

**FIGURES OF SPEECH IN A MORAL LANDSCAPE:
RECONCEPTUALIZING SELF IN PSYCHOLOGY**

by

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Figures of Speech in a Moral Landscape:

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ABSTRACT

The major focus of this dissertation is to render a clear and coherent account of the nature of the phenomena of interest to psychology and psychological therapy. It is argued that individuals' acquisition of a theory of self is central to the development of personal agency and the structuring of human psychology. Self is explicated as a theory through which one learns to structure and interpret experience.

It is proposed that self, as a fundamentally social phenomenon, issues from two interlocking conditions necessary for its possibility. The first of these conditions is intersubjectivity. Self develops through one's participation in the social webs of conversation and practical interrelations carried on within a culture. The second condition concerns human morality. Requisite to selfhood, are historically cultivated, moral goods that confer some answer to inescapable existential questions about what gives human life meaning and value. Self arises by individuals taking up and identifying with morally significant self-descriptions or self-theories that are countenanced and conveyed by cultures. In turn, these moral descriptions furnish an orientation for individuals' intentions and purposes. The implication is that interpreting the intentions and actions of human agents demands construing them in terms of inescapable moral questions and the partial answers, or self-theories, to which they are committed. If we fail to find application for these questions, then we fail to find application for the notions of self, person, agency, and so forth. Self manifests the human aspiration to make sense of things, by giving form to that which matters for

us. It confers meaning on one's life by sustaining the particular goods intrinsic to that meaning. From this perspective, self is to be construed as an "animating metaphor" shaped by moral concerns.

These two conditions, the intersubjective and the moral, are elucidated respectively in terms of the social constructionist thesis of Rom Harré (1984, 1986, 1987a) and the moral philosophy of Charles Taylor (1988a, 1989, 1991). The implications of this ontology are discussed in terms of the aims and conduct of psychological research and psychotherapeutic practice.

DEDICATION

To my Parents and Grandparents, for whom this mattered very much.

"What is man, that Thou art mindful of him . . ."

Psalm 8, v. 2

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INTRODUCTION

Since its inception, during the late 19th century, the discipline of psychology has been concerned with the systematic study of human behavior and experience. In aid of this mission, the major purpose of this dissertation is to render a clear and coherent account of the nature of the phenomena of interest to psychology, and to provide a framework in which to interpret psychological therapy. The account I offer, underscores the importance of "self" in comprehending human behavior and experience. More exactly, I contend that human intentionality, personal agency, the structuring and development of individual psychology, and the nature of human experience, rests largely on individuals' acquisition of a theory of self. Further, I believe that self, as a kind of theory, is fundamentally a social and moral phenomenon.

There has been recently a resurrection of the self as a focus of inquiry for psychology (e.g., Bruner, 1990; Freeman, 1993; Gergen, 1991; Hermans, Kempen, & van Loon, 1992; Sass, 1992; Smith, 1994). Having been relegated to the realms of the imperceptible, the obscure, or the superfluous by an atheistic behaviorism and an idolatrous cognitivism, there is currently fresh concern about the status of self and its role in explanatory accounts of human psychology. The mainstream of academic psychology traditionally has attempted to proof itself from concerns about the moral, political, historical, and contingent aspects of knowledge, inquiry, and technologies of psychotherapeutic practice. It has done so by adopting a stance of value-neutrality that brackets the moral to a distinct domain of study and by

espousing an epistemology rooted in the idea that the path to knowledge is guided by empirical certitude. However, relevant discussions and critique of this stance from such seemingly foreign disciplines as philosophy, literary criticism, and the other social sciences are pressing at psychology's periphery. This has led a growing number of psychologists to reconsider longstanding assumptions about the nature of self and its treatment in psychological study. What is the meaning of selfhood? Does "self" actually manifest something? Can we afford to remain staunchly agnostic about the existence of self, sidestepping in our theories about human minds, agency, and behavior? These motifs of uncertainty and the sorts of concern they stir up, are exemplified in the contemporary debate between philosophical anthropologist, Charles Taylor (1980, 1987, 1990), and "self-styled" private ironist, Richard Rorty (1980, 1985, 1991a, 1993).¹

Taking their cues from Wittgenstein's and Heidegger's critiques of the epistemological tradition, Taylor (1987) and Rorty (1979) track different paths. The epistemological tradition, which Taylor and Rorty both tag as a line of philosophical thought running from Descartes to Kant, regards the tendency to elevate questions of knowing over questions of being. It has promoted a particular view of knowledge as the correct representation of an independent reality. This understanding of knowledge and representational view of language brought epistemology to the fore, setting philosophers in search of a foundational enterprise that could provide indubitable means for determining the truth status of knowledge claims. Disputing the notion of the autonomous "self-as-knower" arising within this tradition, Wittgenstein and

Heidegger point to a different vantage from which to view the intelligibility of human experience.²

Wittgenstein and Heidegger attempt to reveal how the picture of the disengaged, autonomous subject forming inner mental representations of a separate reality misleads. They allege that intelligibility is given by virtue of our being part of a public milieu of meanings sustained by shared socio-cultural practices. Human agency, selfhood, and the intelligibility of experience, is not preordained by biological mechanisms wired for environmental triggers, nor precast by some set of Kantian categories of mind. Rather, these appear as a manifestation of a background of shared meanings, compelled or coerced by the predetermined significances validated by social practices. Our everyday experiences are lent intelligibility ready-made by our immersion in this pervasive background of meanings. According to Wittgenstein and Heidegger, language acquires its meaning not through some fixed referential grounding or correspondence with the world as it is. Rather, meaning is gained through language use in the culturally specific practices or "language games" that are forged in our relations with others. Describing how at the root of all our representations lies an understanding that is rooted in our acting, Wittgenstein and Heidegger deny the need of philosophical foundations for knowledge.

Taylor (1987) offers that in the wake of these critiques, we are now equipped for a nonfoundationalist form of inquiry "in which we discover something deeper and more valid about ourselves . . . more of what we really are like . . . something of our deep or authentic nature as selves" (p. 482). To this end, Taylor (1987, 1988a, 1989) has prepared a Kantian-style

transcendental argument following in the footsteps of Wittgenstein and Heidegger. Taylor proceeds by making "a kind of appeal to intuition" (1987, p. 475), in which there is the attempt to show what conditions are necessary for the experience of intentionality. Taylor asserts that our becoming and being "self-interpreting animals" endows us with "agent's knowledge" (1987, p. 475). It is this idea of agent's knowledge, the sense we have of our agentic practices in the world, that provides the spark for Taylor's transcendental argument.

For Taylor (1987), an investigation of the conditions for intentionality reveals that thinking of ourselves as agents acting rests on the self-descriptions that constitute our actions as such. The implication is that we hold privilege in interpreting our own agency. This is because intentional action is identified only under a certain description, and intentional as opposed to unintentional action is circumscribed by the self-understanding of the agent. We are aware experientially of our purposiveness, that is, there is a point to the things we do. Taylor (1989) argues that this "mattering" of things is much of what it means to be a human agent, and that we are able to accord things significance hinges on our coming to possess a self-description. Our ability to grasp the significance of things by recasting the past in terms of the present, or acting on the present in terms of the future, is gained through the reflexivity afforded by self-description. Taylor sees this reflexive capacity, made manifest through the sorts of self-description or personal theories we hold, as essential, "what is perennial in human life" (1991, p. 305). In other words, according to Taylor, our distinctive ways of thinking about our acting make us what we are.

Rorty (1979, 1991a, 1991b, 1993), however, argues that to dispense with foundationalism is to relinquish any urge for reaching final answers about what we really are, or for that matter, what we could become. Impugning Taylor's essentialism, Rorty alleges that no metaphysical privilege can be attached to any one description of ourselves. Rorty contends that if we are self-interpreting, indeed, if we are "interpretation all the way down," echoing Herbert Dreyfus' phrase, then interpretations do not become plausible by metaphysical entitlement. Rather, plausibility is attained "by reference to what society lets us say" (1979, p. 174). Where nothing escapes interpretation or "recontextualization," what something is depends on our current purposes, and "all possible purposes compete with one another on equal terms, since none are more essentially human than others" (1991a, p. 110).

In Rorty's terms, the something being recontextualized is belief. As "we can inquire after things only under description, that describing something is a matter of relating it to other things, and that grasping the thing itself is not something that precedes contextualization" (1991a, p. 100), inquiry dissolves into a "self-reweaving web of beliefs" (1991a, p. 99). Knowledge of ourselves, like knowledge of anything else, comes down to the descriptions furnished by our language games. Thus, there is no privileged epistemic access to ourselves, and Taylor's transcendental argument sits idling. For Rorty, it's not that we possess any privileged access to ourselves, but rather, that society lets us privilege an idea about access. In contrast to Taylor, who seems pulled toward interpreting an uncertain but nonetheless intuitable truth, insight into something authentic about human nature, Rorty is pulled

toward freedom. Rorty suggests that shedding the shackles of an illusory essentialism means that we can "become increasingly ironic, playful, free, and inventive in our choice of self-descriptions" (1991b, p. 155).

Are there conditions or structures of human agency that render distinctive the character of our psychologies? Is there something special about human meaning, intentionality, or selfhood that wouldn't succumb to behaviorism or that would prohibit such ascription to say, computers? Or, can we treat all vocabularies as arbitrary and optional? Are we given freely to a rambunctious, nonconditional reading of our selves? To what extent is the self determined? The work I shall be attempting in this dissertation, poses something of a passage to these questions. I shall be offering an interpretation through which the questions themselves can be seen to evince more clearly what I take to be their fundamentally moral significance. More specifically, the outflow of interest in the self, and in offering conceptions of it, are part and parcel of the moral domain of human life. Debates over what we are as selves are part of a tradition of concern with existential questions dealing with what gives human life meaning and value.

My interpretation contrasts with what I brand a thin and superficial methodological individualism that pervades much of our theorizing about the nature of human psychology and the conduct of psychotherapy. This kind of methodological individualism is connected to a radically atomistic view of subjectivity that has been spawned by the epistemological tradition. The account I offer broadens and deepens this notion of subjectivity by setting it in light of the vicissitudes of our moral involvements. More exactly, it broadens because it admits of others' necessary complicity in the social

constitution of our selfhood; deepens, because it acknowledges the inextirpable moral timbre of those involvements.

I will be offering a transcendental interpretation³ of sorts, tacking between what we experience as self and turning against the background dimensions (i.e., conditions of possibility) seemingly necessary for such experience. This method of argumentation can be traced to Kant (Harré, 1984) and Taylor (1978/79, 1987). However, unlike Kant who claimed that the account of a transcendental object could only be given by appeal to transcendental properties, I contend, following Harré and Taylor, that self can be explicated on the basis of social properties. Given its reality by continual instantiation in our concrete social relational practices, self is something of a transcendental object, but it is one with an empirical origin. Taking this course, I hope to reveal how thickly "self" is contoured by these conditions and how, in turn, the experience of self is necessary to preserving the conditions. As I hope to show, psychology's rekindled interest in the self is well-warranted, for self is not especially ephemeral. I believe that it is not, as some contemporary postmodernists have pronounced, something that ultimately might be arbitrarily shed. The moral, intersubjective structuring of self provides the developmental passage to intrapersonal psychology, and thus, for its intelligibility.

In bringing to bear and melding the works of two authors, Rom Harré (1984, 1986, 1987a, 1987b) and Charles Taylor (1985a, 1985b, 1987, 1988a, 1989, 1991), I shall offer that there are two transhistorical, interpenetrating dimensions of possibility that make for the practice of selfhood. The first of these dimensions, which I term "breadth," regards social constructionism.

Clearly, we are embodied biological beings. However, we are also cultural artifacts. Persons are constituted in and through the ongoing symbolic relational practices of cultures, the most conspicuous being conversation. Conversation is the principal medium through which we acquire, develop, communicate, and confer upon others, our understandings and interpretations of ourselves, our experiences, and our surroundings. We are figured as persons and selves largely of and through the incessant private and public conversations in which we are perpetually participants. Our psychology, shaped through the reflexivity afforded by self description, is brought forth by an attunement in relational practices, in our conversations with others. To borrow a metaphor, we are figures of speech.

The second dimension, "depth," implicates morality. To introduce this briefly by way of a sketch, one might say that our figuration as selves gestures toward some of our deepest human sensibilities, the real moral responses by which we make sense of our lives. "Self" is an expression of our moral comportment. It is articulating these sensibilities that reveals to us our "situatedness" in a moral dimension, in what is a landscape of inescapable, moral existential questions. Partial answers to these questions are given by our moral traditions. To use Taylor's (1988a) metaphor, our moral traditions display the "topography" (p. 300) of this landscape. That is, they display how we have gone about attempting to answer inescapable questions about what matters to us. They show the ways we have turned against the mystery of this landscape, carving its topography as it were. And, the mutability of moral topography shows how we have aspired unceasingly towards a better map of where we stand in relation to ourselves

and each other in this landscape of questions. To be a human agent is to be living in this landscape and to be trying to locate one's bearings somewhere in it. It is in this mapping of the moral understandings by which we're oriented, that selves appear as "animating metaphors," that is, historically-evolving envelopes for individuals' experience. As such, we are partially constituted, figured by these animating metaphors. Selves are animations. They are figurations of what Wittgenstein (1953) called "forms of life." Selves animate the expression of our moral identities. It is in their expression (i.e., our animation by them) and appraisal against the shifting topography of moral responses that the metamorphosis of self-descriptions takes place. Both the self development of the individual and the historical transmutation of collectively countenanced ideals of selfhood take place against a moral backdrop.

Insight into the first of these dimensions has come through the works of Mead (1934), Vygotsky (1934/1986), and Wittgenstein (1953). However, my account draws predominantly upon the work of Rom Harré (1984, 1986, 1987a), whom I regard as having captured and extended this insight perspicuously in the distinction he draws between persons and selves, his metaphor of self as theory, his interpretation of development in terms of a quadripartite space, and his focus on the constitutive role of conversation in the genesis and perpetuation of human psychology. Building upon the ideas of Mead, Wittgenstein, and Vygotsky, Harré spotlights conversation as a social-cognitive conduit through which social (i.e., public) and cognitive (i.e., private) domains intermingle. The notion of conversation as the medium in which the development and expression of selfhood takes place, provides for a

less reductive and dualistic conception of human psychology (Martin, 1994). Conversation construed not only as the medium for public communication, but also, as the initial vehicle for private thought, renders the social and the cognitive, the intrapersonal and the interpersonal, into an almost seamless web. Grasping the fundamental role of conversation in human life allows for a broader notion of selfhood. It elides much of the problematic radical dualism that stems from maintaining an emphatic division between intrapersonal (i.e., individual) and interpersonal (i.e., collective) realms.

Harré's (1984, 1986, 1987a) work provides a relational answer to the conundrum of individual selfhood and collective being. In drawing attention to the intersubjective dimension of selfhood, our relational condition as conversational beings, Harré's explication marks a challenge to the unquestioned affirmation of an ontology that presumes individualism. This ontological account not only has been a cornerstone of the epistemological tradition, but it has steered the vast majority of psychological theory and psychotherapeutic practice. At the same time, however, Harré's account provides room for the experiential reality of individual autonomy. Harré's account helps to untangle the conflation of ontology with political advocacy that pervades not only folk psychological wisdom, but also, academic psychology at large. His work promotes a relational view, an understanding of the ongoing interplay between cultures and individuals, between self and society.

In explicating the second of these dimensions, I will be relying upon the work of Charles Taylor (1987, 1988a, 1989, 1991). Taylor argues that "constitutive moral goods" (i.e., overarching moral ideals and commitments

by which particular concerns are ordered) are inextricable from the experience of selfhood and personal agency. Taylor's work suggests that epistemic and motivational aspects of selfhood are shaped by publicly sustained moral goods and practices growing out of our shared sociality. According to Taylor, goods arising from our moral traditions provide us with an orientation that sculpts our self-descriptions and personal theories, and steers our intentions and actions. We are compelled or drawn by moral goods to act in certain ways by our being selves of a particular sort. Taylor asserts that in this way, moral goods act as the sources for our agentic empowerment. By preserving our agentic empowerment, such goods, in turn, endure as the very substance of our lives, and as the conflux in which we live together as social beings. Taylor's arguments for the necessity of moral goods imply that requisite to any adequate understanding of human psychology, experience, or behavior is some comprehension of the complex of moral goods and commitments in terms of which human beings live their lives.

Taylor's ideas serve to build a case not only for the necessity of the moral in human life, but also, for a substantive view of morality. From this perspective, morality is not merely a matter of ethics. It is not reducible to the singular question of how to go about treating others. Rather, morality rests upon substantive notions of the good that have undergone rich development over the course of human history. These notions underlie ethical principles. Although Harré recognizes the central place of morality in human affairs, he views the domain of the moral as consisting principally of moral orders, that is, the maintenance of rights, duties, and obligations.

Harré further poses that honor is the central good upon which most moral orders are founded. However, in light of Taylor's rich historical exegesis, one that lays bare a multiplicity of substantive moral goods, and his exploration of the genesis of goods by virtue of the necessity of human agents to be "strong evaluators," Harré is shown to occlude deeper constitutive concerns that stand behind a surface level preoccupation with personal accountability and hierarchical institutions of social power. In light of these concerns, Harré's account tends to diminish the moral dimension of human life to something approaching mere impression management. Thus, I shall be employing Taylor's perspective to ameliorate what I discern to be Harré's somewhat shallow and thin rendering of the moral, as well as to resist a problematic relativism that could ensue from Harré's focus on honor.

Further, I shall explore and present something of the relevance of all this not only for the conduct of psychological research, but also, the practice of psychotherapy. My purpose in this is not to prescribe yet another newfangled technique destined to stock the self-help shelves. Rather, my aim is to provide an ontological account that yields a firmer grasp of what therapy is about, for it seems to me that in extant interpretations of therapy, much of this ontology has been obfuscated by the veils of an ideology of individualism and moral nonrealism. Given a broader and deeper account of subjectivity, I offer that psychotherapy serves principally as a vehicle for moral reflection. In therapeutic conversation, clients' and therapists' commitments to particular shared moral goods are brought to bear on clients' problems and concerns.

Building upon Martin's (1994) account of psychotherapy as a special kind of conversations directed at clients' personal theory revision, I argue that clients' problems and concerns can be viewed principally as questions of moral judgment. Many of the difficulties clients experience, arise when culturally-countenanced, internalized moral goods residing at the "core" of personal theories, have somehow been brought into conflict or are at variance with their current life circumstances. As clients publicly elaborate their recollections and their understandings of their concerns, they make manifest these particular moral goods. Such elaborations reveal what it is that matters for them, and what matters for them are at root, concerns of a moral nature. At the same time, therapists also ascribe to particular moral goods that guide their contributions to the therapeutic conversation. For example, to speak from a "nondirective" stance with the client is to assert the moral good of autonomy (i.e., it is better for individuals to be self-determining and made responsible for their own decisions).

During therapy, clients can become more aware of the manner in which moral goods undergird their experience, contribute to difficulties, and constrain the viability of their decisions. Often, the experience of difficulties may be ameliorated (or perpetuated) by the client's appropriation and internalization of dialogical resources that have been elaborated during the course of therapeutic conversation. Such resources may permit the client ways of interpreting and living with conflicts among seemingly incommensurable goods. Or, such resources may provide the client with means for selectively privileging and/or negating certain of these goods.

The first two chapters of my dissertation will deal with what I have termed the breadth and depth of selfhood, drawing principally upon the insights of Harré and Taylor, respectively. The third chapter is concerned with a discussion of the nature of psychological research and what I have called transcendental interpretation. The fourth chapter discusses the moral ideals resident in contemporary psychology and poses a conception of psychotherapy as moral reflection. As well, in Chapter IV I supplement this interpretation of psychotherapy with an illustrative case study. Lastly, the fifth chapter provides concluding commentary and some implications for the practice of psychotherapy.

