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ABSTRACT

The individualism inherent in traditional theories of moral education, be it from an ethic of justice or of care, is challenged. The argument is made for a sociocultural perspective in which an adequate theory of moral education highlights the role of wider historical and cultural processes, not as mere influences on how one develops, thinks, or decides but as actual constituents of these phenomena. It is through the sociocultural processes of "mediation" and "emergence" that one acquires moral value. Cultural artifacts mediate the many-layered process through which admired others are bestowed with prized qualities, qualities "borrowed back" by individuals in the service of enacting an identity. Therefore, it is argued that culture, not psychology, ultimately underwrites the values societies do or do not attempt to foster in youth. A recent study of children's construals of their heroes and heroines illustrates the argument. Third and fourth grade children were asked to name a hero or heroine, to choose adjectives to describe the heroic figure, and then asked whether they want to be like the chosen hero or heroine. A pattern emerges from the data which supports the idea of an "ideological artifact" representing the culturally bestowed value, which lends support to the thesis. (Contains 35 references.) (Author/EMK)

To Borrow and Bestow: Identification as the Acquisition of Value

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Abstract

This chapter challenges the individualism inherent in traditional theories of moral education, be it from an ethic of justice or of care. We argue for a sociocultural perspective in which an adequate theory of moral education must highlight the role of wider historical and cultural processes, not as mere influences on how one develops, thinks, or decides, but as actual constituents of these phenomena. It is through the sociocultural processes of *mediation* and *emergence* that we acquire moral value. Cultural artifacts mediate the many-layered process through which admired others are bestowed with prized qualities, qualities "borrowed back" by us in the service of enacting an identity. Therefore, we argue that it is culture, not psychology, that ultimately underwrites the values we do or do not attempt to foster in your youth. We illustrate our argument using data from a recent study of children's construals of their heroes and heroines.

Introduction.[1]

Psychological theorists such as Kohlberg (1973a; 1973b) and Piaget (1932) have played an important and influential role in drawing attention to the psychological aspects of moral development and to the implications of these for moral education. Carol Gilligan's (1982) data demonstrating fundamental gender differences have challenged and extended this work (Puka, 1987; Puka, 1991; Brown & Tappan, 1991, Tappan, 1991). In this chapter, we take the opportunity to wonder whether psychology, the science of the mental, provides an adequate basis on which to approach issues of moral education. Scheffler (1991) has argued that if moral education could be reduced to moral reasoning, "culture and history should make no difference" (p. 100). Of course, they do (MacIntyre, 1981): it is only through culture and over time that we cooperatively create those things we come to value as individuals.

This chapter argues for a sociocultural perspective in which an adequate theory of moral development must highlight the role of wider historical and cultural processes not as mere influences on how one develops, thinks, or decides, but as actual constituents of these acts. A sociocultural perspective challenges the assumption that moral development is a fundamentally individual phenomenon. Further, it sheds important light on the role of language practices as mediators of moral thought and behavior. These points will be illustrated through an analysis of data from a study of children's identifications with cultural heroes and heroines (Gash, 1994; Conway, 1996; Gash, & Conway, 1997). These data demonstrate how, at the level of activity, the lines between identity and morality are blurry at best. First, however, we begin by laying out the presuppositions of a sociocultural world view.

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[1] We would like to thank the Sociocultural Research Group (SCRG) at Michigan State University for their feedback to previous versions of this paper and Hugh Gash at St. Patrick's College of Education, (A College of Dublin City University), Dublin, Ireland, for involving the second author in the heroes and heroines project.
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Presuppositions of a sociocultural perspective.

The fundamental assumption of a sociocultural view is that the social is primary. That is to say, a sociocultural view takes to task the atomistic view of society as an aggregate of individuals. It proposes that it is only *through* society that what we recognize as individual identities emerge in the first place. Further, because we are born into a community of others whose customs, concepts, and practices precede us, it is as accurate to say that cultural practices (e.g., language, custom, ritual) acquire us as to say that we acquire them; they *mediate* our being.

