaturity (United States  $M = 3\%$ ; India  $M = 47\%$ ), in all cases, over 40% more of the Indians than of the Americans absolved agents of moral accountability for their conduct. There was no evidence that distinct subgroups existed within each culture who differed in their tendencies to absolve agents of moral accountability.

The results from these two studies support the present claim that there is a greater readiness to make contextual exceptions to the applicability of rules in duty-based interpersonal moral codes than in individually oriented interpersonal moral codes. Although Americans' weighting of contextual factors varied with the issues under consideration, Indians in all cases appeared more prone than were Americans to grant contextual exceptions to the applicability of justice rules.

It may be noted that the findings that a sizable minority of Americans treated contextual factors as extenuating the agent's moral responsibility for breaches provides at least some support for Gilligan's claims concerning the existence of a contextually oriented mode of moral judgment. However, our results imply that, if such an orientation exists, it is much less marked among Americans than among Indians.

## SUMMARY

The studies reviewed here point to a marked and consistent pattern of cross-cultural differences in interpersonal moral judgment:

1. Indians regard interpersonal responsibilities as broader in scope than do Americans, with obligations to respond to another's need seen as extending even to situations involving low levels of need and relatively remote others (Miller et al., 1990).
2. Indians tend to treat interpersonal responsibilities as socially enforceable obligations in contrast to the greater American tendency to view them as matters for personal decision making (Miller et al., 1990; Miller & Luthar, 1989).
3. Indians accord interpersonal responsibilities equal, if not greater, weight than justice obligations in contrast to the American tendency to subordinate interpersonal responsibilities to justice requirements (Miller & Bersoff, 1992).
4. Indians hold a more social view of endogenous motivation than do Americans, with interpersonal norms seen as congruent with, rather than opposed to, the self (Miller & Bersoff, in press).
5. Indians maintain a more contextually sensitive style of moral judgment than do Americans, with Indians more prone than are Americans to make contextual exceptions in applying justice rules (Bersoff & Miller, 1993; Miller & Luthar, 1989).

The types of cultural differences in interpersonal moral judgment documented here should not be considered exhaustive. There are many other areas of contrast not tapped by the research reviewed and we have other studies currently underway to explore some of these domains. For example, in our present program of research focused on the two types of moral systems, we are comparing such issues as conceptions of morally exemplary behavior, the perceived contingency of interpersonal responsibilities on affective considerations and the perceived requirements for self-sacrifice in meeting interpersonal responsibilities.

The results discussed above, however, provide substantial evidence to support the present argument that the perspective emphasized by Indians differs qualitatively from that emphasized by Americans and cannot be adequately understood within either the superogatory or morality-of-caring frameworks. Rather, both the superogatory and morality-of-caring frameworks need to be seen as tapping contrasting aspects of an approach to morality found among Americans, which I have termed here an individually oriented interpersonal moral code. In contrast, the Indian perspective needs to be seen as a distinct approach based on traditional Hindu Indian cultural conceptions, which I have termed here a duty-based interpersonal moral code.

## QUESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

### DIVERSITY IN INTERPERSONAL MORAL CODES

I have argued that the dominant psychological models of interpersonal morality are grounded in certain Western cultural assumptions and that an alternative model is needed to account for Hindu Indian cultural views. An important area for future research is to extend this examination of cultural influences on interpersonal morality to cultural or subcultural groups other than those assessed here. In this effort, it is critical to focus at global as well as specific levels of analysis and to go beyond the Kohlbergian framework in formulating questions and interpreting responses.

The distinction that I have drawn between individually oriented and duty-based interpersonal moral codes may be seen to map onto the distinction between individualistic and collectivist cultures (Hofstede, 1980; Markus & Kitayama, 1991; Triandis, 1989, 1990). It appears likely that collectivist cultures other than India maintain duty-based views of interpersonal responsibilities, with individualistic cultures other than the United States maintaining individually oriented views. In particular, past research provides some evidence to suggest that the duty-based moral code found among Hindu Indians may exist also in other cultural groups. For example, in comparison to trends observed among Americans, greater emphasis has been shown to be placed on helpfulness and on obligations to kin among Hong Kong and Mainland Chinese (Dien, 1982; Ma, 1988, 1989, 1992), Tibetan Buddhist monks (Huebner & Garrod, 1991), and Nigerian and Pakistani Muslims (Maqsd, 1977) as well as among rural populations in British Honduras (Gorsuch & Barnes, 1973), Kenya (Harkness, Edwards, & Super, 1981), and Papua New Guinea (Tietjen & Walker, 1985). Resembling Hindu Indians, Chinese populations have also been documented to approach morality in a particularistic manner and to treat interpersonal responsibilities as natural, with the Confucian concept of *jen* portraying love and benevolence as innate (Cheng, 1990; Dien, 1982; Ma, 1992).