CHAPTER I

FIGURES OF SPEECH

"A mind . . . is a partially fenced off area of the vast prairie of human conversation, an area in which a little individual farming goes on, with a few animals taken from the vast herds that roam the prairie. (Rom Harré, 1987a, p. 42)

Harré (1984, 1986, 1987a) and Taylor (1987, 1988a, 1989, 1991) share the social constructionist thesis that persons and their self-descriptions are constituted in interaction with others. The implication of social constructionism is that the sorts of personal development possible in a culture depend in large part upon the self-descriptions or, in Harré's terms, "theory" of self the actors hold. According to Harré, "self" is a theoretical concept. It is a mode of personal organization made possible by dint of conventionalized relations concretely mediated by speech and other symbolic practices, what since Wittgenstein (1953) has been referred to as "language games."

Harré can be seen as extending Vygotsky's (1934/1986) idea that the very forms our mental organization take are embedded in and appropriated from the dialogical practices circulating in the socio-cultural milieu. Vygotsky held that although thought and speech are independent, during development, thought becomes organized as internalized speech via culturally sustained, linguistically imbued, relational practices. Our language games bear the organizational forms or, in Wittgenstein's terms, "grammars" of self-

description. Harré contends that these organizational forms, realized in public conversation, serve as models for the *sotto voce* reflexive discourse that animates us as agents. We extol, condemn, make requests of, comply with, and order ourselves about, in the same fashion that we do others and that others do us. Our psychology is figured through reflexive discourse modeled after the modes of public conversation. Grammars carry and animate our form of life.

Self as Theory

Harré (1984) maintains that it is the learning of a local concept of "self," derived from the publicly displayed, collectively realized social concept of "person," that engenders our characteristic organization of mind. Harré's claim is that the disposition of mind and agency issues from taking up a particular theory of self educed from a culturally sanctioned idea about persons. The public person concept serves as the source analogue for contriving the animating metaphor of self. As Harré states:

the central constructing concept of individual human psychology is a concept of 'self', . . . it is a theoretical concept whose source analogue is the socially defined and sustained concept of 'person' that is favored in the society under study and is embodied in the grammatical forms of public speech appropriate to talk about persons. Our personal being is created by our coming to believe a theory of self based on our society's working conception of a person.

(p. 26)

Harré's (1984) metaphor of self as theory is based on the idea that reliance on familiar kinds is a major key to building the interlocking spheres of theoretical constructions constituting our interpretations and understandings of the world. The theoretical description of a previously unknown or novel entity most often relies on deploying a construct already extant in our current theoretical vocabularies (Harré, 1970, 1984; Hesse, 1976). This application of familiar kinds underscores the utility of analogues in contriving theoretical descriptions. While metaphor and analogy are ubiquitous in daily parlance, and examples of the metaphoric roots of many words abound, the epistemic value of the kind of analogical reasoning that gives rise to the metaphor of self is demonstrated clearly in the practice of scientific theorizing. While the nature of social and physical phenomena may be seen to differ fundamentally, Harré (1984) argues that the concept of self is derived and employed in much the same way as concepts that explain and organize phenomena in the physical sciences.

The primary role of theory in natural science is to provide explanation for patterns of phenomena. However, appropriate demarcations of phenomenal patterns in the fluidity of experience are not simply given. Such demarcations are "discovered" or accomplished by abstraction made courtesy of the use of analogues (Harré, 1970; 1984). Darwin's invocation of an ever-branching tree of life to elucidate the origin of the species, Dalton's depiction of the atom as a tiny solar system, Crick and Watson's comprehension of the architecture of DNA from viewing a spiraling column of smoke, Boyle's use of a spring to illustrate the behavior of gases under pressure, Kekulé's illumination of the closed structure of the benzene ring by

projecting the image of a snake biting its own tail, Freud's revelation of the unconscious as submerged below the surface of conscious experience like an iceberg; the annals of science are replete with explicit conjuring of metaphor through analogical reasoning. As exhibited in the examples above, the efficacy of a theoretical description to enable understanding a pattern of phenomena depends on treating the pattern of phenomena "as if" it is of the familiar kind conferred by the source analogue. In natural science, analogy and metaphor often provide passage to comprehension.

Familiar analogues not only play a significant role in formulating theoretical descriptions in natural science, but also, figure centrally in arriving at theoretical descriptions of the phenomena of interest to social scientists, or what Taylor (1980) terms, "subject-related" phenomena. According to Taylor, subject-related phenomena are those phenomena with properties that arise only as objects of human experience. For example, descriptions of joy, trepidation, courage, humiliation, love, colour, pitch, or poetry depend upon the meaning these things convey as socially located objects of human experience. Taylor proposes that distinguishing subject-related phenomena ameliorates the incoherence engendered by attempting to apply a criterion of absoluteness to that which exist as objects only within the realm of human relations and conversation. A criterion of absoluteness would dictate that accounts of subject-related phenomena be given in absolute or "dehumanized" terms, independent of their subject-relatedness. It would require separating the descriptive aspects of phenomena from evaluative ones. Such an expectation is quite clearly problematic. Such a separation might be shown to have utility with respect to giving an account

of colour or pitch, that is, subject-related phenomena that nonetheless are rooted in the physical world (i.e., the neurophysiology of human beings). However, the notion that we might be able to prescind from evaluative aspects in our accounts of joy or trepidation, courage or humiliation, that is, subject-related phenomena that are rooted principally in the social world, is much less tenable. The evaluative aspects are woven into what is meant by these terms. Nonetheless, there is widespread disagreement as to whether or not a distinction between subject-related and object-related phenomena can legitimately be made (cf. Rorty, 1980). I shall return to this debate in more detail in Chapter III. For the moment, however, I hope to reveal, such a distinction is warranted on the grounds that subject-relatedness (i.e., of social phenomena) provides for an additional dimension in the semantics of theoretical descriptions.

The additional dimension to which I refer is that, in the case of subject-related phenomena, theoretical descriptions accomplished via analogical analysis not only participate in the apprehension of patterns, but also, share in their creation and transformation. To illustrate, the notion that human beings have a capacity for engaging in introspection as a sort of "inner perception" can be seen as educed via analogical analysis utilizing a Cartesian conception of external perception as the source analogue. Given the starting point of a belief in Cartesian dualism, the subject-object dichotomy endows subjects and objects with a particular relational stance. The internal-external relational condition presumed in Cartesian dualism implies certain entailments for a theoretical description of how, as embodied beings standing separate and detached from external objects, we apprehend

their nature. In attempting to grasp the nature of the mental realm, these entailments become, namely, that there is an inner object to be experienced and that there is an inner entity to experience that inner object. The possibility of introspective experience can be seen to depend upon acquiring belief in a particular theoretical description predicated on applying a source analogue of familiar kind. It is of interest to note that the reification of the psychological ingredients necessary for what is understood as inner perception is further accomplished by their presupposition in the patent self-report research methodologies of psychology, as well as certain psychotherapeutic practices such as the method of introspection in psychoanalysis.

However, in the case of introspection, our source analogue carved in Cartesian contours bequeaths us the dilemma of being unable to discern that which is doing the perceiving from that which is being perceived. Despite this paradox, which would seem to render the account of introspection as inner perception suspect, we persist in studying human psychology with an incoherent conception ensconced in the administration and interpretation of self-report measures. The theoretical description abstracted by our analogical analysis tells us to proceed as if one can know and report on one's self and "as if" the self can be sensed in the same manner as an external object, its analogical counterpart founded in the Cartesian scheme. In the case of inner perception, the additional dimension that arises from the semantics of theoretical descriptions of subject-related phenomena is that the phenomena explained by the theoretical description is, for the most part, itself created by ascribing to a belief in that theoretical description. That

inner perception, or reflexivity, exists, is largely a function of advancing and sustaining a theoretical description that allows for it.

A profound consequence of relying on source analogues of familiar kind in fashioning theoretical descriptions is that even what we find to be our selves is a function of the source analogues available to us. On this premise, Harré (1984) contends that "self" is a theoretical description. Harré maintains that "person," the empirically based, embodied, social individual identifiable by public criteria, serves as source analogue in the constitution of self. The concept of "person" shares in the creation of self. In this light, self is not a theoretical description of a material entity. Self is a theory.

This is not to say that subject-related phenomena, or for that matter object-related phenomena, are constituted fully by the theoretical descriptions or linguistically-formed representations given them. The semantics of a theoretical description maintain a logical independence of linguistic objectivity from epistemic objectivity. As Greenwood (1991) states:

Human actions and social practices are constituted by their social relational and representational dimensions. Physical phenomena are constituted by their physical composition and structure. It does not mark any difference with respect to the objectivity of our scientific descriptions of them. A classificatory description may be said to be linguistically objective if it is true or false according to whether or not the reality putatively described exists and has or has not the properties or relations attributed to it by the description: if it is true or false independently of the employment of the description by individual agents or social collectives. (p. 20)

While subject-related phenomena may be created and sustained by intersubjective relations and discourse, such phenomena themselves are not constituted entirely by the theoretical descriptions given them. To say that "self is a theory" is not the same as saying that self, as a theory, is constituted in sum by our theoretical description of it. Self as theory and our theoretical description of self as a theory are logically distinct matters. The use of metaphor and analogy in the attempt to apprehend the nature of phenomena is a double-edged sword. Metaphor and analogy are marvelous devices for capturing something of the essential character of phenomena, but by definition, they are always somewhat erroneous. For this reason, while theoretical descriptions can create and sustain phenomena, phenomena can not be said to be constituted in sum by our theoretical descriptions of them.

Another way of making this point is to consider what is known as the Quinne-Duhem thesis (Bechtel, 1988a; Phillips, 1987). The thesis holds that without any fixed analysis of meaning, evidence gathered from scientific experimentation does not in itself determine the verification or falsification of hypotheses. A number of theories compatible with the evidence can exist. For this reason, theories are said to be underdetermined by evidence. Further, even as new evidence accrues, there are a number of ways in which competing theories can be modified to accommodate new findings. Thus, our theoretical descriptions of "self as a theory" are always underdetermined. Theories concerning the constitutive nature of self are open to revision. This of course may be complicated further by the fact that the phenomenon itself may change or exist in varying states of transition. As I shall discuss,

collective notions of self can evolve, as emerging and developing individual self-theories interact with the socio-cultural context in which they are sown.

In making the statement "self is a theory," it is important to clarify the sense of the term "theory" that is being employed. A theory can be defined simply as a reasoned account. Harré (1991) offers a distinction to be drawn between two sorts of theory. One sort acts to "enlarge our ontology" (p. 4) by providing a model which attempts to comprehend a phenomenon and the implicit relations in which it is implicated. The other sort, to which Harré refers, are "open textured," malleable sets of concepts capable of being continually revised. In stating that "self is a theory," the term "theory" is used with reference to the first sense of theory described. Acquiring a theory of self, as a model based on the analogue of persons, has ontological implications (i.e., the way in which we actually live our lives). However, the theoretical description (i.e., theory) that is being offered, "self is a theory," fits the second sense of the term "theory." Our theoretical description, "self is a theory," is an attempt to draw on certain conceptual resources in attempting to convey an understanding. As a linguistic formulation, it is helpful as a prosthetic device to investigate something of our condition as selves.

Persons and Selves

Harré (1984) argues that as a theory, self is not to be construed as the property of an individual order, something that is at bottom private, inner, or subjective. Rather, self is to be regarded as a feature derived from the social and moral order. Fundamental to his social constructionist account is

Harré's redrafting of the concepts "person" and "self." Harré accepts as basic Strawson's (1959) ego/person distinction. As Strawson states:

The concept of pure individual consciousness--the pure ego-- . . . cannot exist as a primary concept in terms of which the concept of a person can be explained or analyzed. It can exist, if at all, as a secondary non-primitive concept, which itself is to be explained, analyzed in terms of the concept of a person. (p. 102)

As an embodied, societal individual identified by public criteria, "person" is a "primitive" concept cast from the primary structure of society. "Person" is the concept providing criteria by which individuals are distinguished in the public realm. "Persons" are socially located, socially defined, the constituent elements of social arrays. The concept of "person" pertains to the visible public patterns to which we attribute various kinds of capacity for engaging in meaningful public acts. "Person" indexes speakers, demarcates elements constitutive of conversation, and punctuates particular locations in the streams of social interaction. Actions and utterances of "persons" are understood within the domain of public, interpersonal commitments, not as emanations of some private inner state. "Person" is not the overt expression of some inner phenomenal entity, but the public presentation of a theory of self. "Person" is that from which self, as a theory, is appropriated. The use of the term "appropriate" refers directly to Vygotsky's (1934/1986) account of development whereby individuals are said to appropriate aspects of the grammatical and social relational forms circulating in the culture from which they forge their cognitive lives.

By contrast, "self" is a secondary concept. "Self" is not an entity, but an organizational mode. "Self" emerges as the imbibing of a theory held about "me." It refers to the psychological individual made manifest in the unified organization one undertakes of one's own experience. By virtue of their theoretical status, selves are not natural kinds identified by genetic or biological criteria. Rather, self as a theoretical description of a subject-related phenomenon, is a cultural artifact. Selves are socially and collectively countenanced, fostered, and imposed. Harré (1984) proposes that over the course of human history and across diverse cultures there may be a plurality of theories by which persons have been furnished and selves created. This view is shared by Taylor (1989), and will be elaborated in the subsequent chapter.

Harré (1984) adduces that certain unities that constitute our experience are postulated from holding a theory of self as a unity. These hypothesized unities are also to be viewed as cultural artifacts. Despite the quality of their being subject-related, these unities of experience become reified in the domain of human intersubjective relations and conversation and, in turn, spawn and make manifest other experienced unities. Harré discerns three fundamental unities postulated by ascribing to a theory of a unity of self. These unities are, namely, point of view, point of action, and life trajectory. Harré asserts that it is through belief in the practice of self-ascription, a reflexive ability to interpret events as happening to me, that point of view and point of action are formed. Point of view and point of action provide their respective unified aspects of experience. Additionally, they contribute to the experience of temporal continuity (i.e., life trajectory). By

virtue of these fundamental unities, experience is organized as a "pencil-like field" in which what we learn to call "I" is not experienced per se, but believed to exist at its apex. The "I" denotes self as the theoretical referent for an organized field structured by the practice of self ascription. As a theoretical concept, "self" organizes experience in a fashion analogous to the way that a theory of gravity organizes a scientific understanding of certain forces exerted on and by objects. As Harré states in characterizing the use of a theory of self to structure experience:

when we learn to organize our organically grounded experience as a structured field, and cognitively as a body of beliefs built up of self-predications, we are deploying a concept of 'self' that functions like the deep theoretical concepts of the natural sciences, which serve to organize our experience and knowledge, whether or not they have observable referents in the real world. (p. 145)

Harré (1984) posits that the aforementioned triune of unities, point of view, point of action, and life trajectory, can be seen as leading to the structuring of experience in terms of other unities such as identity, consciousness, and agency; and their reflexive forms, autobiography, self-consciousness, and self-mastery, respectively. Self is the personal unity, the inner being I experience as myself, reified in the reflexive forms of the unities which constitute my experience of self. In other words, my experience of having an autobiography, of being conscious, of being able to act, of being able to reflect on my actions all arise of my having acquired a particular theory of a unity of self.

However, Harré (1984), asserts that the development of the various unities of self does not occur by the efforts of solitary individuals in Cartesian isolation. The forms of mind reflected in a theory of self are acquired and constituted intersubjectively. These forms are conferred through various social and linguistic practices, the conversations and practical activities of the cultures to which individuals belong. It is only through their participation in a culture that human beings achieve selfhood. Selves are engendered by the personal transformation of a cultural inheritance. As Vygotsky (cited in Wertsch, 1991) states, "humans' psychological nature represents the aggregate of internalized social relations that have become functions for the individual and form the individual's structure" (p. 26). Echoing Oakeshott (1975), Harré (1984) proffers that it is "persons engaged in conversation" (p. 65), that forms the fundamental human social-cultural reality. Conversation is the principal medium of social relations through which the transformation to personal being takes place.

Subject-Related Phenomena in a Quadripartite Space

Each secondary structure, a singular self, is not simply a mirroring or precise replica of the primary structure. Features of the primary structure, once appropriated by an individual as a secondary structure, are then instantiated and modified by the personal practices of self-ascription. Given the singularity of positions and locations dictated by the constraint of individual embodiment in time and space, self-ascriptions occur and accrue somewhat uniquely.

By ascribing experiences to a self, our unique instantiations of an appropriated self-description can allow for transformations in that very self-description. Such transformations not only can impact dramatically upon the individual, but also, can have profound consequences for others. For in speaking, we "publish" ourselves. We reveal a possibility, a viable self, a way for us to be in the world. And, by presenting it in the light of the public arena, we are suggesting to others, whether we intend to or not, a possible way of being. From this relational perspective, while our self-descriptions are dictated initially by culture, they can be elaborated and transformed by individuals. Moreover, these transformations can be usurped by others and "conventionalized," that is, accepted into shared practices and enshrined as cultural conventions. In light of the foregoing, Harré (1984) sees the development of both our individual and collective psychologies in terms of four sequential processes that mark the crossing of private and public space. Harré designates these: "appropriation," "transformation," "publication," and "conventionalization."

Harré (1984) offers the representation of a quadripartite space to amend the inadequacies he discerns in the unidimensional Cartesian scheme. Harré contends that the quadripartite representation better encompasses the multidimensionality of the realm in which subject-related phenomena are conceived. Specifically, such a representation assists in comprehending the fundamental duality of persons and selves. It elucidates the ways in which persons and selves are realized and made manifest in an intersubjective dimension.

The atomistic conception of human beings endorsed by mainstream North American psychology and reflected in the contemporary folk psychology of Western culture owes much to the legacy of a tenacious Cartesianism, carried forward by the epistemological tradition. As previously discussed, Cartesian dualism constructs a particular relation between subject and object which implicates a metaphysics of inner and outer. Building on Cartesian materialism, which endows us with mental substance, Locke posited the existence of mental states. Locke differentiated between sensation and reflection as distinct epistemologies, but he maintained that both were imbued with an empirical quintessence. According to the Lockean view, one apprehends nature through sensory experience. In the same way, one comes to know mind through "reflection," in which the mind bends to observe itself with the aid of an "inner" eye or sense. As is the case with Descartes, again with Locke, the metaphor of inner perception looms large.

In his Critique of Pure Reason, Kant (1781/1966) preserved Locke's notion of inner sense but drew a distinction between subjective self-awareness and the manner in which such awareness is organized. Kant asserted that to have a sense of experiencing depends on a conception of it which entails a referential object. Kant claimed further that the construal of an object implies that representations of experience are somehow organized in terms of their relatedness. The appearance of an organized sense of experience, Kant believed, pointed to a transcendental object--a noumenal self. Kant's solution to the conundrum disguised in Locke's work, how a self could "self-reflect," was to posit two aspects of self, a phenomenal self and a noumenal self. It was this Kantian bifurcation of the self that Wundt saw as

the conceptual basis for psychology and its distinctive mission: to establish the empirical basis for philosophy (Danziger, 1990).