These ideas have important implications for moral theory. First, although such arguments may sometimes appear to promote a form of social determinism, our intent here is not to dissolve the individual agent but to earnestly endorse the fact that moral choices are always defined in relation to a context of some kind. Most of us are willing to concede this as an ontological truth. Incorporating it into our theories and methods proves far more difficult, however. Second, from this perspective, the "outcomes" of moral development, whether at the level of individual or society, may indeed be rather arbitrary. In other words, it may be viable to imagine them as being other than they are. At the same time, this does not mean that such outcomes are random; they are always the fruits of complex, layered, and interconnected histories. Finally, sociocultural views attempt to avoid a dualism between culture and the individual by acknowledging that it is never culture in the abstract that individuals act toward; individuals act toward or into *situations* for which both they and culture hold some degree of responsibility. Therefore, from a sociocultural perspective, it is only through the study of persons as they engage in the concrete activities of their day-to-day lives that we can gain a more

complete understanding of the coupling between individual and culture. It is at this coupling that moral choices are ultimately made.

Social epistemologies of the individual collectively represent a turn toward a view of persons as constructive, as actively creating a world that is always in the process of creating them.[2] These perspectives share a basic assumption that what we commonly refer to as "the social" is not a consequence of some fundamental essence or "prime mover" (a psychological, biological, or sociological entity, principle, or event, for example), but is the manifestation of two basic processes: *emergence* and *mediation.* As a term, emergence represents the idea that human thought and behavior develop within social, cultural, and historical contexts apart from which an understanding of persons is incomplete at best and at worst misleading (sometimes tragically so). The argument which most of those sharing a social epistemology adhere to is that individuals and their productions, such things as thoughts, feelings, actions and, on a larger scale, culture itself, only come into being (that is, emerge) in the movement between one stratified level of existence and another. Thus, although one can say that the psychological is dependent upon the biological, for example, neither is it reducible to it.

Mediation implies that, unlike other forms of life, humans are born into a world of cultural practices that must be appropriated in order for individual and culture to survive. We do not simply "acquire" cultural practices, however. Rather, as mentioned, it may be just as

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[2] Others have broadly labeled this the *sociogenic* approach (Berry, 1983; Graaf & Maier, 1994; Valsiner, 1994). A sociogenic perspective is not a theory but a metatheory - a set of basic ontological and epistemological assumptions from which a family of theories emerge. The latter would include, for example, pragmatism (Dewey, 1896; Mead, 1934; Pierce, 1955), symbolic interactionism (Mead, 1934), social constructionism (Gergen, 1985), sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1962; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1991, Cole, 1996) and discursive psychology (Harré & Gillet, 1994). Although it is important to acknowledge that these are perspectives which contain a number of distinctive assumptions, they are not "differences that make a difference" in terms of the ontological assumptions being made. For them all, the social remains primary while the individual emerges out of interaction. Second, there is general acknowledgement regarding the constitutive role of semiotic functions (language, signs, and symbols) as embedded in and mediating human practices.
(continued)

accurate to claim that any meaning system whose existence precedes our own essentially acquires *us*. Of particular importance are how human activities depend on, or are mediated by, cultural meaning systems of language, gesture, custom, ritual, and so on.

Culture affords us the technical and symbolic resources for coordinating our activities with one another. *Semiotic* mediation (see Mertz & Parmentier, 1985), more specifically, refers to the human capacity to use particular signs in the service of work, thought, and communication. Because there is overlap between us in our understanding of signs (that is, certain words, gestures, rituals, and so on), these can be used as "tools" to do creative and practical work together. Whether building bridges or crafting identities, the use of signs makes possible ways of being that would not have evolved otherwise. Jim Wertsch writes,

> The inclusion of signs in action fundamentally transforms the action. The incorporation of mediational means does not simply facilitate action that could have occurred without them; instead, as Vygotsky (1981, p. 137) notes, 'by being included in the process of behavior, the psychological tool [i.e.,the word, sign or symbol] alters the entire flow and structure of mental functioning' (Wertsch, 1991, p.32).

Because the meaning of symbols is culturally designated, mental functioning can be seen as ultimately deriving from, and not simply influenced by, cultural life. According to this view, the elaborate systems of symbols we call "theory" are never veridical with the reality they are intended to represent. Instead, to paraphrase Vygotsky (1981), by being included in the process of meaning-making, symbols afford and constrain our conceptions of the possible.