A limitation of much of this cross-cultural research, however, is its exclusive reliance on the Kohlbergian interpretive framework. Following Kohlbergian scoring procedures, responses that concern role-related duties in many cases are treated as, by definition, con-

ventional concerns or relegated to a residual category of ambiguous or difficult-to-score answers (see discussion in Boyes & Walker, 1988; Snarey, 1985). It is important in future cross-cultural work in this area both to consider the possibility that interpersonal responsibilities may be accorded a postconventional moral status and to explore a more varied set of questions, including, but not limited to, those under consideration here.

Multicultural analyses of conceptions of interpersonal responsibilities, for example, are required to locate the Western system of interpersonal morality in the context of those of other cultures. Whereas there has been a tendency within psychology to assume that patterns observed among American populations may be widely generalized, it appears likely that an individually oriented interpersonal moral code may be revealed to be present in relatively few cultures outside of North America and parts of Western Europe. Such comparative research also is needed to test hypotheses about various functional and nonfunctional correlates of interpersonal moral systems. Although evidence to date suggests that moral codes are not merely patterned by the objective adaptive constraints associated with socioeconomic status and modernization (Kim, Triandis, Kâgitçibasi, Choi, & Yoon, in press; Yang, 1988), it remains important to understand the significance of interpersonal moral codes in different ecological contexts (e.g., Gielen, Cruickshank, Johnston, Swanzey, & Avellani, 1986).

In turn, analyses that go beyond the present dichotomous framework and that give greater weight to local cultural meanings must also be undertaken as a means of enhancing current conceptions of the variation that exists in interpersonal moral orientations. Using the broad distinction between individually oriented versus duty-based interpersonal moral codes as the only framework for classification would have the effect of obscuring the many differences that distinguish interpersonal moral codes found in contrasting individualistic and collectivist cultures. Thus, for example, it is likely that there are many contrasts between the views of interpersonal morality held among Tibetan Buddhists than among Hindu Indians, with these contrasts reflecting, at least in part, the varied metaphysical beliefs maintained in each context—for example, the Buddhist emphasis on suffering and their denial that a self exists as compared with the Hindu emphasis on *moksha* or spiritual release and their belief in the existence of one true self or

*atman* (Huebner & Garrod, 1991). Equally, it is likely that, particularly in cultures with socialist traditions, there is a greater emphasis on responsibilities to collectives than found either in American culture, with its focus on the individual, or in Hindu Indian culture, with its focus on responsibilities to family, friends, and other in-group members. Studies that are sensitive to indigenous meanings would also be valuable in uncovering the existence of hybrid forms of the individually oriented and duty-based patterns identified here. For example, research among Israeli populations suggests that moral codes may exist that combine an emphasis on individual rights and equality with an emphasis on interpersonal and communal obligations (T. Becker, 1976; Snarey, Reimer, & Kohlberg, 1985).

## CULTURE AND GENDER

One of the most controversial claims made by Gilligan is that interpersonal orientations are gender related, with females more prone to adopt a caring perspective and males more prone to assume a justice-oriented stance. On an empirical level, this claim is weakened by findings of only limited gender differences in moral judgment, with the majority of studies—including our work reported here—finding few, if any, effects of gender (Thomas, 1986; Walker, 1984). As I argued earlier, conceptually, the claim may be criticized for its relative inattention to cultural meanings that may affect gender experiences and that may lead to variation in the significance of gender in different cultural contexts.

An important area for future research is to integrate cultural considerations into an examination of possible gender effects. Instead of asking whether gender or culture is the more powerful influence on moral development, it is critical to focus on how gender differences are patterned by the culturally specific presuppositions made within a given cultural setting and how they may be manifest in culturally variable ways. Rather than being incompatible with a focus on gender, a cultural perspective would enrich an understanding of gender effects. Gender, then, would not be understood within an exclusively deterministic framework as patterned by a universal biologically based psychology of development but as a constraint that can be given meaning in culturally informed ways.

## CULTURAL INFLUENCES ON AFFECT AND MOTIVATION

Finally, it remains important to examine the implications of the present contrast in interpersonal moral codes for other domains of social cognition and interpersonal functioning. For example, it is likely that what is valued in interpersonal relationships and the types of stresses that arise differ qualitatively in cultures emphasizing individually oriented as contrasted with duty-based interpersonal moral codes. Equally, the role accorded to affect is likely to vary, with interpersonal commitments likely to be viewed as more affectively dependent in cultures emphasizing freely chosen interpersonal commitments than in those emphasizing social duties. Although no simple relationship can be expected between attribution and behavior, it is important to understand ways in which moral behavior may differ in cultures that treat interpersonal responsiveness as a matter of personal choice rather than as a matter of duty and to understand how individual motivation may differ in cultures that treat individual motivation as congruent with, rather than as opposed to, social expectations.

In sum, the present examination of cultural influences on interpersonal morality needs to be extended to other related domains. In enriching current understanding of the varied forms of psychological functioning, such an effort can highlight limitations in the applicability of existing models as well as contribute to the deparochialization of psychological theory (Miller, in press).

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