Despite their profound philosophical contributions, both Locke and Kant failed to escape the fetters of Cartesianism. In fact, the Cartesian scheme was very much extended through their ideas. It was perpetuated in Wundt's work and has been carried forward pervading the epistemology and, consequently, the vast majority of modes of inquiry in psychology and the conduct of psychotherapeutic practices. Harré (1984) suggests, however, that Kant's idea of a transcendental self does provide something of a toehold for overcoming Cartesianism. In ascribing to self the status of theory, Harré puts forth an essentially Kantian view of the self as a kind of transcendental objects. However, unlike Kant, who claimed that an account of a transcendental object could only be established by appeal to transcendental properties, Harré poses that the production of self can be explicated on the basis of social properties. According to Harré, the "self-engendering" abstractions of the analogue of person occur in the milieu fashioned by social relational and grammatical forms sustained by culture. It is these social relational and grammatical forms that configure the analogue of person and, as a consequence, the forms from which self arise. As Harré states:

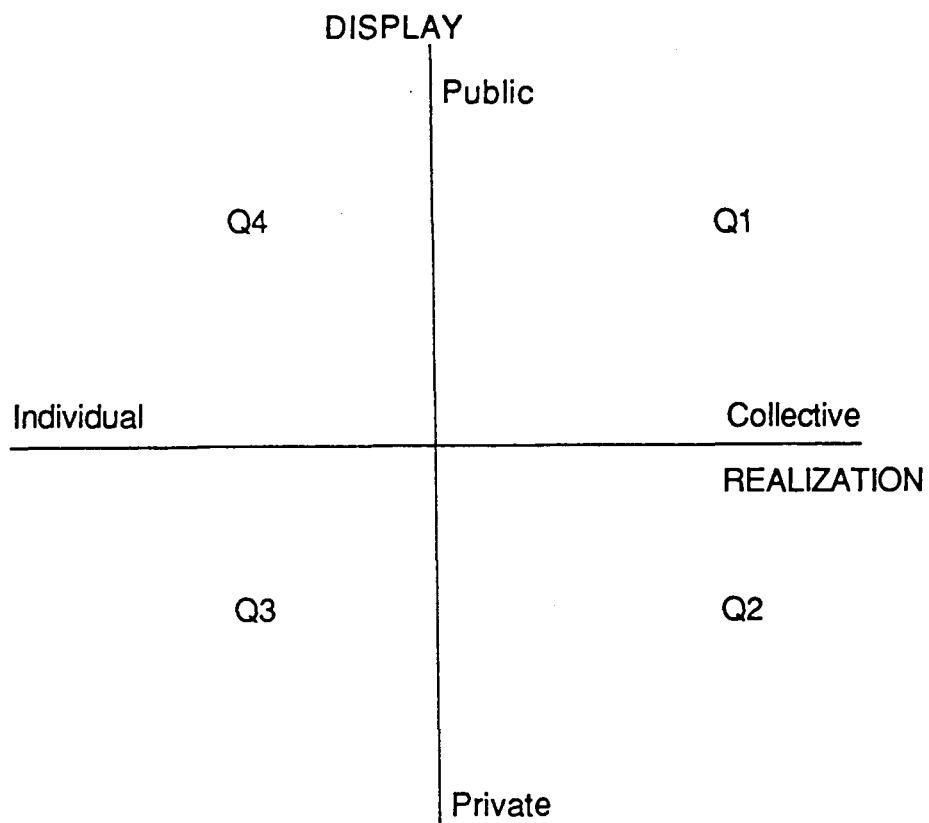
the 'self' is acquired as a generalization and abstraction of the public person-concept, that is, in use in the public-collective discourse of a community by a slide from one grammatical model to another, initiated by certain social/linguistic practices. (p. 167)

Harré's (1984) conception of a quadripartite space serves in locating subject-related phenomena as they take on various forms. In so doing, it

illuminates the manner in which such phenomena are made manifest. Harré suggests that the unidimensional Cartesian scheme be replaced by one with two intersecting orthogonal dimensions as shown in Figure 1. Both dimensions, display and realization, are to be construed as continua. The variability in location of phenomena along these dimensions is moderated by social relational and grammatical forms. Specifically, placement of a phenomenon along the display dimension is mediated by the social relational and grammatical forms that engender its representation. The way in which these forms enable the action of the phenomenon determines the phenomenon's location along the realization dimension. These two intersecting dimensions, display and realization, form four quadrants: the public-collective (Q1), the private-collective (Q2), the private-individual (Q3), and the public-individual (Q4).

In light of the Harréan quadripartite space, the myriad of relational and conversational forms which constitute our social practices can be seen as extant in Q1. Such forms, the concept of "persons," for example, are publicly displayed and collectively realized. Selves, which are privately displayed and individually realized, occupy Q3. The displacement of persons and selves in the diagonally opposed quadrants, Q1 and Q3 respectively, serves to highlight their distinction as discussed earlier. However, it is the considerations afforded by Q2 and Q4 that prohibit collapsing the Harréan space to a single dimension and recapitulating the Cartesian scheme. The importance of Q2 and Q4 becomes apparent in what Harré (1984) posits to be a developmental cycle beginning in Q1 and progressing sequentially

Figure 1
Harré's Quadripartite Space

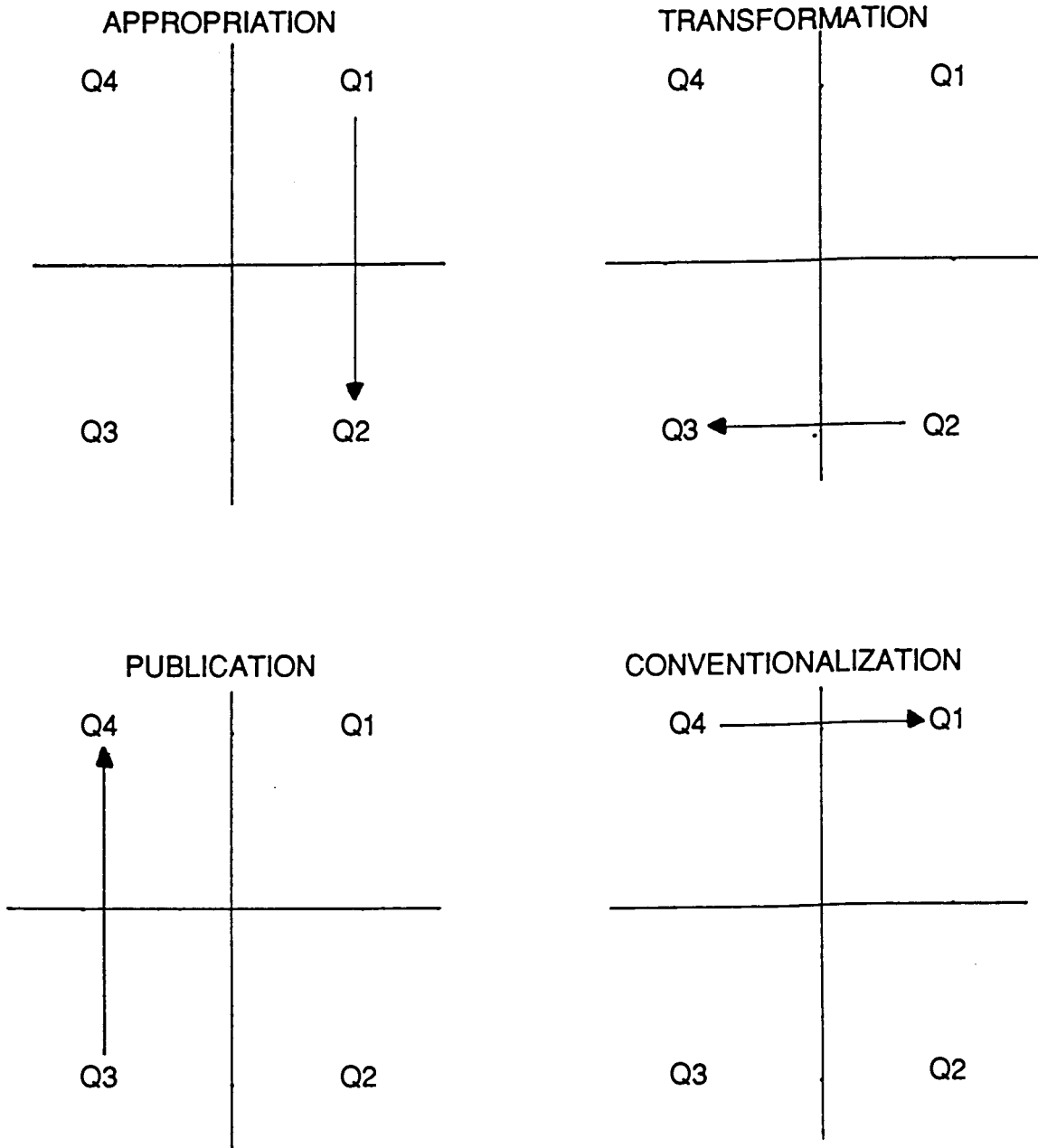


through the other three quadrants. As shown in Figure 2, the developmental cycle is expressed in four stages during which phenomena are transposed to subsequent quadrants.

Harré's (1984) argument from social conditions holds that our cultural inheritance is the social die in which human reality is cast. That mind is formed from the appropriation of conversational resources and practical conventions sustained by culture, indicates the origin of the developmental cycle to be punctuated at Q1. Vygotsky's (1934/1986) account of the process of appropriation describes the bridging of Q1 and Q2 in what constitutes the first step of this developmental cycle. Appropriation is the process by which publicly displayed, collectively realized, social relational and linguistic forms become reflected in forms of mind. Vygotsky, describing the development of "egocentric" speech, characterizes appropriation as the imbibing of structures that allows thought to take on its verbal dimensions and speech to become rational. Appropriation refers to ways in which symbiotic social relations and certain conversational practices or language games, bring these collectively realized structures into the realm of private display.

It is important to note the radical difference between Vygotsky's views on psychological development and those of Freud and Piaget, his Western contemporaries. Freud and Piaget both presupposed that the individual is endowed innately with certain primitive forms of thought. Freud and Piaget held that it was these forms of thought that gave rise to egocentric speech. However, they believed that such speech eventually dissipated during the child's socialization and the formation of the superego or conscience. This

Figure 2
Harré's Developmental Scheme



assumption precasts development as the continual adaptation of the biologically internal or private to the external or social. Freud and Piaget held that it was the taming of egocentric speech that led to the rationalizing of the individual. In contrast, the Vygotskian position is that it is culture that funds the kinds of cognitive capacities that human beings can manifest. In Vygotsky's socio-cultural account of development, cognitive maturation proceeds only by virtue of the knowledge encoded in the rest of the culture, knowledge that pre-exists a culture's new initiates. This knowledge, carried by conversational practices, prescribes certain preferred conventions for particular kinds of cognitive activity. Thus, in contrast to Freud and Piaget, Vygotsky attributed little of the maturation of cognitive functioning and mental life to that which pre-exists our immersion in a culture.

"Transformation" is the step from Q2 to Q3 in which one's sense of individuality appears, made possible by an emergent theory of self. Transformation refers to the process by which appropriated forms are engaged to organize experience as unities. In transformation, the appropriated forms are instantiated with particular events, engendering one's distinctive sense of experience as reflected in one's sense of autobiography, self-consciousness, and self-mastery. Transformation is the ordering of experience as one's own. It is the private display and individual realization of the products of self-ascription. Self emerges in Q3, the product of transformation.

Harré (1984) extends and enhances Vygotsky's (1934/1986) work by positing two additional stages in the development of subject-related phenomena. "Publication" is the process by which phenomena pass from Q3

to Q4. It is the public expression of one's unique transformations, bringing them into the light of the social arena and exposing them to the scrutiny of others. It is transmitting to others of that which has been organized according to the various aspects of a theory of self. Harré terms the final stage in the developmental cycle, "conventionalization." Conventionalization is the collective realization, sanctioning, and adoption of an idiosyncratic construction such that it becomes part of the shared cultural milieu. In crossing from Q4 to Q1, the publicly displayed, individually realized phenomenon is accepted into the shared knowledge and conventions of the culture, a possibility for others.

Thus, according to Harré (1984), "self" is to be comprehended as a kind of theories through which an individual's experience is organized. During transformation, the constitution of experience is dramatically altered. Up to that point, the individual was engaged primarily in internalizing particular organizational forms carried by conversation. In transformation, these internalized forms are employed to configure experiences. Through transformation, individuals structure a distinctive, autobiographical self-consciousness. The significance of Harré's extension of Vygotsky's (1934/1986) account, is in his explication of the processes of publication and conventionalization. This reveals how an individual can be something of an artifact of cultural conversations and conventions and, at the same time, potentially come to be something of an artificer contributing creatively to the transformation of those conversations and conventions.

It is important to note that the processes of appropriation, transformation, publication, and conventionalization themselves are

embedded in particular social relational and linguistic forms which shape their expression as processes. These processes, as well, are part of a cultural inheritance. Harré (1984) contends that the transition of phenomena from one quadrant to another is made highly complex by a myriad of social conventions that mediate the possibility of personal transformations. According to Harré, this complexity arises in large part from the grounding of social convention in "moral orders." Appropriation, transformation, publication, and conventionalization is not solely a matter of spatial movement. These developmental processes are also to be seen as portending moral movement. Harré (1984, 1987b) asserts that the grammatical models that carry the organizational forms for selfhood, the practices of self-ascription, and the development of psychological functioning, originate from the participation of persons in morally governed settings. Harré terms these settings, "moral orders."

Moral Orders

Harré (1984, 1987b) believes social conventions to be sustained and situated within systems of rights, duties, and obligations that comprise moral orders. According to Harré, selfhood and the psychological functioning of individuals is forged developmentally in such a way as to fulfill the specifications provided by the public person concept, as these specifications are maintained by a culture. The developmental or educative process by which persons and selves are constituted (i.e., as depicted by the quadripartite space), is designed to yield the kind of persons that will enable

the continuation of the culture. That is, if a culture is to persist, selves must be presented such that essential aspects of the source analogue (i.e., the concept of person proper to the culture) will be preserved. Harré contends that in order for this to happen, the sorts of self-fashioning grammatical models that are carried by conversation are moderated by moral orders. Systems of rights, duties, and obligations, and the positioning of a person within these, dictate the kinds of individual conduct permissible. In this way, moral orders mediate the nature of our development as persons and selves. They do so, by prescribing the kinds of intersubjective relation by which selves can be constituted, and by providing constraints for the ways that self can appropriately be presented. Moral orders provide the context of social appraisal. They furnish the setting in which actions and utterances are interpreted.

Harré (1984) believes that the maintenance of personal honor is the basis of most moral orders. According to Harré, preserving or gaining honor is the major motive that moves most human beings in the endeavors they undertake. As Harré (1984) states, "I believe that in some form or another it [honor] is the moral system by which most human beings live and have lived" (p. 235). Moral orders founded upon honor are concerned principally with the assessment of the character of persons. In moral orders resting upon honor, judgments as to the worth of an individual are set against a backdrop of social hierarchy, the ways in which persons are socially positioned according to various cultural conventions. The status of individuals is a function of how those individuals' actions and utterances are interpreted in terms of their particular positioning in the moral order. Thus, in honor moralities, what one

says and does is linked inextricably to a certain picture of what one's culture believes one ought to be and how one ought to behave.

In moral orders concerned with honor, the significance of actions and utterances is weighed not simply in terms of the first order desires of the actor. Assessing the merit of an individual is not simply a function of the degree of success with which that individual goes about meeting immediately felt needs. Rather, what one says and does is judged by the degree to which the actions of the actor publicly bolster or defame his or her honor or reputation. Connectedly, the status of a person is measured by the extent to which he or she is capable of doing what is required of their position in the moral order in which they participate. Such status consists in acting in accordance with the rights ascribed to a person and in the fulfilling of duties and obligations proper to particular positionings.

Thus, the intentional actions of an individual are something of an indication of what that individual believes he or she is entitled and obligated to do. Harré's (1984, 1987b) point is that one's actions are not simply a matter of what one is capable of doing. One's actions are also a matter of rights, what one believes one has the right to do given one's positioning in a moral order. Further, one's position is largely based on the impressions others form of one's character, what the actor is seen to be. In turn, these impressions are prescribed largely *a priori* by the specifications of moral orders. In Harré's account, the social context created by moral orders is of central importance to understanding the self-development of individuals. In drawing attention to these factors, Harré challenges the Piagetian tradition of developmental psychology.

Harré (1984) argues that Piagetian and Kohlbergian accounts of moral development confuse cognitive competence in moral conduct with knowledge of the kinds of moral theory or moral "folk wisdom" that are required for one to live in a moral order. Piaget (1932) and Kohlberg (1964) held that moral understanding develops in accordance with certain cognitive capacities. According to Piaget and Kohlberg, these cognitive capacities, differentiated by developmental patterns of cognitive growth, constrain the sorts of moral reasoning an individual is capable of at a given stage in their development. With a focus on the cognitive developmental level of the individual in their theories, for Piaget and Kohlberg, social context is taken to be something highly abstract, with little attention paid to its more specific structural properties. Consequently, Harré charges that Piaget and Kohlberg miss the culturally distinctive character of local conventions regarding moral acceptability that moderate the presentation of self. The implication of Harré's notion of a moral order is that what someone does is not simply a matter of cognitive competence, of what one can do. Rather, because conduct is linked to the moral appraisal of the actor's character, what individuals do or do not do is also a matter of whether or not they perceive themselves to have the right, obligation, or duty to do so given their position in a moral order. Other critiques of the Piagetian and Kohlbergian lines of moral developmental theory support the plausibility of Harré's analysis. These include reports of individuals skipping stages or reverting to previous stages of moral development (Holstein, 1976), underestimation of the moral reasoning abilities of young children (Darley & Shultz, 1990), effects attributable to the particularity and personal meaningfulness of the moral

dilemmas used to assess stages of moral development (Fishkin, Keniston, & MacKinnon, 1973; Eisenberg-Berg, 1979; Suls & Kalle, 1979), gender specific effects (Gilligan, 1982), and the socialization of children toward age appropriate "intellectual manners" (e.g., Goodnow, 1977; Davies, 1980).

Harré's (1984, 1987b) account of development reveals the importance of moral aspects of human interaction. Morality is not simply something we develop as individuals, it is also the context in which we develop. Further, Harré's developmental account explains how aspects of our characteristically moral interactions can be appropriated and become integral to our ways of thinking and acting. As has been described, Harré believes that development can be explained as an educative process that occurs by the developing individual's appropriation of conversational elements and relational practices. These conversations and relational practices that an individual participates in are constrained within the structure of moral orders.

Harré (1984) asserts that for human beings to be moral, certain features must be ascribed to persons; namely, agency and personal accountability. Harré contends that these features are acquired as a part of selfhood in the same fashion as other cognitive linguistic tools for thought. The structuring of a sense of agency and personal accountability for the developing child (i.e., as stipulated by the local culture) occurs by appropriation of the kinds of talk made available that are concerned with the making of demands and requests, and of responding to demands and requests with varying degrees of compliance or resistance. By taking up the public conversational forms associated with these sorts of interpersonal relation, one becomes equipped with the cognitive tools for the kinds of internal

dialogue that moderate self control, motivation, and intentional action. The ways in which one "treats oneself" are rooted in the ways that one treats others and is treated by others. One learns to consider and converse with oneself, accord oneself rights, duties, and obligations, on the basis of one's prior experiences in social interactions with others. According to Harré, these social interactions are steeped in the moral theory of moral orders and, as a consequence, so are one's private cognitive conversations (i.e., individual psychology).

Detailing the way in which such self-controlling forms of talk come to be taken up, Harré (1984) invokes the notion of psychological symbiosis (Shotter, 1984) or scaffolding, to use Bruner's (1983) term. Psychological symbiosis poses a challenge to the Piagetian notion that throughout the course of development, an individual is to be understood as a biologically self-contained unit, as functionally isolated during each developmental stage. In contrast, psychological symbiosis encompasses, in the process of development, the performances undertaken by a more competent individual who supplements the deficits or inadequate displays of personhood shown by another. The most typical example of this is that of the relationship between an infant and its primary caregiver. A parent will interpret his or her infant's feelings and actions as intentional and, consequently, endows the child with the capacity of having emotions, as such emotions are culturally defined. As shown in some of Bruner's (1983) research, inferences of this sort made by mothers are readily apparent in a mother's conversations with her infant, the way in which she speaks to and for her child. A mother interacts with her infant, "not as the infant actually is," but as the infant is imagined by the

mother as a psychologically supplemented individual. The conversational contributions of the mother serve to complement the child such that the child appears as a person (i.e., as the public person concept is culturally defined).

Rounding out his account of the symbiotic nature of development, Harré (1986) refers to Vygotsky's (1934/1986) related notion of the zone of proximal development. The zone of proximal development pertains to the sphere of potential learning encompassed by the relations between a child and a more competent individual. In contrast to the Piagetian view of the individual, as maturing in a biologically preordained fashion (i.e., passing through a set sequence of invariant stages of cognitive development) in his or her own isolated cognitive shell, the zone of proximal development implies that learning requires the collaborative structuring of a "learning space." A specification of this space is the provision of scaffolding by a more competent other (i.e., adult or peer). Scaffolding lends the child a perspective on something that the child is on the verge of learning. In scaffolding, there is a provision of linguistic or other representational resources that enable the child to see something anew through the terms provided by the more competent other. The child learns, and development takes place, by the child's appropriating bits and pieces of the complementary conversational or representational elaborations provided by the symbiotic other.