Moral Artifacts. It is the function of moral behavior in particular to constrain or afford certain ways of perceiving, thinking, and feeling, thus regulating the nature of our relationship with other living things. Although there are many ways to conceptualize the nature of cultural artifacts (see Cole, 1996, p. 123), we would like to presuppose that there are roughly three classes (in practice these are not likely to be separate). First, there are artifact whose structure "contains" their function; "dumb" artifacts, if you will. Although these artifacts do pass the test of artifactuality (that is, they are an embodiment of human thought "reflecting" the mind(s) of those who created them), such artifacts do not mediate the "transfer" of meaning between persons, they do not carry or contain meaning within themselves as part of the purpose for which they were designed. Chairs, for instance, although they might imply certain aspects of the human world (the contours of our bodies or the regal status of a king), have no general meaning beyond their practical function of supporting those who wish to sit. Similarly, the meaning of a utility pole is found directly in its ability to support utility lines. Utility poles were not intended to symbolize, represent, or point toward some deeper meaning beyond themselves; their meaning *is* their physical function.

At the same time, there is a second class of cultural artifacts whose purpose extends beyond their physical structure to their function as symbols mediating our routine transactions with the world. These are similar to what Searle (1995) refers to as *institutional facts*, artifacts completely dependent on social institutions because it is only by virtue of the consensusual understanding institutions afford that the function of such artifacts can be achieved in the first place. One example of this would be money. Money itself remains functional only so long as common agreement exists that what one claims to be a one hundred dollar bill, for instance, does indeed constitute a bill of that denomination. We can agree that the identity of this object is not

defined by its intrinsic worth, what it "really" is: a piece of paper. In fact, we often say that an artifact such as a license or contract that has lost this element of common agreement is "not worth the paper its printed on."[3] What good is a one hundred dollar bill apart from the economic institutions that recognize and support it? Institutional artifacts exist only insofar as the social institutions which authorize them.

Finally, there is a third class of artifact that more directly concerns us here. We call these "ideological artifacts." In this class are those artifacts through which we not only represent meaning and ideas to one another, but through which we communicate their *value*. For example, in the wake of increasingly negative public sentiment, many cigarette advertisers appear to have done away with text in their advertisements. Instead, one might see only an image, perhaps two young, attractive persons, a man and a woman, are situated in some beautiful natural setting, a tropical beach or sunny mountain slope. Their expressions portray them as happy and untroubled, free spirits doing their own thing. There may even be something provocative about the way they look at one another. Somewhere a brand of cigarette is prominently displayed. Aside from the compulsory surgeon general's warning, no other written text appears.

Now, we are well aware that this scene is not genuine; it is not a portrayal of spontaneous events. We know that these two persons are models, that events were staged - perhaps shot on an indoor set. Indeed, neither of them may even smoke. But we also know that such concessions are beside the point. Instead, we recognize this image as belonging to a class of cultural artifact whose function is to mediate our relationship with the world through promoting a certain way of life. This fabrication is an artifact of late 20th century American culture. But it does not simply

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[3] Persons wishing to live together rather than marry sometimes justify their decision by asserting that marriage is "just a piece of paper," merely an institution and thus, at some level, "not real."
(continued)

"reflect" the values of that culture [characteristics such things as youth, physical attractiveness, wealth, freedom, health (ironically in this case), sex, autonomy, and a care free attitude]. As an artifact it contains and promulgates them, mediating morality by publically championing a view of the kind of life one should be living. Of course, the advertiser hopes we will not look so deeply but only long enough to associate this image with a particular brand of cigarette. Cultural heroes and heroines, which we later use to illustrate our argument, are another notable form of ideological artifact. Other examples might include books, music, clothing, art, architecture, various social practices and rituals, and so forth.

Language itself is an ideological artifact. The ability to share meaning through language cannot be explained at the psychological level alone, by an understanding of how we cognitively process language, for example. Thinkers such as Halliday (1989) and Bakhtin (1981) have helped us understand that the meaning of words and symbols are always embedded within larger historically and geographically dispersed conversations. These inhabit the definition of any symbol or utterance, giving it felt sense and flavor. In this way, language not only serves a referential function, that is, it "names" things for us, it also tells us how to *feel* about them. For instance, Kieran Egan (1988) has argued that terms typically defined relative to one another, such as good versus bad, failure versus success, survival versus destruction, helpfulness versus cruelty, honesty versus dishonesty, and so on, often articulate what are actually quite abstract moral orders. Nonetheless, even very young children have little trouble telling you which of these terms are preferable. In fact, says Egan, it is these "binary opposites" that ultimately underlie and give meaning to narratives of all kinds, particularly fairy tales. Some binary opposites are obviously moral in nature. The power of a word like "selfish" does not derive from

its ability to describe objective attributes of an individual but from the fact that behind it lies an ideology of the kind of person one *should* be and, perhaps, is not.

Critique of moral development as occurring on the site of the individual.

Traditional psychological science, like American society in general (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985), is predicated on a bounded, individualistic view of persons. In this view, moral development is typically explained at the level of individual psychology. So it is at the level of individual psychology that the dominant technologies of moral education receive their warrant. Historical, contextual, or cultural considerations become secondary, if considered at all. This authorizes the attempt to instill children with an ethical "gyrocompass," an autonomous capacity to determine magnetic moral north in the ethical fogs of life. From a psychological standpoint, whether we are talking about an ethic of care or an ethic of justice does not really matter. In either case, an ethic makes little sense psychologically, or perhaps is divvied out to another discipline altogether (philosophy or ethics, for example) unless its primary manifestation is perceived to be in the thoughts and behaviors of individuals.

We would like to problematize this notion somewhat. Imagine a scenario in which a child (we will use a male) has just observed his favorite superhero on television. The hero is aggressive, viciously punching and kicking his opponent, although all in the service of good, of course. Later, we return to observe this same child outside with playmates. In short order he begins demonstrating many of the same behaviors modeled by the superhero. We watch as his playmates eagerly respond in kind. Soon, as a group they have begun to recreate themselves within the fantasy world of the hero. To the extent that this image is shared, the children enthusiastically strengthen one another's identifications with the model. Later in the day, we witness our subject at home trying out these moves with a younger sibling. He is quickly

reprimanded by a parent, who explains that kicking and punching are not appropriate behaviors. He stops kicking. The next day during recess however, surrounded by his mates, he kicks and punches with abandon, only to have these behaviors disappear once again as he enters the classroom. What is happening here? The traditional psychological explanation is a cognitive one: basically that the child has acquired in memory a set of representations following exposure to the hero: attitudes, rules, expectations, and so on. These constitute a schemata, if you will, which regulates the child's attempts to enact the modeled behaviors himself.

One thinks of Banduara's classic "bobo-doll" experiments on the modeling of aggression, one of the first studies to give behaviorism a run for its money (Bandura, & Walters, 1963). Children were exposed to televised images of other children pummeling a blow-up toy. Their behavior was then observed when left alone with a similar toy. Of course, they proceeded to pummel the doll. We do in fact see an effect of exposure to aggression. The explanation provided is that an image is presented to the child by the television. Through a series of perceptual and psychological processes, this image is absorbed by the child who carries it into other contexts where it may or may not be enacted (perhaps something akin to what educators call *transfer*). This explanation naturally leads researchers to an interest in how these structures "interact" with certain contexts. For example, in the Bobo doll scenario, the context might inhere in those rule systems that either do or do not support the pummeling of bobo dolls. In fact, in Bandura's study, there was an attempt to attenuate the effects of these rule systems by observing children in isolation.[4]

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[4] Although making a link to culture in the form of the technology of television, this remains an essentially psychological explanation. The results of such studies were assumed to illustrate the impact of televised images (independent variable) on aggression (dependent variable). In this model, culture is merely a determinant of moral behavior rather than an actual *constituent*.

In contrast, the process of emergence argues that at no point can the contextual and individual ingredients of a phenomenon as complicated as human behavior exist independent of one another. From a sociocultural standpoint, context is not simply one more independent variable either inhibiting or promoting the acting out of a specific response. Instead, the behavior itself is "attached" to the context in a way which allows it to be fully defined only *in relation to* that context. In our example, children in the yard eagerly reward one another's playful donning of a superhero identity. It is an honorable and good thing. It bonds them together. To become a "Morphin' Power Ranger" in the middle of a math lesson means something quite different, however. Here, *not* demonstrating this identification is the valued and responsible choice, the mark of good character. In fact, to do so could shame and isolate you. Rather than risk our connection to others, we stop kicking and punching. It is no longer part of who we are when we are in a math lesson. The psychological assumption is that learning to make such changes verifies that the mind has "internalized" the rules appropriate to various contexts.