The zone of proximal development is not to be taken as a characteristic of the child, nor can it be attributed exclusively to the teaching activities of a more competent adult or peer. Rather, it is a feature of their collaborative engagement. The focus here is on the social system within which learning and development takes place. Harré (1984) argues that the

Piagetian idea that development occurs according to natural, innately governed stages, is largely an artifact of the manner in which the social existence of the child is organized through and with others. The course of development and the order in which skills and beliefs are acquired, is culturally as well as biologically determined.

Psychological symbiosis, scaffolding, and the zone of proximal development provide a window onto the way that conversational relations structure both cognitive and moral development. Given that psychological symbiosis, scaffolding, and the zone of proximal development are concerned with the structuring of a conversational space, and that such spaces are configured by the rights, duties, and obligations of the prevailing moral order, psychological symbiosis is fundamentally a morally governed affair. As symbiotic relations provide the context of development for human beings, beginning from the highly vulnerable condition of infancy, it would seem reasonable to expect that such relations would need to be founded in some sort of ethics. Further, moral aspects of the symbiotic relationship that preside over and structure conversations, the distribution of rights, duties, and obligations accorded individuals on the basis of their position in the moral order, are also imbibed in acts of appropriation. Such moral aspects become features of the psychological functioning and self-descriptions of individuals.

The importance of Harré's exposition of development (1984, 1986, 1987a, 1987b), is that it reveals how self arises as a kind of personal theory that has been taken up through participation in the morally saturated conversations and the interrelational activities of a culture. To sum up Harré's account, selves emerge as the appropriations of a theory conveyed

through symbiotic relationships. The form that such a theory takes is intimately bound up with the kinds of cultural conversations in which persons are immersed. Our psychologies are conversational in origin, form, and content. Further, self-development also takes place in morally governed settings. Implicit in conversations are certain rights, duties and obligations that moderate, constrain, and yet also make possible our intersubjective symbiotic relations. Goods and ethical constraints implicit in moral orders permeate symbiotic relations and conversations. Thus, not only does the process by which selfhood is constructed manifest moral content, but also, because development proceeds by virtue of conversational appropriations and transformations, the very content of self theories is moral in character. One way of putting this is that becoming a self is the development of a moral status.

As revealed in Harré's explanation of development, self takes on moral content as a result of its being the product of intersubjective conversational relations and practical activities laden with moral overtones. Harré's explication reveals how an understanding of oneself as autonomous, as an independent, sovereign social atom can come to be taken up by the individuals of a culture. In other words, it shows how although we may live out our lives with a strong conception of ourselves as individuals, the ways in which we understand ourselves to be individuals and demarcate and manifest our individuality (i.e., our personal psychology), is largely a matter brought about and moderated by the practices carried on within a culture. This is a central point I wish to preserve from Harré's account of the moral dimension. It implies that what one believes oneself to be, originates with moral beliefs

and practices sustained by a culture. The implication to be drawn for psychology in understanding human action, is that in order to comprehend the way that human beings move through the world, presenting and interpreting themselves more or less as enduring, unified subjects, it is necessary to distinguish the extant complex of moral commitments in terms of which they view their lives, and towards which they are oriented.

However, a difficulty with Harré's (1984) perspective stems from his preoccupation with the preservation of honor. For Harré, the moral content of conversations springs principally from a concern with how one appears to others--the maintenance of honor. According to Harré, the rights, duties, and obligations we understand ourselves to possess and that moderate our activities, are anchored in our social positioning or social place. While honor may indeed have structured the moral orders of many premodern societies, it would appear to be much less influential on the morality of Western moderns. Admittedly, a concern with honor still may be seen in segments or subcultures of modern Western society that are hierarchically structured, such as the military, nobility, clergy, and some traditional professions such as those concerned with law enforcement. However, in the modern era, the good of honor has largely been supplanted by a good of dignity. Berger (1983) argues that the displacement of honor and the concurrent rise of a concern with human dignity, took place with the modern project of affirming the autonomy of the individual subject. Traditional conceptions of honor would be quite inimical to such a project. This is because honor is attached to a view of the individual that measures his or her worth in terms of institutionalized social roles. In contrast, modern dignity is founded on the idea of autonomy,

that worth and identity are in essence separate from institutional roles. What is thought to be constitutive of human beings, essentially human, is a consciousness that is immune to the authoritative external imposition of social roles. However, as Berger points out, although honor and dignity define the relation between self and society in very different ways, they nonetheless are both an outgrowth of and dependent upon intersubjective relations. As Berger states:

it is in relations with others that both honor and dignity are attained, exchanged, preserved or threatened. Both require a deliberate effort of the will for their maintenance--one must strive for them, often against the malevolent opposition of others--thus honor and dignity become goals of moral enterprise. (p. 176)

By invoking a principal good of honor, Harré (1984) does appear to provide something of a substantive account of the moral, something that serves to guide ethics and that fashions a relation between self and the social milieu in which it exists. Harré does make an attempt to press behind our various rights, duties, and obligations to the notion of a superordinate, substantive good that orders and structures other goods in some meaningful fashion. Taylor (1989) sees such substantive accounts as an attempt to lay bare "constitutive goods" (p. 93). With his use of the term constitutive goods, Taylor is drawing attention to an overarching good or complex of overarching goods that empower human agents to frame their ethical commitments within moral life as a whole. Taylor sees this taking up and promoting of constitutive goods as fundamental to the moral enterprise. As I shall be attempting to show, this pressing beyond ethics, of piecemeal goods that are

components or features of a good life, what Taylor distinguishes as "life goods," to accounts of substantive notions of the good or constitutive goods is of central importance. Constitutive goods are pivotal to comprehending the moral character of self. Further, Taylor's account reveals how narrowly construing the moral as a concern with the maintenance of honor diminishes the importance of and underplays the powerful influence of a rich tradition throughout human history to explicate notions of the constitutive good.

In Sources of the Self, Taylor (1989) reveals that the constitutive goods upon which self is founded run much deeper than an attention to honor. Harré's (1984) emphasis on honor would seem to render the principal motive that shapes our conversations and actions, the constitutive good, as nothing more than a surface of impression management. The point that Harré seems to miss is that the sense of moral responsibility that is held by members of a society issues from individuals coming to a particular understanding of themselves as agents. Clearly, individuals generally share a concern with measuring up to social standards and with whether or not they are appearing in a good light to others. However, this concern with appearances is not the decisive factor guiding the development of self. One's place in an imposed moral order and efforts to establish and maintain a "self-image" are linked only weakly to the development of self and identity. The agentic understanding that comes with the development of a theory of self is rooted in deeper constitutive goods.

The difficulty with Harré's (1984) construal is that it underestimates the philosophically richer nature of the moral in human affairs. By contrast, Taylor (1989) argues that the fundamental concept of person has been forged

with a philosophic eye toward certain fundamental existential questions. According to Taylor, the public person concept is rendered from a broader array of goods stemming from an intimate concern with inescapable questions concerning what it is that gives human life meaning and value, and what it means to be a person. Taylor contends that attempts to meet these sorts of concern have given rise to a multiplicity of life goods hierarchically ordered in accordance with overarching constitutive goods. These constitutive goods provide an account that furnishes something of the essence of what it is to be human and they provide for the ordering of various life goods accordingly. Constitutive goods provide a framework definition for human ontology that is given in moral terms. Attempting to capture something of that which makes us what we are, constitutive goods point towards an indispensable feature of human agency. Namely, it is that human agents require an orientation to the good. In order to make some sense out of our lives, to ascribe experiences to ourselves, to have intentions, or to be able to reflect upon our experiences, we require a moral orientation. A moral orientation allows us to make qualitative discriminations amongst various choices. It allows us to decide upon the merits of our endeavors. By providing this orientation, constitutive goods are moral landmarks. They punctuate what is of significance about our condition as human beings and, in turn, provide a framework that serves to orient us when deliberating about our meaningful intentions and pursuits. More importantly, however, constitutive goods provide something of an explanation of this significance in terms that allow us to comprehend ourselves as agents. Constitutive goods are bound up with the self-understandings we develop about our agency. In

this way, self is developed as an interpretive orienting framework, a map of moral space.

CHAPTER II

PERSONS AND SELVES IN A MORAL LANDSCAPE

We are considering no trivial subject, but how . . . [one] should live.

-Plato, Republic, 352d.

Taylor (1988a, 1989, 1991) argues that a concern for certain existential questions is inescapable given the nature of the human condition and that it is this concern that gives rise to moral life. In Taylor's view, this bearing would seem neither optional nor arbitrary for us. It is not only that human beings live as moral beings, but that they have no choice but to do so given the kind of beings that they are. Taylor's claim of moral realism--that morality is necessary to the structuring of persons and selves--grants the thesis of the social construction of self without entailing the relativism that might ensue from an account of morality based solely upon honor and the preservation or advancement of social placement. It might be argued that if we did away with our concern for honor, morality would simply evaporate. If we ceased to be concerned with what others perceived of our character and with rendering evaluations of others on the basis of socially prescribed standards of worth, we would be cut adrift from our seemingly superficial moral commitments. In a Rortian fashion, we could simply take up at will whatever theories of self or self-serving commitments happened to suit our immediate first order desires or creative purposes. Left to embrace freedom,

we would now be unfettered to fashion ourselves as we privately saw fit unconstrained by any external impositions of moral authority.

However, moral nonrealism tends to lead to an exaggerated subjectivist portrait of self. As the boundaries of the moral realism/nonrealism argument have been contrived, if morality is not a fixture of the real world, then it must be something residing in the minds of individuals. In this picture, morality becomes subjective projection upon a morally neutral world. Our moral commitments are the result of either voluntary participation or coerced engagement in arbitrary social practices.⁴ Given such a perspective, self becomes a furling agglomeration of self-supervised choices and experiences. What this picture misses, however, is the extent to which we are ensconced in collective moral practices that are rooted firmly in our form of life, and that these practices are necessary to existing as the sort of beings that we are. That is, our engagement in these practices is essential to developing the sense we can have of ourselves as an enduring, unified identity, for developing an understanding of ourselves as agents, and for perpetuating our form of life. It is not only that these practices moderate what we do, but also, that they are integral in effecting the sense we have of ourselves--our identity as agents.

An ontological view of human beings based upon radical subjectivity hides the fact that it is only within such moral practices that we get our footing as persons and selves among others. It elides what Taylor (1989) refers to as "strong evaluation." Strong evaluation pertains to the use of external standards by which we determine what is right or wrong, better or worse, or more or less worthy. Taylor asserts that the use of such standards

are indispensable to the forging of agency and identity. In explicating this second dimension, moral practices, I shall be elaborating Taylor's contention that it is essential to our nature that we conceive ourselves to be living lives that make sense. And, further, that this is possible only if life is experienced as situated in a framework of goods and commitments taken to be valid independently of our particular choices. The central point I wish to draw from Taylor's account is that engagement in moral practices that are rooted in frameworks is something that is essential to living life as persons and as selves. Frameworks of constitutive goods provide us with an orientation required not only for guiding our relations with others and perpetuating our intersubjectivity (which Harré's account shows as essential to the development of self), but also, for interpreting ourselves as agents. In this way, moral practices are a transcendental condition of personhood and selfhood.

Taylor's (1988a, 1989, 1991) argument for moral realism is rooted in the phenomenology of moral experience. According to Taylor, nonrealism falls short in capturing the nature of our moral experience, for it fails to fit the way in which human beings actually live, interpreting and experiencing their lives. Taylor (1989) states simply that, "If nonrealism can't be supported by moral experience then there are no good grounds to believe it at all" (p. 60). Taylor argues that goods, such as autonomy, freedom, dignity, and so forth, form the basis of our deliberations, our intentional actions, and the judgments we render about the intentionality of others. Taylor contends that we must have recourse to such strongly valued goods and a framework in which to situate them, to exist as communal beings; that is, we would seem to require such

goods to understand the ways in which we can orient ourselves in our relations to others.

In light of the thesis of the social construction of self, we are constituted as selves only by virtue of the fact that we live among other selves. We could not develop as selves if it were not for our participation in a culture and our immersion in a language that allowed for self-description and self-interpretation. A self is partially constituted by its interpretations and the self-ascriptions it makes. These interpretations, in turn, are made largely on the basis of references one derives from those around them. We define our identities and refer to ourselves day to day, largely in terms of the social spaces that we inhabit (e.g., our families, professions, cultural affiliations, and so forth). Harré (1984, 1987b) indeed is correct in recognizing that knowing who we are is understood most often as knowing where we stand in these social spaces. However, these references are more strongly situated within (i.e., offered and interpreted from) a framework of moral goods. Identity is rendered from identifying with certain moral commitments that provide a framework in which one can decide what is meaningful, what is of value, and what is appropriate action from case to case. Taylor (1989) sees such a framework as imperative to making the kinds of qualitative discrimination that is required by living life as a self among others. Things matter to human beings. We simply need some way of dealing with the fact that certain things are of significance to us. As Taylor states:

doing without frameworks is utterly impossible for us; otherwise put, that the horizons within which we live our lives and which make sense of them have to include these strong qualitative

discriminations. Moreover, this is not meant just as a contingently true psychological fact about human beings, which could perhaps turn out one day not to hold for some exceptional individual . . .

Rather the claim is that living within such strongly qualified horizons is constitutive of human agency, that stepping outside these limits would be tantamount to stepping outside what we would recognize as integral, that is, undamaged human personhood. (p. 27)

From a social constructionist perspective, it would seem reasonable to expect that selves need to be made somewhat predictable to each other in order to manage our intersubjective co-existence. Trust in the idea that human beings have selves of a certain sort, a feature of which being that they remain somewhat consistent over time, is necessary for much of the predictability that enables our co-existence. As Dunn (1990) states with regard to the need for this trust amongst persons, "[it] is essentially concerned with coping with uncertainty over time" (p. 73). For instance, we trust that our own self and that the selves of others will be temporally continuous, that there will be the experience of self as a unity, that individuals will maintain a somewhat consistent point of view and point of action, and that they will forge something of an autobiography by making self-ascriptions. It is of interest to note that in their longstanding quest for determining stable and widely generalizable principles of human behavior, psychologists have overlooked this. Perhaps the most predictable and generalizable aspect of human behavior is the consciously unified experience of self that is developed and perpetuated in the lives of individuals. To say, "I'm not myself today" is not meant to imply that I am someone else.

Excepting cases of mental pathology, we trust and can predict with a great deal of confidence that in the vast majority of cases, a person's self remains an intact unity from one context to another.

This consistency is grounded not only in our individual embodiment, but also, in morality. The unified nature of self is also a manifestation of what it is that matters to us. As Taylor (1989) states, "[self is] a being which essentially is constituted by a certain mode of self-concern" (p. 49). The way in which self is understood as being consistent from one situation to another is based largely upon the privileges and liabilities that are accorded to individuals. However, the consistency of persons and selves understood in terms of personal accountability, is circumscribed by goods strongly valued by the culture. Children learn not simply how to act in meeting their needs, but also, how to act in a fashion that is meaningful and acceptable to others. The self-understanding they develop is strongly connected to what others are attempting to accomplish and find important in their lives. Children do not develop a sense or knowledge of themselves that is concerned exclusively with their own needs. They also come to know who and what they are in relation to the goods strongly valued by those around them. This knowledge provides the means for knowing how to live among others.

However, our recourse to strongly valued goods is not because our articulations of goods necessarily render the goods themselves real. Our descriptions of goods are theoretical articulations and thus they are subject to the same sorts of caveats I have outlined in relation to a theory of self. Nonetheless, the point that Taylor (1988a, 1989, 1991) wishes persistently to underscore is that reality attaches to the framework of goods itself. The

case Taylor presents is that there must be a framework in which human beings can reflect upon their own choices and actions and upon those of others. We must have something that provides for an orientation, that acts as a beacon in guiding our relations with others. How we go about structuring this framework always will be somewhat underdetermined by our articulations of the goods by which we believe the framework is fashioned. Nonetheless, Taylor sees the need for an orienting framework itself as something inescapable given the human condition. I will discuss the notion of strongly evaluated goods within an inescapable framework in more detail shortly. However, for the moment I want to return to the issue of nonrealism.

Taylor's (1989) phenomenological argument asks us to reflect upon our actual experience. He asserts that if we consider the ways in which we go about deliberating and making decisions, we find ourselves faced with frameworks. These frameworks guide our judgments about what is right or wrong, better or worse, or more or less worthy. In turn, if we look more closely at how these frameworks are structured, Taylor points to constitutive moral goods that are to be uncovered. For example, Taylor shows convincingly how nonrealist claims for the dispensability of morality can be shown actually to rely upon the moral goods that they attempt to repudiate. To demonstrate this, Taylor shows how nonrealist, "projectivist" accounts of morality (e.g., emotivism and instrumentalism) are derived from a certain view of the subject. The ideal of human beings as disengaged subjects, figures centrally in such nonrealist accounts of moral life. The ideal of disengagement poses that a human agent is fundamentally autonomous and

free, and able to remain detached from whatever moral claims are imposed authoritatively from outside one's identity. When this ideal or image of the disengaged self is brought into the moral realm, morality is seen to reside in the minds of individuals, something that originates with the autonomous subject. The moral is thus the subject's projection of contrived values onto what is fundamentally a morally neutral world.

However, what such an account fails to grasp is that the ideal of the disengaged self is part and parcel of a moral tradition that elevates certain moral goods. These goods lie behind nonrealism, and the failure to acknowledge and recognize them show nonrealism up; namely, that it is based on certain unquestioned moral presuppositions. The notion of a disengaged subject negotiating a fundamentally morally neutral world, is itself a moral position rooted in the moral goods of freedom and autonomy. These goods are connected to a moral ontology. They express an idea about what gives human life meaning and value; namely, that each individual has worth or dignity by virtue of being an essentially autonomous and free creature capable of reflecting upon and determining his or her own purposes. Thus, Taylor (1989) reveals how nonrealism is actually parasitic on a particular description of the self, a description that touts certain moral goods. These goods are connected to particular notions about what is meaningful and valuable about human life. Such notions about the good provide an orienting framework for how we should treat others in our relations. Further, such notions are inextricably linked to individual and collective conceptions and understandings of what persons and selves in essence are.

It is Taylor's contention (1988a, 1989, 1991) that selves arise by virtue of an individual's affiliating with particular morally significant self-descriptions or, to use Harré's (1984) terminology, self theories that have been configured around such frameworks. Taylor asserts that self-descriptions function to situate human agents in relation not only to one another, but also, in relation to particular moral goods upheld by moral traditions, autonomy, for example. Taylor asserts that forging a self-description and developing an identity are dependent upon appropriating external standards that provide the individual with an orientation. According to Taylor (1989), the orientation given by external standards enables one to make contrasts and comparisons. By conferring a sense of what is right or wrong, better or worse, more and less worthy, such standards orient our motivations and purposes. Taylor claims that in order for individuals to function as reflective beings, such standards are essential. It is this indispensability of our use of standards that sits at the crux of Taylor's moral realism. Taylor finds the notion that human agents might function without some sense of there being standards or terms of reference by which to orient their actions, as something inconceivable, an existential impossibility. Taylor's claim is that the hierarchical contrasting and arranging of goods through what he calls strong evaluation, is a "transcendental condition" not only of practical reason, but of agency itself.

Human Agents as Strong Evaluators

According to Taylor (1989), we have a need for standards that are used to judge our lives as meaningful, gratifying, good, and so forth. Taylor calls these standards "strong evaluations" in that they are the bases for evaluating the merit of our actions and desires as right or wrong, worthy or unworthy, better or worse, and so forth. As Taylor states, strong evaluations "are not rendered valid by our own desires, inclinations, or choices, but rather stand independent of these and offer standards by which they can be judged" (p. 4). For an agent whose desires and aversions are leveled, insofar as there are no significant qualitative discriminations made among them, motives for action can be understood as simply attention paid to whatever desires and feelings happen to crop up. By contrast, the strong evaluator not only makes qualitative distinctions among various desires, but also, realizes higher order desires and purposes by reflecting on which desires to identify with, and on the sort of person one is and wishes to become.

Structured within frameworks of strong evaluations, desires and identities are not merely given *a priori*. Rather, desires and identities are actively shaped by the reflexive activity of making choices in light of external standards. The practice of weighing choices in terms of external standards is the way in which our various commitments become circumscribed and inculcated. Deliberation thus becomes an act of self-interpretation and, moreover, self-determination. Thus, a self cannot be described absolutely, for a self cannot be independent of its description and the interpretations it

makes in terms of strong evaluation. Individual selves are constituted through the descriptions they take up and the interpretations they make.

Though the practice of strong evaluation implicates the agent in constituting selfhood, this does not mean that self is spawned in an interpersonal vacuum. We are selves only by virtue of the fact that certain things matter to us. And, matters of identity are worked out primarily through the accepted interpretations given by culturally countenanced standards. Self-interpretation takes place in the light of a socio-cultural context where certain goods and commitments have already been sorted out, and are readily reproduced and promoted. These goods and commitments are transacted with others in the grammars of our form of life. Strong evaluation provides the environment for implanting moral goods and commitments in our particular practices. I have indicated how these goods and commitments are taken up and practiced by individuals via Harré's (1984, 1986, 1987a) developmental account.

Agency is the application of a theory of self that allows for self-initiated action. Intrinsic to this theory is a sense of standards that provide the means for strong evaluation. Strong evaluation is, in the presence of an impulse, acting in a way other than simply realizing the impulse. In order to carry this out, in order to reflect and reason about the various courses of action to be taken in a particular situation, we require qualitative distinctions of worth. We deliberate about our actions and intentions in terms of judgments of right and wrong, better or worse, more or less worthy. By employing a capacity for reflexivity and reasoning over alternatives, human beings can embrace, retreat from (although not completely), or reformulate

what their culture has to offer. However, to be able to reason practically about what we ought to do, requires that we have some understanding of standards by which we can gauge the merit of our intentions and weigh alternative courses of action. Practical reasoning depends as much on a knowledge of social conventions and standards of acceptability as it does on private mental constructions.

The interpretation of human beings as strong evaluators reveals a contrast between acting according to immediately felt, first order desires and acting according to moral goods and goals that we sense as making a claim upon us in some fashion. Taylor (1988a, 1989) contends that this claim we sense lies in constitutive goods. He asserts that constitutive goods make a profound claim upon human beings and compel our behavior in particular ways because they pose something of an answer to inescapable moral questions that concern what is it to be a human being and what sort of life is worth living. As Taylor (1989) states, self is "something that can exist only in a space of moral issues" (p. 49) and this implies that "to know who I am is a species of knowing where I stand" (p. 27) in relation to the good.

Moral Topographies in a Landscape of Questions

The practice of strong evaluation over the course of human history and across the breadth of individuals' experience, of cleaving qualitative distinctions in that which matters for us, provides the clearing of questions in which the articulations of goods and commitments, that form our moral traditions, arise. To borrow Taylor's (1988a) metaphor, moral traditions are

a "moral topography" (p. 300) of this landscape of questions. Faced with our immersion in this landscape of questions, moral topography has fashioned the landmarks that serve to orient us in our meaningful aspirations and commitments. As Taylor (1989) states,

we take as basic that the human agent exists in a space of questions. And these are the questions to which our framework-definitions are answers, providing the horizon within which we know where we stand, and what meanings things have for us. (p. 29)

Taylor (1989) comprehends this landscape (i.e., space) as concerned with three sorts of question. The first deals with the nature of a meaningful life, "What is it that gives human life some value?" The second pertains to the ideals of personhood that follow from this evaluation, "What is it good to be?" The third regards the nature of our obligations to others, "How are others to be judged as meriting our respect or contempt?" Taylor's inclusion of the first two of these questions broadens the focus of moral inquiry to include what traditionally have been considered more or less spiritual questions. While not excluded completely from traditional moral philosophy (cf. Barrow, 1991), such questions have been treated primarily as inspirational matters falling more within the bounds of religion and art, the jurisdiction of clergy and artists (Kymlicka, 1991). Taylor contends, however, that these questions are not so easily segregated, that they hinge together. An ideal depends upon some answer to the question of what gives human life some value. Convergently, since such ideals are cultivated and constituted through dialogue and other forms of symbolic interaction, we are obliged to acknowledge others.

In his critique of modern moral philosophy, Taylor (1989) argues that a focus on procedures for ironing out the pursuit of piecemeal life goods has occluded the more important question concerned with constitutive goods-- what stands behind and in some way shapes our rights, duties, and obligations? On what basis do we accord human agents their accountability and liabilities? What is it about human beings that brings forth concerns such as those about justice? For Taylor, the central issue to be put back on the table for moral philosophy is whether or not there are incomparably higher constitutive goods that offer an understanding of and consolidate life goods within some meaningful order. Taylor contends that uncovering and positing such constitutive goods is the proper domain of inquiry for moral philosophers. He charges that those who would eschew such an endeavor are quite simply out of touch with the nature and history of their own vocation.

Taylor (1989) argues that there has been a central place for constitutive goods throughout the history of Western moral philosophy. For example, there is Plato's notion of the transcendent Good that provides for a meaningful cosmic order, Aristotle's proclaiming of contemplation as the highest good, Judeo-Christian assertions about human beings as creatures of God and the import of God's word that subordinates other goods, Kant's emphasis on human rational agency that enables volitional moral duty, and the utilitarian superordinate good of benevolence upon which its principles are based. Such constitutive goods have formed the bedrock of Western moral philosophy and the common thread that runs through them is that they convey something about what human beings essentially are. The structuring of our intersubjective relations with others is connected to moral frameworks

deep-seated in constitutive goods. The admonishments of moral philosophers are connected implicitly or explicitly to claims about the intrinsic merits or nature of human beings, something about us that commands our respect and that steers our strong evaluations.

It is not difficult to accept that simply to ensure our survival and to reproduce human forms of life, there must be cultural conventions built around ethics such as those enshrined by legal principles. Although there may be tremendous cultural variation in the customs by which life goods are preserved, efforts to protect lives within a community and interdict the purposeless or aberrant taking of human life are undertaken across cultures. Indeed, Hart (1961) once noted that such pancultural efforts constitute a truism. However, for Taylor (1989), sorting out generic life goods, comprehending the variation in their importance across cultures, and developing ethical principles to guide action does not reach the major question on which moral philosophy ought to be focused. In Taylor's terms, sorting out the kinds of obvious everyday matters pertaining to life goods is "philosophizing weakly." Philosophizing in this way ends up restricting moral inquiry to the question of how to go about satisfying our first order needs and wants, in terms of some deontological principle or utilitarian standard. In contrast, Taylor contends that moral philosophers should concern themselves more with investigations into the deeper meaning of goods and the ways that we attempt to order them according to superordinate goods that are in some fashion incomparably more important. Learning how to live life as a self involves more than knowing how to meet the immediate exigencies of survival (e.g., hunger, reproduction, and so forth). It requires

comprehending something of the quest for meaning in human aspirations. It requires a grasp of what Taylor terms the "spiritual" (1989, p. 4) concerns pertaining to self.⁵ For Taylor, inquiry into such spiritual concerns requires philosophizing strongly.

Taylor (1989) sees the three kinds of question described above, coalescing in our moral traditions via our articulations of the constitutive good. These articulations reveal humanity's encounters with spiritual concerns and our attempts at philosophizing strongly about what matters to us. These attempts have been made manifest in various conceptions of what it is that gives human life meaning and value--what attaches dignity or honor to personhood. In light of Harré's (1984) notion of the public person concept serving as the source analogue for self, our answers to these kinds of question become the animating metaphors for self. To reiterate Taylor's claim, "[self is] a being which essentially is constituted by a certain mode of self-concern" (1989, p. 49).

In this way, self is an expression of our moral comportment. It makes manifest what is of significance for us. Self-description is intertwined with significance. In Taylor's (1989) words, "what I am as a self is essentially defined by the ways things have significance for me" (p. 34). That we can understand things as having significance for us is given by the reflexive awareness of ourselves afforded by a self-description. Only those who maintain self-descriptions and are able to conceive of themselves reflexively as agents can comprehend the significance things have for them. Only beings of this sort can have experiences of joy, trepidation, courage, humiliation, gratitude, and so forth. These matters of significance are peculiarly human.

When we human beings attempt to formulate and articulate our initially inchoate feelings, the sense we have of the significances of our condition, expressing them through strong evaluations, they become moral matters for us. This "mattering" is a moral response to things (i.e., questions). Taylor (1989) alleges that we articulate this mattering in our visions of the good and further, that this acknowledgment of the good is empowering. Because we are drawn by notions of the good, or compelled to act in certain ways by them, they serve to orient us; that is, they serve as the moral sources of our agentic empowerment. From this perspective, Taylor argues a substantive account of action and intentionality. Intentional actions are to be viewed as situations where persons move towards certain goods. The sources of our moral empowerment, moral topographies, are embedded in our intentional actions. Thus, there is a point of agreement between Harré and Taylor in the importance they attribute to the moral in human intentionality. However, where Taylor and Harré diverge is in their construal of the substantive content of the moral, the nature of the ideals that have contributed to the source analogue of person.

Before turning further to Taylor's (1989) explication of the moral dimension, it may be helpful to place his account against more familiar psychological theories of moral development. In light of Taylor's account, theories of moral development such as Piaget's (1932/1965) and Kohlberg's (1964) emphasize what it is right to do (i.e., moral reasoning) over what it is good or better to be, or have attempted to reduce morality to systems of rules. Akin to Harré's focus on the rights, duties, and obligations dictated by moral orders, such views tend to emphasize procedural ethics, obscuring the

more strongly rooted substantive ideals upon which such ethical commitments rest. Further, Piaget and Kohlberg simply assume that a progression toward individual autonomy is a progression of natural growth. Autonomy corresponds with a natural, gradual augmentation of the individual's cognitive capacities. However, the acquisition of an understanding of oneself as autonomous may be more the acquisition of an understanding of a specific moral good. Indeed, moral development may not be guided primarily by the timely appearance of certain cognitive capacities. Rather, moral development may be steered more by its rooting in culturally specific views of the person that capture what it is good for persons of certain ages to be, implying certain rights, duties, and obligations. These views of the person may indeed be what steer the treatment of others in symbiotic activities.

Taylor's account does not rest on establishing unequivocally a single "hypergood" or "basic reason" to the exclusion of other goods as has been the tradition in contemporary theories of Western moral philosophy. Taylor's introduction and use of the term "constitutive good" rather than "hypergood," is in large part an attempt to avoid what he sees as a curious and misdirected drive toward reduction and unification in modern moral philosophy. As Taylor (1989) states:

There has been a tendency to breathtaking systematization in modern moral philosophy. Utilitarianism and Kantianism organize everything around one basic reason. And as so often happens in such cases, the notion becomes accredited among the proponents of these theories that the nature of moral reasoning is such that we ought to be able to

unify our moral views around a single base. . . . This drive towards unification, far from being an essential feature of morality, is rather a peculiar feature of modern moral philosophy. (p. 77)

Taylor sees reduction and unification as inappropriate to the task of modern moral philosophy due to a plurality of constitutive goods resident in the modern identity. In Taylor's view, there needs to be allowance for a plurality of constitutive goods that are equally legitimate and simultaneously operative.

According to Taylor (1989), values and life goods are accorded worth by virtue of their being some facet or expression of a constitutive good. Values and life goods articulate something about our sense of the constitutive good. They are constituted by constitutive goods; hence the descriptor "constitutive." There is always a constitutive good internal to the structure of a life good or value. In contrast to basic reasons or hypergoods, however, Taylor contends that constitutive goods are not meant to function in the Procrustean fashion of reducing all moral decisions to a single principle or procedure. Taylor argues that an overriding hypergood or basic reason that is formulated in advance, on the basis of subordinating all other goods in every context, becomes painfully unworkable. This is because there is more than one authentic constitutive good commanding our allegiance and compelling us to act in certain ways. There is a plurality of constitutive goods acting as moral sources and serving to order our strong evaluations. Constitutive goods may exist along side each other as moral sources. However, it also may be the case that in certain contexts, constitutive goods may be

conflictual. Conflict among constitutive goods is problematic. I shall be elaborating this point in a subsequent discussion of psychotherapy.

The Moral Topography of the Modern Identity

In his illuminating and expansive volume, Sources of the Self, Taylor (1989) traces the moral sources of the modern identity. Taylor offers thick descriptions of the origins and development of particular constitutive goods and illustrates the ways in which these have come to figure as moral sources for modern persons. Traversing almost half a millennium of human history, considering ideas in religion, art, science, literature, and philosophy, Taylor (1989) delineates three moral sources resident in and sustaining the modern identity. These are namely, inwardness, the affirmation of ordinary life, and the expressivist notion of nature as a moral source.

Inwardness refers to the sense we have of ourselves as autonomous creatures with inner depths. Tracing the development of this conception of personhood, Taylor (1989) discusses how we have come to share and sustain the idea that we have privileged access to ourselves through inner reflection. Taylor shows through an history of ideas, how we have developed an understanding of ourselves as sovereign social atoms, each with his or her own private inner life and unique identity, and how this sanctifying of autonomy connects to a concern with a felt respect for individual life.

Taylor (1989) sees the notion of inwardness beginning with the Cartesian ideal of autonomous disengagement. Autonomous disengagement refers to the capacity of human beings, through thought, to radically

unsituate themselves from their sociality and their embodiment, and to come to a morally neutral stance toward themselves (i.e., their desires and ends) and the world. Plato already had set the stage for construing dispassionate thought as the vehicle for achieving a higher moral state. For Plato, self-mastery was accomplished by a reordering of the soul such that passions were placed under the control of reason. In the perspective put forth by Plato, reason was concerned with the ability to come to see and understand the larger order of the Good in which human beings are placed. Plato held that the moral understanding to be gained through reason is not something that is internal to human beings, but rather, connected to the larger meaningful cosmic order of which we are a part.

In light of the 17th century scientific revolution, however, Descartes claimed that the world was not endowed with its own meanings from which human beings could derive reference and interpret themselves. Rather, the world was to be interpreted as a neutral domain of facts. The Platonic perspective of human beings as part of a meaningful cosmos was replaced by a view of the world as a composite of contingently related elements. The world was a mechanism and the mapping of relations among its constitutive elements was seen to lead to its greater control and manipulation. The Platonic notion that reason was something to be seen in the rational order of the cosmos, was replaced by the notion that reason was something to be constructed by individuals themselves. Descartes saw reason as a capacity of thought that allowed human beings themselves to forge accurate representations of reality. Plato's Ideas, something made manifest by the world, became something made manifest internally, embodied by human

thought. Rationality was no longer a matter of seeing things correctly, but the correct use of certain canons. Self-mastery was still rational mastery, but it was now founded in instrumental control. Instrumentality presided, and the focus shifted to the means and procedures for forging accurate representations. This turn marked the beginning of the epistemological tradition.

Taylor (1989) refers to this instrumentality brought firmly into the domain of human affairs during the Enlightenment, as the adoption of a "punctual" stance. Human beings were now believed to be able to remake themselves instrumentally, to change and to reorder their experience and intentions through disengaged, systematic deliberations. This in effect turned subjects towards themselves in gaining self-understanding. It advanced the notion of an internalized moral source and brought about the notion of autonomy as a constitutive moral good. It was a capacity for disengagement via rational thought that gave the subject autonomy. Autonomy was a notion about what was meaningful and valuable about human life, about the worth and dignity of human beings, and about why human life ought to be respected. It was a moral ontology--an account of the human essence of individuals.

In Taylor's (1989) exposé, the conception of an autonomous punctual self blossomed during the 17th century Enlightenment from Cartesian seeds sown in theories of social contract typified by John Locke's. Locke pushed the ideal of disengagement further by his use of certain metaphors aimed at reifying mental processes and establishing mind as a truly independent consciousness. Locke's description of thought was as inner disassembly and

reassembly ideally conducted by an "under-labourer" or "master-builder" who had strong enough convictions to remain impervious to the influences of others while building a rational representation of things. Enlightenment social contract theory affirmed vigorously the freedom and independence of individuals and the right to determine reasonably one's own purposes without interference from any natural or societal external authority. Coveting autonomy, self-exploration through instrumental reason, and a view of the good life attained through personal commitment, Enlightenment society proclaimed and sanctified the life of the individual.

Kant further advanced the view that the dignity and essence of the human individual was rooted in autonomy and an internal capacity for rational thought. For Kant, human dignity reposed on the ability of individuals to determine rationally their moral duty and to act accordingly. However, it was the Romantic era that brought the moral source of inwardness to full bloom. The Romantics contributed the notion of a natural essence that impels and edifies a private inner life, a unique identity. The Romantics were adverse to Cartesian ideals in the Enlightenment view. Enlightenment thinkers remained enamored with the Cartesian emphasis on instrumental reason and a radical disengagement from the world of ordinary experience as the keys to accomplishing the mind's proper classification. Enlightenment responsibility sat squarely upon the shoulders of the individual to assume sole authority and ownership of representations forged of an otherwise disorderly world. In contrast, Romanticism, which Taylor (1989) sees as anticipated by Montaigne and established by Rousseau, called

for intimate and absorbed engagement with the particularity of human feeling and ordinary experience.

The Romantics not only further advanced the turn toward inwardness, but also, broached the expressivist idea of nature as a moral source. The Romantics saw nature as the source of selfhood and they glorified a communion with nature through examining and expressing individual motivations and feelings. Rousseau claimed that the true moral character of human beings was to be found in a natural essence that became distorted through exposure to the perverse influence of society. Nonetheless, nature's voice could be heard through attentiveness, for when it spoke, it resonated through one's conscience. The individual was the expression of nature. Nature was seen as an inner store of potentialities to be expressed, and human fulfillment was linked to discovering and making manifest the nature concealed within. Yet, despite this shared grounding in nature, each individual was recognized as unique, and obliged to turn inward to follow his or her own original path of expression. In the Romanticist's portrait of the person, the search for one's originality and expression of its unfolding natural inner essence is the hallmark of individual life and human existence. With the Romantics, what is of worth in human life does not repose upon the rational determination of our own individual purposes, but rather, upon an understanding of the ways in which we are moved by nature--our individual sentiments and impulses. As Taylor (1989) states with regard to the Romantic impulse, "The end of self-exploration is not disengaged control but engagement, coming to terms with what we really are" (p. 344).

Taylor (1989) maintains that the ornate tapestry of modern personhood is woven from complex and heterogeneous strands of thought regarding particular notions of the good that ensue in the Cartesian/ Enlightenment and Romantic characterizations of persons. Detailing their extensive historical development, Taylor reveals how these strands intertwine in the late 18th century, twisting in a monumental turn towards "inwardness," our sense of ourselves as having inner spaces, and the prizing of individual autonomy and radical subjectivity. While the Romantic view of nature as a spiritual source has resurfaced with present ecological concerns, its spiritual complexion has long since been eroded by a mechanistic naturalism that declared nature omnipotent but innocent, the amoral fountainhead of existence. Nonetheless, the notion that human beings have an "inner nature" to be uncovered and expressed is still very much a part of contemporary moral folk wisdom.

A third modern moral source is what Taylor (1989) refers to as "the affirmation of ordinary life." Taylor traces this ideal to the Reformation while acknowledging an earlier variant of it in Rabbinic Judaism. The affirmation of ordinary life is Taylor's term of art for the idea that there is moral worth in those practices and aspects of living to do with "production and reproduction, that is, labour, the making of the things needed for life, and our life as sexual beings, including marriage and the family" (p. 211). It holds that concerns of ordinary daily life such as work; child-rearing; other household responsibilities; the broad range of our more and less significant encounters with others including intimate, social personal relations with spouses and partners; and so forth; comprise the legitimate sphere for moral self-development.

As obvious as this seems to us as moderns, this belief has not always existed. For Plato and Aristotle, these aspects of life constituted a good only to the degree that they supported the loftier activities of the privileged few engaged in political life and contemplation. Consider that in The Republic, Plato argued that only those educated as philosopher-kings would be enabled to attain a high degree of moral development. Similarly, Aristotle barred farmers and craftsmen from holding citizenship in his ideal city, claiming that the demands of their work prohibited the kinds of educative and social activities enabling the attainment of civic virtues. Consider also, that Catholicism's renunciation of ordinary life (i.e., family life) was part of the ennobling of religious vocations.

Taylor (1989) asserts that in the early modern period, through religious and then secular movements, the hierarchical structure that degraded the worth of ordinary life came under staunch attack. The heroic or more gallant virtues associated with the honor ethic were discredited, dismissed as dissolute vanity. The good life became associated with solemn living and productivity. The affirmation of ordinary life was a movement to accord dignity and worth to everyday aspects of living. The notion that there is fulfillment through ordinary life is not just recognizing the importance of primitive needs, but rather, formulating a moral good.