This creates a problem for the sociocultuarlist. He or she might ask: "In what circumstance, then, do we then presume to behold this so-called mind, this self-contained, pre-contextual locus diagnosable as being at a certain stage of moral development? Against what background do we apprehend it as the a source of ideas, habits, traits, beliefs, impulses, emotions, attitudes, developmental processes, representations, and any number of other abilities and attributes we might wish to bestow?" The implications of such questions are profound. They ask us to humbly acknowledge, not simply as an aside but substantively in theory and in practice, that apart from him or her as an abstraction, at no point *is* there a pre-contextual

individual. There are only individuals-in-contexts; if not one context, then another. It is not simply in the individual that moral choices are ultimately made.

Borrowing, bestowing, and the media.

Bestowing.

When we identify with a particular hero or heroine at the level of the media, we are not identifying with that individual on a personal level, of course. What we identify with, what has meaning for us, are the characteristics that we believe them to possess. Understandably, we are therefore shaken when an American hero the size of baseball's Mickey Mantle suffers an early death, the consequence of a lifetime of alcoholic self-abuse. Hearing Mantle himself denounce his hero-ness, we somehow feel betrayed. But was there ever an intention to dupe us? Did Mantle really spend his adult life consciously misrepresenting himself to us? To some extent, perhaps the all-American virtues one might have perceived in Mantle were never his to begin with, qualities such as self-restraint, integrity, honesty, self-discipline, uprightness, and so on. Instead, these were things *bestowed* on him by a culture that requires someone like Mantle to make its values incarnate, values often preexisting the actual figures themselves.

The meaning of the words, gestures, and accomplishments of public figures is not defined by them alone. Although this is true for all of us, we all draw from a common pool of words and gestures, it is different for the famous, those whose public identities are formed through the media. As mentioned, when those persons that a certain society has bestowed with virtues abruptly stop demonstrating them, we become angry. Witness the outcry of the British at the Royal family's refusal to publicly display their grief in the days immediately following the death of Princess Diana. We can never know how sincere the Queen's eventual televised statement of grief was. Indeed, like Mickey Mantle, to the public her sincerity was secondary to her display

of a virtue that a grieving public insist she have (in this instance, a degree of personal vulnerability).

Borrowing.

If *bestowing* functions to make certain culturally-defined virtues incarnate, what is the reason that these figures are ultimately important to us? Their importance lies in that fact that in identifying with them we *borrow* for ourselves those very attributes they incarnate. Whether in act or imagination, and if only for the moment, we try on for ourselves their perceived characteristics, attitudes, and postures. From a child's attempt to enact the prowess of a Michael Jordan to an adult lost in Walter Mitty daydreams of a better life, both are borrowing from the storehouse of culturally defined stories. It is these and not the structures and functions of individual psychology which mediate between who we are and who we might wish to become.[5]

Heroes and Heroines

We wish to illustrate the cultural mediation of value using data from a study in which the second author is involved (Gash & Conway, 1997). The data come from a survey study of third and fourth grade childrens heroes and heroines. Although the study involved children in both Ireland and the U.S., we restrict ourselves to the U.S. data (n=192) (Conway, 1996).

In this study, children were asked to do three things. First, they were asked to name their hero or heroine. Second, they were asked to choose as many adjectives as necessary to describe their heroic figure from a list of 24. To ensure that these words were familiar and meaningful, the list had been compiled based on analysis of prior interviews with children in which these

[5] It is important to note that particular cultures are not necessarily homogeneous. Not everyone within a culture identifies with an icon in the same way. For instance, while some blacks may admire the success of basketball player, Michael Jordan, for other blacks, Jordan may be perceived as a "slave" to white economic interests.

words had appeared. Third, children were asked whether or not they want to be like their chosen hero or heroine.

In sum, we consider children's choice of words in describing their heroic figure as the type of ideological artifact mentioned earlier.

Our data also consider how borrowing and bestowing might be useful terms for describing the acquisition of values as it occurs between those in one's immediate proximity. Consider one's relationships with professionals, friends, or family members. A significant difference here is that there are opportunities for "reality testing" that one does not have through the media. We can actually test out and experience (or not) for ourselves the qualities that we borrow or that we bestow. It may be that the closer the relationship and the more personal the attachment, the less that a particular relationship is culturally mediated. Although, we hasten to add, there is still no point at which one could be said to reach a pure and unmediated connection, a relationship between souls untouched by the shaping influences of culture.