Taylor (1989) contends that these three constitutive goods are not merely abstractions for lofty theoretical contemplation. They are not ornamental. Taylor asserts that constitutive goods are an attempt to make manifest something authentic in human ontology. According to Taylor, constitutive goods make a powerful claim upon us, commanding our

allegiance, and compelling us to do good or be good. Taylor states that in this regard, the constitutive good functions as a moral source for selfhood, "something the love of which empowers us to do and be good" (p. 93).

Constitutive goods possess this power because they are a faithful attempt to articulate our authentic moral sensibilities. These goods frame the moral landscape providing an orientation with which to interpret ourselves. As Taylor states, "when a given constellation of self, moral sources, and localization is ours, that means it is the one from within which we experience and deliberate about our moral situation" (pp. 111-112).

According to Taylor (1988a, 1989, 1991), human beings exist in a space constituted by moral concerns. We are constituted as selves in our relations with others and becoming a self is predicated upon taking up a particular orientation to constitutive goods. Taylor's argument is based on the notion that some understanding of the good is necessary to forging a self-description and living life among others. He argues that human beings have maintained a perennial concern with the questions of what gives life meaning and value, what it is good or better to be, and that the answers that we pose to these concerns are intended to touch upon the essence of what it is to live life as a human agent. These answers are attached to conceptions of self.

Taylor's (1988a, 1989) account of constitutive goods reveals them to be something of a structural principle for the unity of a theory of self and for developing an unified identity. Taylor's work provides something of an explanation for the way in which the unities of self delineated by Harré (1984), are shaped. A constitutive good acts to provide a reference point for the integrity of self. Constitutive goods allow for the meaningful assemblage,

interpretation, and integration of one's intentions and choices of action into a coherent unity--a theory of self. They allow for a unified understanding and valuing of one's "autonomous," "inner," or "ordinary" point of view, point of action, and autobiography. The constitutive good is a principle of structural integrity that we attempt to effect for ourselves by orienting ourselves by it. In practical reasoning, in the private conversations with ourselves during which we deliberate over our various intentions, there is always an eye toward effecting this unity. This is the case even if we are often incapable of following through with what we judge to be the right course of action. Such cases, simply illustrate the flip side of the same moral coin. Even when committing wrong action, such action is nonetheless defined in terms of what is the good.

Where constitutive goods function to compel or motivate us, acting as the moral sources for our agentic empowerment, such goods become enshrined in our personal theories and self-descriptions. Constitutive goods that serve as moral sources are edified in each enactment of the good, in each strong evaluation, in each choice of better over worse, or worse over better. In making such choices, one elaborates a cultural tradition constitutive of the kind of selves that one is. That which allows me to choose the means to be good or do good, is an understanding of the constitutive goods in which I participate. In this way, the constitutive good is not a static appropriation, but develops dynamically with each instantiation and application of it. In light of Harré's (1984) quadripartite scheme, constitutive goods can undergo a metamorphosis through the cyclical developmental process of appropriation, transformation, publication, and conventionalization. Indeed, the history of

humanity has been punctuated with the development of viable self-descriptions attending the progressive articulation (i.e., publication) and conventionalization of constitutive goods. Without constitutive goods and the ability for strong evaluation, it seems incomprehensible that a unified self could be achieved, that one could have any sense of agentic self-understanding, or that human existence as persons and selves would be possible.

There are a couple of important concerns I wish to broach at this juncture. First, there are questions to be raised with respect to the generalizability of the three moral sources Taylor (1989) sketches. Do the moral sources of inwardness, ordinary life, and the expressivist notion of nature hold across the various subcultures comprising Western civilization? Does it make any sense to talk in terms of a homogeneity among Western cultures with respect to these three moral sources? For my present purposes, such an investigation would take me too far afield. I sincerely hope that others will be prompted to take up the task of such study and that you, the reader, at least will examine these three sources in terms of resonance with your own personal experience and self-understanding. Notwithstanding, I shall be following Taylor's rendering in my elaboration of the various aspects and presuppositions inherent in modern psychological study and psychotherapeutic practice. I believe Taylor's historical portrait of self admits a clearer view to much of the underlying assumptions and motivations in these domains of study and practice. While additional moral sources may emerge from crosscultural or subcultural studies, such findings would, however, only provide further support for the major premise that I am

adopting. Namely, it is the view that engagement in moral practices is necessary to the development of human agency and that the frameworks occasioned by moral sources are internal to notions of person and self.

Secondly, there is the issue of individuals' accessibility to their own moral sources. Constitutive goods functioning as moral sources may not be immediately apparent or always ready at hand to individuals for conscious inspection. It is conceivable that many or perhaps even the majority of individuals who are products of Western cultures know little of the specific nature of the constitutive goods by which they are motivated and to which they owe particular allegiances. Nonetheless, in light of Taylor's (1989) claims, such goods are always there forming what often may be only a tacit horizon for our strong evaluations. As Taylor states:

Unreflecting people in the culture, who are drawn to certain life goods, may have nothing to offer in the way of description of constitutive good, but that doesn't mean that their sense of what is worth pursuing isn't shaped by some unstructured intuitions of their metaphysical predicament, about their moral sources being within or without, for example. (p. 307)

Thirdly, there is the question of the status of Taylor's account or, for that matter, the one I am offering on the basis of Harré's and Taylor's claims. This question leads us to a consideration of what I have referred to in the introduction as "transcendental interpretation." The following chapter will attempt to explicate this in some detail.

CHAPTER III

RECONCEPTUALIZING PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH

"If our science cannot, in terms of attainment, feel secure, it is at least the case that the dance of respectability, as called from the wings by some fashionable theory of proper science, is no longer a dependable source of security.

(Sigmund Koch, 1959, p. 783)

It has been suggested by some, that psychologists' endeavors to establish psychology as a form of science by emulating the methods and epistemology of the natural sciences, have been somewhat problematic if not completely doomed (cf. Howard, 1986; Koch, 1959, 1964; Manicas, 1987; Martin, 1993). Sigmund Koch was one of the first to prod the strategy that was employed to found psychology as a science (Howard, 1986). In his critique, Koch (1959, 1964) claims that from the beginning, those determined to establish psychology as a bona fide discipline committed a crucial error. Koch argues that the discipline of psychology ought to have been launched from a careful preliminary investigation and analysis of the nature of the phenomena of inquiry.⁶ Methods and procedures ought to have been adopted or devised on the basis of an adequate conception of the subject matter. Koch's point is that it is simply a matter of good common sense to have an idea about your point of destination before you set out on the journey. According to Koch, early psychologists didn't really have much of an idea about where they were going, but they were certainly very adamant about

how they wanted to get there. They were committed to adopting the procedures and practices of the natural sciences with the fervent belief that the key to achieving the same sorts of technological payoff and respectability was a matter of method. Rather than deducing a methodology from a careful examination of the subject matter, however, the agenda was to make psychology resemble as closely as possible the orthodox sciences of the day (of which physics was considered prototypic).

The manner in which the question was framed (i.e., "What must we do to be a science?") necessitated a methodological answer. Presumably, if the subject matter was treated appropriately, that is if psychologists acted like scientists, then surely they would be practicing science. This tactic of mimicking scientific methods to gain legitimacy among the scientific community still can be seen to undergird much of what passes for psychological research today. Such mimicry becomes apparent in the current climate of "methodolatry" where a concern with method has taken precedence over more theoretical and substantive issues (Martin & Sugarman, 1993; Strong, 1991) (e.g., witness the contemporary debate over the merits of qualitative versus quantitative methods that stubbornly persists in major psychological and educational research journals and that comes up frequently in the myriad of electronic conferences on related topics). Once again, however, this focus on procedure, on finding the right instruments and means with which to get in on God's game is no coincidence. It is strongly aligned with persistent Cartesian and Enlightenment ideals that have been retained throughout the epistemological tradition and have come to be fixed firmly in the modern identity.

Since the 17th century, progress in the natural sciences has been wed to an idea about the need to separate ourselves from the objects of our inquiry. Fundamental to the epistemology of natural science is the dictum that knowledge of the world be "absolute." This means that scientific knowledge requires extricating ourselves as much as possible from any prejudices that might arise from the peculiarities of our nature and condition as human beings. An explicit objective in natural science inquiry has been (and presently remains) to distinguish those characteristics of natural phenomena that appear only by virtue of some aspect of human nature and to nullify or offset those characteristics. In pursuing this ideal of disengagement, in attempting to cut out as much of ourselves as possible from the processes of scientific observation and explanation, we have aspired to ascend to what Nagel (1985) has aptly termed "the view from nowhere."

Now it may be useful, indeed prudent in light of our purposes and aims, to cling to disengagement as something of an ideal for investigating the phenomena of natural science. The case of Galileo clearly shows the dangers in ascribing too strongly and unquestioningly to even our most cherished beliefs. On the other hand, however, I contend that this is a muddled way to think about proceeding in the investigation of the subject-related phenomena of interest to psychologists.

The ideal of disengagement in science is discussed more often in terms of objectivity. Objectivity in natural science can be characterized as a concern with the need for a neutral language of observation that can elevate analysis above mere subjective impression and opinion. Objectivity is seen as the gateway to developing a neutral understanding of phenomena that is

accessible to all observers no matter what cultural, moral, political, or even historical vantage they might occupy. The point is that nothing that is social by nature is to enter into the process of acquiring true knowledge in natural science. The received view is that scientific knowledge (i.e., scientific truth) is to be achieved by the solitary subject (i.e., scientist) standing in a detached relation to a completely independent object of inquiry--an independent reality. If psychology was to be a form of natural science, it required emulating the practices and standards of the latter. This meant that there was no exception to be made concerning the practices and standards associated with the achievement of objectivity. Psychology adopted the practices of formulating and verifying causal hypotheses, replicability, and implementing controls and techniques of isolation to eliminate the sort of subjective intrusions that were determined to threaten objectivity in natural science. Explanations were to be rendered by adherence to rigorous scientific methods and, behind the protective escutcheon of method, truth was shielded from the menace of mere subjective interpretation. However, as many contemporary philosophers of science have asked, can even natural science avoid the troublesome predicament of interpretation? And, further, is interpretation as subjective as it is made out to be?

In addition to predictability, control, and manipulation, a major aim of science is also intelligibility. Science attempts to lend coherence and unity to our experience of phenomena. But there are rules and limits imposed on intelligibility. Kuhn (1970), Hanson (1958), Feyerabend (1975), Winch (1990) and others studying the sociological character of science have made it clear how observation is "theory-laden," to use Hanson's term. The direction that

research takes, the confirmation and rejection of theories, and the criteria for the acceptance of data are circumscribed by a normative framework of presuppositions, conventions, and purposes layed out by traditions of the scientific community. It is also plainly the case that the norms and standards with which science attempts to make things intelligible also are encompassed by the limits of certain forms of language and intersubjective relations set down by a culture. Knowledge derived from either social or natural science is conditioned by normative frameworks. This implies that scientific observations and theories are subject to interpretation in much the same sense that our own experiences and personal theories undergo interpretation. Disengaged objectivity in the sense described above is something of a myth.

However, not only is the character of science socially conditioned, but also, in the case of social science, the phenomena that constitute the field of inquiry are themselves socially conditioned. There are not only presuppositions, conventions, orientations and purposes that shape the language game of social science, but also, those that shape the language game that is partially constitutive of the phenomena of study themselves. In the first chapter, I broached this feature in terms of Taylor's (1980) subject/object-related distinction. Now as I have mentioned above, notions of disengagement and objectivity in natural science, express the belief that while human beings are a part of the natural world, subject-related phenomena are not. Subject-related phenomena are understood to be the result of human agents being the kind of interpretive beings that they are, rather than by any "absolute" characteristic. It is for this reason that

natural scientists attempt to discount subject-related phenomena in explanatory accounts of nature. Nonetheless, the crucial point is that object-related phenomena do not change as a result of the descriptions we offer of them and the language games we play with them. Object-related phenomena are left unaltered by our descriptions of them. For example, the forces we witness as gravity are not transformed if we begin to construe them as the effects of warped space. Apples still fall from trees and comets still collide with Jupiter.

In contrast, subject-related phenomena are partly constituted by the descriptions and interpretations that we offer of them. It is for this reason that subject-related phenomena can be transformed through our descriptions and interpretations. An authentic change in the way we understand and experience subject-related phenomena, our selves for instance, can occur through reconstituting our self-descriptions. Human psychology and interaction, as conversation broadly construed, is dynamic. It is influenced by conscious reflection and interpretation, and there is the immanent possibility of dramatic change, of transformations (i.e., in the Harréan sense) occurring in highly inventive or unexpected ways. Thus, not only is social science an interpretive practice, but the objects of inquiry that comprise the field of study are interpretively constituted. Anthony Giddens (1976) speaks about this twofold interpretive character of social science in terms of a "double hermeneutic" (p. 158).

Further, not only are subject-related phenomena constituted within the language games of description and interpretation, but also, they are rendered intelligible only in terms of their location within complexes of belief

and practice, moral goods and norms. Psychological phenomena are socially located and represented, made manifest in the subjective understandings of the actor and others who cohabit the intersubjective moral world of the actor (i.e., as depicted by the Harréan quadripartite space). Issuing from their social locations and representations in personal and collectively countenanced theories, such phenomena are made manifest only in real-world, open systems within linguistic, moral, cultural, and historical contexts. Their meaning is contextually located. This is why techniques such as isolation usually combined with a Corpuscularian form of reductive explanation, borrowed from natural science, are inappropriate (Martin, 1993). Isolation alters the essential nature of psychological phenomena. The meaning of a subject-related object or event is bound within a framework of goods and norms, to a culture's orientation, assumptions, purposes, and expectations. Thus, comprehending such phenomena requires becoming familiar with and taking account of, the framework and context that undergirds them. This makes plain the futility of psychological researchers holding on to an ideal of objectivity rooted in the notion of a neutral language of observation that renders descriptions in absolute terms. Plainly, there can be no such language. Further, it implies that coming to grips with subject-related phenomena can not be accomplished strictly by empirical observation. It is necessary that such phenomena be interpreted in terms of the frameworks of meaning within which they are constituted. Subject-related phenomena cannot somehow be detached from the interpretive frameworks that give them their sense without altering what they essentially are.

Taylor (1985b) illustrates this nicely with the example of deference.

Understanding an act or utterance as one of deference requires understanding it in contrast to those that indicate defiance or insolence, in relation to actions or utterances that mark courtesy and respect, and in terms of beliefs regarding the hierarchical structuring of relationships, as well as institutions of social power. Only with a grasp of the contextual web of meaning within which the action or utterance is located and defined can it be rendered intelligible. Distinguishing an act as one of deference is only justifiable if the act could in fact be one of deference; only if it is located in a context where there are also extant concepts of courtesy, respect, defiance, and insolence, in which there is a hierarchical structuring of interpersonal relationships and, of course, in which there are constitutive moral goods that orient and order such beliefs and practices. To grasp an act as one of deference, these features must be part of the cultural context in which the actor participates. In the same light, without this milieu of convergent and contrasting meanings, the act cannot be legitimately described as marking deference no matter how many behavioral features it displays of what might be operationally defined as a deferential act. In that case, it would not be attached to the framework that makes it intelligible as deference. The natural world, by contrast, is not interpretively structured outside the natural sciences. Object-related phenomena do not exist in a complex of meanings which they ascribe to themselves. In this way, social science is fundamentally different from natural science.

However, as I alluded in the first chapter, there is opposition to making such a distinction between the phenomena of study in natural and social

science, and thus between the character of natural and social science.

Rorty's (1980, 1982) argument against the distinction is twofold. First, Rorty claims that understanding any phenomenon depends upon a web of conceptual interconnections that identify it in relation to other phenomena. Rorty contends that there is nothing special about subject- or object-related phenomena that distinguish them in this way. As Rorty (1982) states:

To say that human beings wouldn't be human, would be merely animal unless they talked a lot is true enough. If you can't figure out the relation between a person, the noises he makes, and other persons, then you won't know much about him. But one could equally well say that fossils wouldn't be fossils, would just be rocks, if we couldn't grasp their relations to other fossils. Fossils are constituted as fossils by a web of relationships to other fossils and to the speech of paleontologists who describe such relationships. If you can't grasp some of these relationships, the fossil will remain, to you, a mere rock. Anything is, for purposes of being inquired into, constituted within a 'web of meanings.' (p. 199)

Taylor (1985b) would not dispute this. Then again, this point is not really telling against Taylor's claim. Taylor contends that the distinction he is drawing is not marked just by the relation between a phenomenon and its web of meanings. Rather, Taylor's distinction marks a difference in the source of the web of meaning to which the phenomenon is connected. Social and natural science both rely on an interpretive framework that is constituted of meaningful conceptual interrelations. However, the difference lies in the doubly hermeneutic character of social science. There is an

additional context of meaning essential to interpreting the phenomena of interest to social sciences that does not intrude upon natural scientific study; namely, it is that which exists as a function of the cultural phenomena being studied. Social scientists not only have to account for their intentions and interpretations, but also, those of the subjects of their study.

Rorty's (1982) second line of objection is that he sees Taylor as equating the meaning of actions and utterances with what the actor happens to say about them. Rorty contends that if an act of deference is determined by whether or not actors use a description of deference, then it might simply be the case that the actors don't really know what they are doing, that they're just plain stupid or confused, or that the culture is very primitive and unable to offer much of an explanation of the act. Rorty asserts that nothing about an act's particular location in a context demands that we accept the actor's or, for that matter, even the culture's description of it. Again however, Rorty seems to be missing Taylor's point. There is nothing in Taylor's account that necessitates accepting the agent's description. The point is that even if a more discerning scientific explanation can be given, that explanation must still preserve something of a connection to the agent's own meaningful intentions and beliefs as they exist within an assemblage of conceptions necessary to ascribing a particular meaning to the action.

To illustrate this, Taylor (1985b) poses the example of negotiation. In order to enter into negotiation, the negotiating parties must comprehend themselves to be acting as autonomous agents; they must understand the difference between choosing freely and being coerced; and they must know the rules and customs involved in beginning, breaking off, compromising or

settling negotiations. These are what we might call the "conditions of possibility" for what can be called negotiation. However, there is nothing that necessitates that the negotiating parties explain what they are doing in these terms. There is no necessity for the parties involved to describe themselves as autonomous agents or for them to hold a manifest conception of free choice. They may not have the terms "deadlock" or "concession" or "contractual obligation" in their lexicon. In some circumstances, these terms of description may be highly localized and only be employed by scientists. Nonetheless, these terms are used legitimately only if they are related to the terms of expression that the agents actually use; that is, if they are connected to what is of significance for the agents. Meaningful human action is identified by the intentions of the actor and by the web of meanings in which the action is located. The meaning of an intentional action only can be comprehended in terms of the actor's understanding of the context. Therefore, in the case of negotiation, scientific terms are justified only if they are connected to what the agents understand themselves to be doing as they compromise or fall into deadlock. In contrast, where there are no terms for expressing compromise or bargaining, as is the case in traditional Japanese villages (Smith, 1959, cited in Taylor, 1985b, p. 32), then there are no grounds for describing practices of negotiation. The point is not that the parties can legitimately be seen to be negotiating only if they say they are. Rather, it is that the practice of negotiation entails certain norms, goods, and presuppositions that are internal to the practice. The practice of negotiation, or any other practice for that matter, may be vulnerable to a variety of descriptions. But, in order for the description of the practice to be valid, the

description can not distort the intentions of the actor nor the essential make-up of the practice.

Rorty (1991a) has claimed in concert with his first line of argument, that we eventually might find that we simply can do without such terms as negotiation or deference. For instance, at some point we might find it more useful to defer to a completely neurophysiological description of such activities. Further, this would not be because a neurophysiological description was any more truthful, but merely by virtue of its being more useful. In Rorty's view, descriptions of phenomena don't represent the way things really are, but rather, merely reflect ways of human coping. In turn, these ways of coping only connect up to the specific aims and purposes of those who are providing and accepting the descriptions. Rorty (1979, 1980, 1982, 1991a) in fact consistently levels this claim at a description of any phenomenon. After all, given the Kuhnian insight, science is constituted within a tradition of norms and conventions that work for certain aims and purposes. It's not that science gets at any "real" meaning of things. As Rorty is fond of pointing out, the difference between Aristotle's metaphysical construal and Galileo's experimental natural science is not that Galileo's mathematics was the final key to unlocking nature's secrets. Rather, it's more simply the case that Galileo struck upon a way of describing things that suited certain purposes. Drawing upon the critiques of Wittgenstein and Heidegger, Rorty points out how correspondence as a notion of forging accurate representations is a red herring. For Rorty, it's all a matter of recontextualizing our beliefs with a view toward certain aims. There is no independent reality out there lying in wait for the raving Platonists to

discover. We would all be just as well to unencumber ourselves from our 2500-year-old Platonic mortgage on reality. As Rorty (1991a) states:

if you give up the notion of representing objects, then you had better give up the claim to be recontextualizing objects. You had better admit that all your conception of inquiry allows you to do is to recontextualize your beliefs and desires. You don't find out anything about objects at all--you just find out about how your web of beliefs and desires can be rewoven so as to accommodate new beliefs and desires.

(p. 101)

In the same light, once we recognize that the social sciences are constituted by a tradition of goods, norms, and conventions, then we also have to give up the idea that they are getting at the "real" meaning of the actions, utterances, practices, norms, and conventions studied. The manner in which the social sciences study phenomena, the sort of descriptions that are employed, and the criteria that are put in place for confirming or rejecting theories and hypotheses, hinge on the specific aims and purposes of social scientists and society at large. In Rorty's view, it's simply all a sophisticated form of coping.

However, was the discounting of Ptolemaic astronomy or phlogiston simply a matter of these descriptions not suiting our aims and purposes? We may have desired an explanation for smoke resulting from combustion, but the theory of phlogiston was shown to be unfounded. I contend that Rorty's account of radical pragmatism is off the mark. This is because it is precisely that there is truth by correspondence that natural science indeed does work at meeting our aims and purposes. Natural science does work by virtue of

the way things actually are. I think we need look no further to affirm this than the successful refutation of faulty theories and substantiation of valid ones that has made for tremendous technological advance in natural science. However, while it seems to me that the adequacy of correspondence theory is not all that contentious in the realm of object-related phenomena, it is more problematic with respect to subject-related phenomena. There seems little difficulty in saying that a claim like "there is no such thing as phlogiston" is rendered true by virtue of the way things really are. Yet, it seems more difficult to extend this to things like negotiation and deference. The reason for this lies in the fact that in natural science there is a domain of physical phenomena against which our descriptions can be validated. For psychologists, however, there seems no such solid domain with which we might gauge or ground descriptive correspondence. But what is meant by correspondence here?

Both Rorty and Taylor would agree with Wittgenstein's and Heidegger's critiques of the epistemological tradition. Rorty and Taylor both would agree that we ought to abandon the representationalist view that knowledge demands a certain kind of metaphysics concerned with forging accurate representations of an independent reality. Both would agree that the notion that we function cognitively only within a perceptual realm of appearances, and that we are limited to fashioning representations of these appearances, misleads us to contrive an argumentative space that allows for supposing something like Plato's Ideas or Kant's thing-in-itself. However, as Taylor (1990) points out, Rorty seems to think that the only alternative to pragmatism is to have a general account of truth as correspondence theory.

Further, Rorty seems to assume that correspondence must be construed as representationalism-- the simple picture theory of representation attacked by Wittgenstein and Heidegger. Ironically, Rorty's conception of the alternatives would seem to show that he hasn't really abandoned the epistemological tradition altogether, but relies upon it to build his own position. As Taylor (1990) states:

Rorty is still partly trapped in the old model. It is not that he explicitly subscribes to the representational view, and indeed, he often seems to be repudiating it. It is rather that his conception of the alternatives still seem commanded by that view. That is, his notion of what it is to reject representationalism still seems commanded by the doctrine being rejected. So to learn that our thoughts don't correspond to things-in-themselves is to conclude that they don't correspond to anything at all. If transcendent entities don't make them true, then nothing makes them true. These were the only game in the epistemic town, and if they go the place has to be closed down. (p. 271)

With this move, Rorty rejects the metaphysics of the epistemological tradition (i.e., the thing-in-itself) but, in so doing, embraces nonrealism/ pragmatism by more or less fleeing from a spectre. However, there is no reason why truth by correspondence needs to be linked necessarily to the metaphysics of a thing-in-itself. There is no need to tie correspondence to the notion that everything we perceive is mere appearance, and that things themselves have a transcendent reality that is beyond human consciousness and experience. As I have argued, in natural science there seems little doubt that there is indeed truth by correspondence with an independent reality

constituted by physical phenomena. Those who practice natural science aren't getting any big news here. Nonetheless, I also contend that there is a kind of truth by correspondence in the case of subject-related phenomena. Namely, there is truth in terms of self-understanding.

In the case of subject-related phenomena, there is no external reference point that allows us to settle differences of interpretation. There is no route to dealing with descriptions of subject-related phenomena as independent objects in a fashion similar to the natural scientific strategies we have for discerning, describing, and settling disputes over our descriptions of object-related phenomena. Human beings are partially constituted by their self-interpretations and there is no grasping the nature of our thoughts, intentions, beliefs, and purposes that is independent of our self-interpretations. Human nature is not "objectively" given, but rather, hangs on the self-interpretations of both the actor and the observer. However, this does not imply that the interpretive character of the phenomena eradicates the issue of validity. The question of validity does not simply evaporate just because we are working with phenomena that are constituted interpretively. Quite simply, the question of validity can not be avoided. This is because not any interpretation will do, nor is just any interpretation legitimate.

For instance, to return to the negotiation scenario, let's say that during a break in the negotiations, one of the negotiators moves to shake hands with the other. It may be that the act could be intended as a sign to show that the negotiator is bargaining in good faith, it may be an attempt to conceal some ruse, it may be a demonstration of recognizing that things are going well, it may be an indication of a fondness for the other, and so forth. But to say that

all of these interpretations are equally valid, or that one is better than the others because it better suits our purposes, is to miss the point. Just because we may want to see things in a certain light to suit our beliefs and purposes, does not allow us to reweave things in any manner that is or might potentially be aligned with them. It matters that one gets it right. In this sense, as was the case with Ptolemaic astronomy or phlogiston, so it is with interpreting subject-related phenomena. There is a getting to the truth of the matter here as well. It seems inconceivable that human beings might operate without some notion of truth by correspondence also in the domain of subject-related phenomena. There is always an underlying assumption that there are right answers to questions of intention, of someone's feelings, what is meant by a gesture, what one ought to do, and so forth. Further, such an assumption is not merely a contingent matter that disappears as soon as one begins to reweave a description. This is because such assumptions are ontological matters.

Here is where a notion of truth as correspondence with self-understanding can be brought to bear. We require certain terms of expression such as deference, negotiation, courage, and humiliation in dealing with the reality of living as human agents amongst others. As beings that operate both collectively and individually (i.e., psychologically) through the use of language, we require such terms of expression to mark, to convey to others, and to deliberate over, what we recognize as authentic and significant aspects of our experience. As well, there are certain ontological assumptions and commitments (e.g., truth, moral goods) that we must make in order to function. As I have argued on the basis of Taylor's (1988a, 1989, 1991) work,

constitutive moral goods are necessary to having an orientation (i.e., for making strong evaluations). We require some notion of what it is to be a person, in order to develop as selves and to live both as individual and collective beings. If we require certain terms of expression, and certain ontological assumptions and commitments in order to get on with the business of living, it is ludicrous to suppose that some kind of epistemological arguments could overrule the best self-understanding of those terms of expression and assumptions vital to making sense of our lives and existing as the kind of beings that we are. As Taylor (1988b) states:

Once we have established our best possible account of the questions we have to take seriously in order actually to live our lives, once we have clarified, in other words, what the ontological assumptions are that we can't help making in practice as we go about the business of living, where in heaven or earth could the epistemological arguments come from that should convince us that we are wrong? What considerations could possibly trump the best self-understanding of what is inseparable from and indispensable in practice? (p. 56)

Contrary to Rorty's view, there are terms of expression that we are obliged to use because such terms discern what is real for us. Quite simply, if we are incapable of considering or understanding our own intentions, beliefs, orientation, actions, arguments, and those of others without such terms, then these are indeed real features of our world. If we can not function as human agents without a notion of truth, without terms of expression for struggling with alternative explanations, without terms for rectifying misconceptions or fighting clear to a more perspicuous account of things, without terms that tell

something of how we can make a transition that allows for a better grasp of things, without terms like joy, courage, trepidation, or humiliation, then the features these terms pick out are real for us. As Taylor (1989) states with regard to the status of such phenomena:

What is real is what you have to deal with, what won't go away just because it doesn't fit with your prejudices. . . . what you can't help having recourse to in life is real, or as near to reality as you can get a grasp at present. (p. 59)

Subject-related phenomena have real consequences for the ways in which human beings live. The phenomena of interest to psychology exert causal influence, and in this sense, they are no less real than their natural science counterparts (cf. Bhaskar, 1989; Greenwood, 1991; Martin, 1993).

Notions of "absoluteness" and objectivity, in the sense I have described above, lead us to believe that such features or significances should not figure in explanatory accounts of phenomena. However, unless an absolute account provides us with a clearer, more veridical explanation of the meanings that things have for us, better elucidates the sense we have of the significances of our condition, then plainly it should not be adopted. Unless eliminative materialism or identity theory⁷ provides an epistemic gain for say a description of deference, and thus far these positions would seem to show that they hold little promise of doing so, then we have no reason to prescind from the ordinary, value-laced terms that are the best account we have for describing the things that really matter to us.

The terms of expression and descriptions that we weave in describing ourselves are intimately connected to the understanding we have of our

ourselves as agents. This understanding is, in turn, inextricably bound up with our practices as agents, as we attempt to deal with our concerns and practical involvements. Our agentic actions are rooted in this self-understanding. As I have claimed on the basis of Harré's (1984, 1986, 1987a) explanation of self as a theory, the self-understanding we develop can be seen largely as the result of ascribing to a particular theory of self. However, the self-understanding that emerges from our instantiation of this theory (i.e., by the self-ascription of experiences) is also an essential part of our practice as agents. It is the way that we are engaged and caught up in our everyday dealings with things in the world. It is a reality of our condition as human agents. The self-understanding that we develop through our immersion and participation in shared practices gives us a window onto ourselves and the reality of being a human agent. As Taylor (1985a) states, "the self-understanding [we possess] as agents is part of the reality it purports to understand" (p. 203). While we may have no way to gain an external point of reference that permits us to escape our self-constituting interpretations, our own self-understanding is the best gauge of correspondence we have for arriving at accounts of subject-related phenomena. Consequently, I concur with the position taken recently by psychologists such as Howard (1986, 1993, 1994) and Rychlak (1988) who argue for accepting teleological explanations (i.e., the reasons that individuals themselves provide) for human action. As Howard (1986) admonishes:

If you want to know why a person behaved in particular manner, ask him or her! The answer may sometimes be incomplete, or uninformed, or even purposely misleading. But in leaving out an individual's

account of why he or she behaved as he or she did, we lose access to what in my opinion, is the central human capacity in the formation of human action. (p. 158)

Thus far, my labour in this work might be construed as an attempt to redress the misdirection of psychological study as revealed by Koch's (1959, 1964) critique. I have provided an explication of the phenomena of interest to psychological study. Given this groundwork, I believe that what remains both important and doable in the study of psychological phenomena is developing clear, consistent, and coherent interpretations of the critical social locations and personal/collective representations by which psychological phenomena are defined. Part of this task entails giving an account of the social and moral conditions that allow for the possibility of such phenomena. What conditions need to be present in order for the phenomenon to exist as it does? This task is not to be likened to operationalism, in which the phenomena of interest are equated with observables. Rather, what is required is the persistent development of clearer conceptions that gain some purchase over the social and representational aspects of psychological phenomena and the conditions for their possibility. My term of art for this task is "transcendental interpretation."

What is a Transcendental Interpretation?

The question of what kinds of internal necessity define something or make for its possibility might be characterized as a "transcendental" question. In dealing with questions of this sort in relation to self or other subject-related phenomena of interest to psychologists, I suggest an approach rooted in the tradition of Kant's (1781/1966) transcendental argument.⁸ The form of Kant's transcendental argument can be seen to be comprised of three phases. It begins with some undeniable experiential fact, it then proceeds by deducing a necessary condition for the possibility of this experience, and closes with the strong conclusion that the condition must prevail if indeed we are to have such an experience. The Kantian transcendental argument relies on the criterion of consistency. It presupposes that it would be inconsistent to ascribe to a belief that some fact of experience is beyond doubt, but not to assent to a condition that has been demonstrated as necessary to that experience. Kant's purpose in employing transcendental arguments was as a means for justifying a particular kind of knowledge claims.

It is traditional to consider analytic statements (i.e., statements that are true by definition) as *a priori* because they repose upon the meanings of words. By contrast, synthetic statements (i.e., statements that combine concepts to make substantive claims about the world, adding to our extant knowledge) are traditionally thought to be *a posteriori* because they would seem to require validation by experience. Kant's use of transcendental arguments was directed at a justification that some synthetic knowledge

claims can be *a priori*. Synthetic *a priori* knowledge claims are those that are true of what we experience, but which are necessarily true and independent of such experience. An example of such a claim would be: "every event has a cause." These kinds of claim are not true by definition insofar as an analysis of the meaning of the concept "event" does not reveal any necessary relation to "cause." Yet, the necessity of the claim is *a priori* because it is true prior to experience and, at the same time, it is synthetic because it adds to what we know. Kant's purpose in using the transcendental argument to establish synthetic *a priori* claims was to repudiate skeptical challenges to such things as the existence of causality, the existence of external objects, and the existence of self.

Kantian transcendental arguments are characterized by two features. First, they are rooted in some aspect of experience acknowledged to be beyond doubt. Second, arguments of this sort are *ad hominem*; that is, they attempt to entrap skeptics on the grounds of inconsistency by showing them that because they are the kind of beings that they are and have the kind of experiences that they do, they are unable to doubt legitimately the indispensable condition that they claim to be doubting. In this way, the *ad hominem* feature of transcendental arguments shows them to be "a kind of appeal to intuition" (Taylor, 1987, p. 475). Kant's strategy was to make an appeal to the agent's self-understanding. In this way, Kant can be construed, in effect, as having applied a notion of truth as correspondence with agentic self-understanding. Kant's argumentative strategy is to provoke the skeptic's insight into his own experience of self-understanding.

The strength of the *ad hominem* feature of a transcendental argument is that it shows skeptics up by persuading them that their doubts are hollow, and this is accomplished with the aid of their own self-understanding. At the same time, however, that the point of reference for the argument is the agent's self-understanding, portends a certain open-endedness. That our self-understandings are open to being transformed and revised, calls into question the apodicticity of the argument. This would imply that a transcendental argument never really arrives at any terminal closure. Let me attempt to elaborate this. Kant's aim was to develop an argument for predetermined, innate categories of mind that were brought to bear on experience. According to Kant, these categories are synthetic *a priori* and thus, they are to be treated as the embodiment of necessary truths. These categories, Kant asserted, enable us to construct and know the objects of perception. For Kant, these categories of mind are fixed, something with which we are naturally endowed. However, by beginning the transcendental argument with the indubitable fact of a subject's experience, Kant elided the important question of what accounts for the subjectivity of the subject. Entrapped within the epistemological tradition, Kant presumed the autonomous, disengaged knowing subject standing behind experience. It is on this basis that he deduced the notion that human beings were endowed with innate faculties that allowed for disengaged, autonomous knowing. And, it was this presumption of methodological individualism that led Kant astray.

Following in the footsteps and drawing upon the insights of Harré and Taylor (who in the same fashion are indebted to Wittgenstein and Heidegger), I have attempted to rectify Kant's error of assuming methodological

individualism. In explicating the conditions of possibility for subjectivity, I claim that the conditions from which agentic self-understanding emerges are social, linguistic, and moral, rather than hereditary. The intelligibility of experience is enabled by a self-understanding forged with others, from one's immersion in and appropriation of the conversational and moral resources sustained and conveyed by a culture's practices. Our self-understanding derives from our shared immersion and commitment to our form of life. As Taylor (1985b) describes:

The meanings and norms implicit in these practices are not just in the minds of the actors but are out there in the practices themselves, practices which cannot be conceived as a set of individual actions, but which are essentially modes of social relation, of mutual action. (p. 36)

Kant believed himself to be establishing an account of a fixed human cognitive architecture comprised of necessary universal truths. However, in light of Harré's and Taylor's works, what Kant was offering may be reframed as an interpretation of a self-understanding that is socio-cultural in origin and that is not immutable but potentially open to revision.

Reconsidering Psychological Research

Notwithstanding the foregoing critique, I contend that Kant's method of transcendental argument provides a stepping stone for gaining a better conception of psychological research. I hold that psychological research serves two principal aims. First, an aim of psychology is to lend intelligibility

to its subject matter. As I have stated, this requires the development of clear, consistent, and coherent interpretations of the important social locations and personal/collective representations by which psychological phenomena are defined and of the conditions of possibility that permit them. Second, I also believe that an aim of psychology is to extend or ameliorate our ordinary practices by making explicit the goods and norms that motivate them, thereby promoting further discussion as to the adequacy of these goods and norms. I envision psychological research as an attempt to articulate what we can of our self-understanding, of what is of meaning and value to us that motivates our practices, and of what we understand and believe it is to be a person. In so doing, psychological research might serve to enhance individuals' grasp of their condition as human agents and to augment their abilities of moral mastery and self-control (i.e., given the ontological constraints and considerations I have discussed).

However, this means that psychology can no longer be construed as a task completely analagous to physics or biology. It is not the discovery of universal, fixed, enduring mechanical laws by which individual cognitive architectures are structured. Nor, should we expect any longer to find convincing, accounts rendered by the exhaustive reduction of human biophysical properties or the incremental measurement of what are construed as adaptive behaviors generated by the rule-governed responsivity of automata to a flux of environmental demands. I do not deny that certain enablements and constraints are conferred on human beings by virtue of our biological make-up. However, traditionally these aspects have been overemphasized to the detriment of the socio-cultural, intersubjective, and

moral features of human agency I have described. Further, we should not expect to be able to comprehend much of the human condition in terms of abstract, decontextualized, dehumanized, noncultural, absolute principles. We should not expect much success by applying a notion of autonomous, disengaged reasoning from first principles. This is because our understanding, interpreting, and reasoning, springs from our immersion in a community with others. The basis for self-understanding and our capacity for practices of interpretation, deliberation, and reasoning, is that which is transmitted to us in language and custom. It is the intersubjective, moral socio-cultural milieu, subject to the shifting changes brought by personal and collective transformations, and not disengaged pure reason, that forms the bedrock of human psychology and permits any explicit grasp of subject-related phenomena.

I have proffered the term "transcendental interpretation" rather than "transcendental argument." My reason for doing so, is an attempt to shed some of the awkward and specious baggage accompanying the epistemological tradition that can be seen to have encumbered Kant. By employing the term "interpretation," I am endeavoring to eschew the problematic conception of the disengaged subject forming inner representations of an independent, yet directly inaccessible reality; one who aspires to render descriptions in absolute terms. Neither the phenomena of interest nor the character of our effort to investigate them, can be sanitized of human "contaminants." The intersubjective, moral features distinctive to human beings are constitutive features. Transcendental interpretation is not aimed at escaping the peculiarities of our condition, but rather, at articulating

something of how it is that we operate from within them. What is it that is of significance for us, what gives human life meaning and value, and how have we gone about attempting to answer this question in terms of our practices? In this light, psychological research is not dispassionate theorizing geared towards neural mechanistic explanations of the way human beings work. Rather, psychological research aims at elucidating how various subject-related phenomena are understood and enacted in our various practices. Psychological research is itself an interpretive social practice directed at investigating, enhancing, and expressing our particularly human concerns--the significances of our condition as human agents.