One finding of the analyses was that the variation between children in their choice of adjectives was not random. Instead, there was a pattern. Children's choices seemed to group themselves into two different clusters.[6] Looking at the words themselves, we see that these factors appear to represent two more-or-less different hero types. The first cluster of words were:

> brilliant, caring, confident, dresses well, friendly, funny, gentle, good, good looking, helpful, honest, important, kind, loving, loyal, skillful (see Table 1).

[6] Using Cronbach alpha with $r > 0.7$ (approx.) or above as a cut off point, two of the factors were deemed reliable. These two factors accounted for 27.2% of the variance in the initial items (Conway, 1996).

Therefore, this composite variable or factor was labelled The Virtuous. Second factor items were:

> active, confident, famous, skillful, not in the domain of family, in the domain of sport.

This second factor was labeled The Sports Star.

Each cluster was presumed to represent the overlap between children in their individual images of what a hero or heroine should be. Although each child was describing a specific person at the individual level, for each cluster the children were collectively defining something much more abstract: an artifact "suspended" in culture in the form of roles, rituals, stereotypes, and so on. In fact, although such phenomenon have both their private (i.e., individual) and public (i.e., cultural) moments, we might say that The Virtuous and The Sports Star represent archetypes of a sort. As such, they inhabit and organize the pattern of words by which children describe those who are virtuous or strong. Perhaps, like archetypes, many such clusters are relatively ancient, each generation needing only to wait for the right person to come along to give them flesh and blood, a face and a name.[7]

At the same time, through borrowing for ourselves the perceived attributes of icons such as The Virtuous and The Sports Star, they become an aspect of real persons' lives. In the study,

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[7] Generational differences in childrens' heroic figures illustrate how some timelines for a hero are longer than individual lives while some go out of style while others are more basic (Conway & Hapkiewicz, in progress). Furthermore, Torney-Purta and Schwille (1986) note that heroic figures may change markedly in a given society over time. They illustrate this claim with the case of Japanese children's changing conceptions of the heroic between the beginning and end of the twentieth century. In the early 1990's, Japanese children "saw the emperor, above all, and military men, secondarily, as the greatest men in Japan" (p. 38): But by the 1960's the children "did not agree on any one hero, named no military men and favored a bacteriologist over the emperor and the prime minister" (p. 38). This Japanese example reminds us that we must also acknowledge that both new archetypes can emerge in a given society and the range of heroic figures available in a society changes over time (Erikson, 1980). (continued)

children were also asked if they wished to be like their hero. Are there qualities of their heroes and heroines that they might wish to take on for themselves? The vast majority (85%) said that this was the case. For these children, qualities of the hero seemed to symbolize aspects of what these children might call "the good." For example, one girl wanted to be like the figure skater, Oksan Biole "because she finishes everything she starts." The values here are persistence, determination, and follow-through, presumably characteristics this child would like to see in herself. A boy in the study said he wished to be like a particular college basketball star because "he is good at basketball." It is competence, skill, and perhaps status that this boy identifies with. Another male shared that he wished to be like his father because he wanted to "be a good dad" while one girl aspired to be like her teacher because then she would "be able to teach other little children." The latter two examples seem to be more about relational rather than instrumental or achievement-related values.[8]

Summary and Conclusions.

This chapter has argued that cultural processes do not simply influence moral behavior. Instead, they are actual *constituents* of the values that we do or do not attempt to foster among our youth. Using heroes and heroines as an example of *ideological artifact* (that is, artifacts bestowed with particular culturally valued attributes), we have sought to illustrate how such artifacts are "borrowed from" by persons in the service of their own identity-making. In closing, values such as those shared by the children in our study, values like determination, physical prowess, and caring for others, are qualities valued in certain ways at certain times and places. If we are lucky, the right incarnation of dads, basketball stars, and teachers will come into our lives

at the appropriate moments to embody these values for us, to make them incarnate. The bottom line, however, is that such persons need not always "earn" the identities attributed to them. Identity, especially those of our champions, is realized only as these figures live among persons for whom such identities are meaningful. In return, our heroes and heroines do us the favor of personifying certain values for us; they provide a resource we borrow from in our personal efforts at identity-making.

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[8] This paper has to do with heroes and heroines. Had we time, we might extend our analysis to those figures which represent the infamous or notorious. These are important persons, the sin eaters of a post-industrial society. Bestowed on them are the feared possible selves we wish *not* to become.

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