It is through articulation and terms of expression, that we find and make sense of life. Articulation is more than merely naming things. Language and conversation also serve to create a public space, one in which we can bring to light and shape our particularly human concerns with and amongst others.⁹ It is in this public space that we reason with others over interpretations, not for the purposes of arguing that one interpretation is correct in any absolute sense, but rather, that it is superior in terms of our self-understanding. In dealing with the domain of subject-related phenomena, we reason comparatively. In this way, we are able to make progress, betterment, by elucidating and working out a contradiction or inconsistency, or by illuminating something in our self-understanding that was overlooked by a previous interpretation. We can reason over and choose among interpretations by showing that one or another constitutes an epistemic gain. We can reason in terms of transitions guided by and anchored in our self-understanding. To borrow the words of P. Christopher Smith (1991), "Like

rowers we can, with occasional glances over our shoulders toward where we are headed, orient ourselves at first in reference to the things we will be leaving behind" (p. xvii).

CHAPTER IV

PSYCHOTHERAPY AS MORAL REFLECTION

Perhaps a concern about how something might work in the first place risks encouraging psychotherapists and students of psychotherapy to become "lost in thought, "with little practical benefit to practitioners or clients in need of assistance. I have great sympathy with such arguments and great respect for providers of therapeutic intervention who attempt to "soldier on" in the face of widespread demand for their services. However, I ultimately am concerned less about being "lost in thought" than about being "missing in action."

(Martin, 1994, p. 99)

What gives human life meaning and value? What is the nature of the good life? These kinds of question are at the marrow of humanity's great intrigue. While they persist as a chief source of nourishment for the spurts and turns of philosophical discourse, such questions have been relatively of little interest to the mainstream of contemporary academic psychology (cf. Bruner, 1990). Rather than viewing the posing of these questions and the conjecturing of answers as somehow important, indeed as significant clues to understanding that which those such as Taylor (1988a, 1989) see as indispensably constitutive of personal psychology, for the most part, this deeper dimension has been ignored. The roots of this elision, and psychologists' widespread avoidance and suspicion of the spiritual reach of morality (Sarason, 1992), may be traced in large part to an allegiance to the

epistemological tradition and the widespread temper of scientific naturalism it has bred. However, the epistemological tradition and its repercussions, methodological individualism, radical subjectivity, the ideals of disengagement, representationalism, and scientific naturalism, can be shown to be rooted firmly in characteristic moralities, and to uphold certain moral goods. As discussed in the third chapter, this is the case despite any protestations of neutrality by naturalists. It has been Taylor's (1989) project to retrieve these goods, and to show the extent to which the modern identity is undergirded by them.

Taylor's (1989) account shows insightfully how much of the turn inward, the radical subjectivity resident in the modern identity, is spun from Enlightenment and Romantic themes. Both displaced the world as the source of our mystery, meaning, and morality, and turned the subject towards itself in comprehending moral sources. The Enlightenment and Romanticism have bequeathed to the modern identity, their shared belief in radical subjectivity and a commitment to individualism. Self-responsible freedom, self-determination, expression, and the particularity of identity, have been so strongly embraced by most contemporary Westerners and imbued in our practices that these characteristics are construed more broadly as natural facts than as artifacts of ideology (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985). As Taylor describes, there is a tendency to comprehend ourselves as possessing these features in the same way we think of ourselves as having eyes, hearts, and livers, as "an interpretation-free given" (p. 106). Concomitantly, psychology is entrenched in the moral topography of the modern identity.

Western psychology has been consigned to the moral good of inwardness and its strands of disengaged autonomy and uniqueness. Consequently, the hegemony of methodological individualism has been a cornerstone of psychology (Cushman, 1990; Prillenkensky, 1989; Rieff, 1966; Sampson, 1983). Human beings are conceived to be ontologically, independent sovereign social atoms. Intersubjectivity is construed as a consequence of our intrasubjectivity. From psychology's inception as a distinct academic discipline during the late 19th century in Wundt's laboratories in Leipzig, to present university research settings, the premise of methodological individualism has played out accordingly as theories and choices of method have served to re-create and reify the object of inquiry (i.e., the autonomous inner self) presupposed.

Danziger (1990) illustrates this mutually confirming relation between the notion of an autonomous disengaged self and its study vis-à-vis the introduction of introspection as the method proper to the conduct of psychological study. Conceiving of mind as the experience of an isolated, private inner world of the self spawned and sanctioned Wundt's application of an introspective methodology. At the same time, it can be seen how just such an inner world, as an object of inquiry, might be created and sustained through the practice of introspection. As Danziger states:

the emergence of the notion of introspection as a method was intimately linked to the emergence of psychology as a separate field of study with its own special subject matter. The belief in the existence of this subject matter, the private world of inner experience, was a precondition for any meaningful discussion of introspection as a

method. And such discussions, as well as the actual practice of the method, tended to validate this belief. (p. 24)

The study of the inner world of the self declined during the reign of behaviorism. Nonetheless, methodological individualism prevailed. It likewise was sustained by the experimental paradigm contrived to investigate the "learning effects" of operant conditioning (Bruner, 1990). Granted by the proposed universality of the operant conditioning learning mechanism, rats replaced human beings. However, the individual subject remained the unit of measurement. Measuring the lone animal's solitary performance in various mazes gradually became definitive of the phenomenon of interest. The phenomenon (i.e., the autonomous learning subject) became what the research paradigm measured. In behaviorism, even the negation of the self did little to impede the advance of methodological individualism in psychological theorizing.

More recent examples of this reciprocity on the road to reification are apparent in contemporary empirical studies by cognitive, social, and educational psychologists alleging characteristics of selfhood such as self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977, 1993), self-worth (Covington & Beery, 1976; Covington & Omelich, 1979), self-concept (Byrne, 1984), and self-regulated learning (Zimmerman, 1989). As Bruner (1990) states with regard to the phenomenon under study taking on the character of the experimental paradigm: "And so with the study of self: 'it' is whatever is measured by test of the self-concept" (p. 101). Presupposing an isolated inner self to be known, the disengaged, solitary knowing subject, researchers following these lines of study examine conventions concerning the "self-evaluation of self" while

customarily glossing the more fundamental question. The question is not addressed because the "hard core" of the theory (Lakatos, 1978) contains the implicit presupposition of an autonomous inner self. Despite being central to the theory under investigation, an explicit account of the "self-contained self" or the conditions for its possibility are rarely offered. This is because a certain picture of the self is presupposed. Consequently, such research often ends up as a pallid demonstration of what is already true mostly by definition.

This point has been made forcefully in the sort of critiques given by Brandtstader (1987), Egan (1988), and Smedslund (1979). These authors declare empirical studies in this tradition redundant because the propositions being tested are rendered true by their analytic content rather than by any empirical association. The propositions under study are not contingently related, but rather, are structurally implicated. Rather than being an empirical demonstration of such self-features, the studies lead to an interpreting of events operationally defined in such a way that they are entailed by the theory itself. The operations that specify the occurrence of the phenomenon are precisely what we ought to expect. This expectancy is not given by the experimental data or on empirical grounds, but rather, by what is meant by the terms in the first place. To illustrate, an extremely low score on a measure of self-concept would be unlikely to prompt explanation in terms of an absence of self. The assumption that the person is in possession of a self is not up for question. Or, what would it mean for someone to say that they remember a positive feeling of self-worth after a particular experience, but at the same time claim that the memory or the feeling was not theirs? This person is not likely to be interpreted as providing the kind of

evidence that would falsify a theoretical prediction. Rather, he or she would be understood as violating certain linguistic conventions.

As I already have discussed, ascending with the epistemological tradition has been a concern with representation. The representationalist view emphasizes that our grasp of things consists of the representations we enframe of their independent reality. Also linked to this view of knowledge, is an understanding of reason as procedural. Coming to right representations depends upon the instrumental use of language and following correct canons of rational thought. This focus on representation and procedural reason can be evinced in the current preoccupation with models of human psychology grounded in the metaphor of machine computation. In these models, there is much emphasis on deciphering what are inferred as the formal rule-like operations of thinking. The notion that the psychological functioning of a human being might be modeled using an isolated computer is again grounded in methodological individualism.

Contributing further to this prejudice toward an individualistic ideology in psychology, is the Romantic conviction that we are creatures with inner depths. Each of us has something of a natural essence that gives rise to a private and unique inner life. In psychoanalysis, humanistic client-centered therapy and its variants in theories of education, art therapy, play therapy, and the onslaught of "new age" thinking, the influence of an expressivist morality abounds. The massive proliferation of self-help books and the lucrative self-help workshop industry also reveals a widespread concern among individuals over whether or not they are fulfilling themselves--realizing their own potential. And, further, there is most often the presumption that,

equipped with a how-to manual, one is self-sufficiently capable of improvement on one's own.

This notion of fulfilling one's inner potential and maintaining a state of psychological well-being, now has become explicitly placed in the context of health. In contemporary North American culture, one's inner psychological state and its care in relationships, parenting, and work, is discussed in daily parlance in terms of health. This concern with mental health can be seen in large part as an affirmation of the good of ordinary life. The rapid acceptance of the idea of mental health in North America has brought tremendous expansion to the mental health professions and social institutions that support mental health. The reason that counseling and psychotherapy are now deemed so important is that they are intimately connected to the moral goods of inwardness, expressivism, and ordinary life.

What Taylor's (1989) portrayal makes compellingly plain is that throughout human history we have been enchanted and beguiled by inescapable questions concerning not only who and what we are, what it means to be a person, but what it is good or better to be. And, in grappling with these questions, we have conjectured and countenanced meaningful descriptions of ourselves. These descriptions are not mere fictions of fancy nor, as might be assumed, is one or another in itself ascent to a neutral "god's eye view" of our condition. Regardless of whether we are lost or at home, we are always somewhere in the moral landscape. Our theories of what it is to be a person cannot be morally neutral, for such theories are constitutive of our lives, and living is not a neutral affair. As Taylor (1988a) states:

Our identity not only presupposes points of moral reference in relation to which we define ourselves, but also itself constitutes a central moral issue. Whether one is true to one's identity can never be a neutral issue. If it makes sense to be neutral towards it, then it is no longer this issue. (p. 316)

We are never utterly disengaged observers. Theories of persons are moral depictions always availed from the point of view of a participant in life, from immersion with others in a landscape of questions. The power of such moral depictions is poignantly revealed throughout psychology's history. Being captured, indeed morally encumbered, by a certain picture of our subjectivity, a self-description, constrains the kind of research questions legitimately asked and dictates methodologies appropriate to their study. However, the invocative power of moral topographies extends much further than their explicit effects evinced in academic research psychology or psychotherapeutic practice. Moreover, as I have alleged, such self-descriptions animate and validate, sculpt and sustain the vicissitudinous forms of selfhood that historically mark the individual experience of persons. Cultures serve as repositories of these animating metaphors, ways of personal being, realized and made manifest through language and other relational practices. To view selves in this light is to see the nature of our individual experience as predicated on a perpetually mutating cultural inheritance. Consequently, methodological individualism may be imputed as presupposing precisely that which needs to be explained.

Social constructionism regards the unity of self as a critical, irreducible, and undeniable fact of human experience. Focusing on our moral

intersubjectivity, the conditions necessary for this experiential unity of self, both broadens and deepens our view of subjectivity. It brings forward what has been suppressed and forgotten in our experiential lives, but which nonetheless must always be there for us. As I have attempted to reveal via the works of Harré (1984, 1986, 1987a) and Taylor (1988a, 1989, 1991), self issues as a property of dimensions of the moral socio-cultural milieu. Underscoring these dimensions presents selfhood as an achievement rather than as a given, and redefines the relation between intrasubjectivity and intersubjectivity. Brought into focus through the lenses afforded by Harré's and Taylor's work, selves are viewed largely as cultural endowments.

However, it is at least intuitively unappealing if not utterly mistaken to discount our sense of agency, individual accountability, and moral responsibility. If we are furnished with selves by our cultures, then the practices we engage in cannot be viewed simplistically as the result of autonomous individual choice. Yet, there is the experiential fact that when we act, we do experience and understand ourselves as individuals making autonomous choices. As I have attempted to establish by way of my transcendental interpretation, this experience of ourselves as individuals is part of our self-understanding. It is the way that we go about interpreting our experiences day to day. There is little to gainsay the experiential reality of one's vacillation in indecision or fortitude in resolve. Thus, on the one hand, a view that presumes such experience as resulting solely from autonomous sovereign choice would be fallaciously ideological; on the other, a view that abjures agency denies a reality of our experiential lives.

Those such as Harré and Taylor acknowledge the authenticity of agency and individualism in human experience. However, they espouse a relational interpretation of the interplay between self and society.¹⁰ To hold such a view is to see the experiential reality of individual selfhood and personal agency as an expression or manifestation of the character of our involvements with others. As such, an adequate explication of individual selfhood and human psychology requires revealing how it arises from the conditions of our shared sociality and the processes of enculturation. How is it possible, for example, that agency, consciousness, and autobiography, aspects of a unified self characteristic of the modern identity, become animated via our relational practices and collectivity? And yet, how is it possible that collectively affirmed, institutionalized self-descriptions can be transformed by the intentional actions of individuals? As I have already described, a relational denouement to the quandary of the autonomous individual that exists as both a profoundly institutionalized way of experiencing and as an alterable idea is attainable via the works of Harré and Taylor.

Psychotherapeutic Change

There have been several depictions of the self, inspired by methodological individualism, on offer for psychological theories (cf. Bruner, 1990). Descartes bequeathed a notion of self as an empirically registering entity. The legacy of Freud has given us self as a bickering committee of homunculi. Cognitive psychology with its penchant for schematic diagrams,

what Dennett (1993) satirizes as "boxology," portrays self as a composite of boxed abilities stacked one upon another. Cognitive scientists, particularly those with pragmatist and naturalist leanings (e.g., Dennett, 1991), allege self to be epiphenomenal, the ephemeral exhaust of an isolated neural factory. And, often in combination with one of these characters, postmodernists such as Rorty (1991b) and Gergen (1991) take self to be a socially constructed but nonetheless existentially neutral object, enabled through radical disengagement to leap into monomaniacal freedom and create its own private world of meaning. It is not difficult to see how this myopia could darken the background of our rich and complex, moral socio-cultural constitution and, in most cases, further aggrandize radical subjectivity. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the case of psychotherapy.

In psychotherapy, such self-aggrandizement occludes much of what seems required for the more emancipatory aim of helping people to see their lives more clearly, assisting them to make adequate sense of how they live and can go about living their lives. In light of the ontological interpretation I have broached, the radical subjectivity and inwardness touted by most psychotherapies would seem inimical to this project. The implicit mission of most forms of psychotherapy is to steer the person toward a sense of greater monological inwardness and autonomy, to reify a sense of private inner profundity and autonomous disengagement. Such hyperindividualism precludes a deeper acknowledgment of what it is that we share with others. It neglects the broader mosaic of our selfhood, the public and collective nature of the moral ideals and realities in which we are rooted and by which we are constituted. Indeed, as Sass (1988) claims, such kinds of psychotherapy,

"might be less a cure than a symptom of the narcissism of our times" (p. 323).

According to Taylor (1988a, 1989, 1991), making sense of one's life depends upon locating oneself in relation to the goods and commitments constitutive of one's intentionality. Again, this deep need for orientation reflects in the kinds of self-description spun of our moral intersubjectivity across the questions of human experience. Thus, I claim that whenever we take ourselves to be interpreting human beings, we will be construing them in terms of inescapable moral questions and the partial answers, or self-theories, to which they are committed, albeit in an often implicit and confused fashion. If we fail to find application for these questions, then we fail to find application for the notions of self, person, agency, and so forth. "Self" manifests our need to make sense of things, by giving form to that which matters for us. It confers meaning on one's life by sustaining the particular goods intrinsic to that meaning. Forming the tacit horizon of our lives, such goods often are obfuscated in our practices. Nonetheless, the moral sources by which we live are indicated obliquely when we are faced with the task of judging our lives as worthwhile or wanting, meaningful or dreary, whether we consider ourselves to be behaving well or badly, and so forth; that is, when we are compelled to make strong evaluations. Psychotherapy is typified by such occasions.

Consider the client torn between starting a family or pursuing a career, or one who anxiously suffers a dissatisfying or demeaning job in the service of supporting a family, or the gay or lesbian who agonizes over making their sexual identity public knowledge. Such scenarios and the narratives that

accompany them can be interpreted as conflicts amongst the goods of expressivist fulfillment, ordinary life, and inwardness. As moderns, we recognize at least something of the underlying nature of such concerns, even if there is considerable variation in the ways they are manifested in our own personal lives. I contend, along with Taylor (1988a, 1989, 1991), that this empathy issues from the fact that we share these moral sources. As I have mentioned, the reasons for this empathy may evade the conscious scrutiny of many. Nonetheless, that we can feel at least to some degree, the pull of each of these three constitutive goods, occasions our resonance with such difficulties and concerns.

As I hope to reveal, psychotherapy is structured chiefly around constitutive goods. In attempting to show this, I shall be interpreting the moral disposition of psychotherapy, keeping with the ontological account I have provided. As I have claimed, the moral dimension of human life interlocks with the intersubjective through conversation and the other interrelational practices in which we are immersed. An explanatory account of psychotherapy consonant with the ontological interpretation I have given is that of Martin (1994). Akin to the ideas of Vygotsky (1934/1986) and Harré (1984, 1986, 1987a), Martin's account recognizes the central role played by conversation not only in the formation of individual psychology, but also, in effecting therapeutic change. As Martin states:

Psychological therapy is a unique form of conversation that attempts to alter the personal theories about themselves, others, and their own life circumstances that clients have acquired through their

participation in other (previous and ongoing) intimate, social, and cultural conversations. (p. 3)

According to Martin, therapeutic change is enabled by clients' appropriation and internalization of aspects of the therapeutic conversation into their personal theories and self-descriptions. Centering on the interplay of the social (i.e., public) and private (i.e., cognitive) as they flow through the medium of conversation, Martin discerns three major features of the therapeutic context: (1) clients' appropriation and internalization of elements of the therapeutic conversation; (2) alterations and amendments to clients' personal theories (i.e., of problems and concerns) that result from appropriations and internalizations of therapeutic conversations; and (3) the mediating role played by clients' episodic, experiential memories in facilitating the processes of appropriation, internalization, and personal theory revision.

Martin (1994) contends that therapeutic conversation serves as a culturally sanctioned venue for clients' expression and elaboration of their personal theories and their understanding of problems and concerns (i.e., that have prompted them to seek therapy). This expression and elaboration is carried out in the public, social context of therapeutic conversation. Martin proffers that in order for these expressions and elaborations to take place, the therapeutic context must foster the client's recall and articulation of memories of extratherapeutic experiences relevant to the client's difficulties and concerns. Martin develops the notion that episodic memory, defined simply as memory for past experience, encompasses the personal identity of the rememberer. Unlike conceptions of procedural and semantic memory (used in psychology to refer respectively to the retention of condition-action

rules and declarative propositions), which for the most part are devoid of personal reference, episodic memory is laced with subjective content. According to Martin, episodic memory is highly experiential and autobiographical, loaded with personal meanings, feelings, and valuations. Martin maintains that in this way, one's episodic memories of experiences are the vessels for one's personal theories, the beliefs one holds about others, and interpretations of life circumstances. Episodic memories reflect one's self-understanding.

Gradually throughout the course of therapy, inconsistencies and conflicts become apparent and are made explicit as aspects of the client's personal theories, beliefs, and self-understanding are articulated. During the participants' collaborative construction and articulation of this content, conversational resources are afforded that may be deemed as relevant and helpful by the client. In turn, the client can appropriate and internalize these resources into the private discourse constitutive of his or her "inner" cognitive, mental life. Thus, conversation serves to mediate both the therapeutic activities of: (1) the public expression and elaboration of personal theories as manifested by clients' memories of past experiences; and (2) revisions to clients' personal theories via clients' cognitive, private instantiation and transformation of memories of psychotherapeutic conversations. Appropriating, recalling, and elaborating therapeutic events can lead to the transformation of aspects of personal theories.

Martin's (1994) account of therapeutic change advances the view that therapy acts to provide a context in which self-interpretations can be altered somewhat by participation in conversational/practical activities of a certain

sort (i.e., psychotherapy). Underscoring the conversational nature of human change in the context of psychotherapy, Martin's framework recognizes the intersubjective (i.e., conversational) nature of human ontology and the persistent aspiration of human beings to grasp their place amongst others in the social world they inhabit. In Martin's words, psychotherapy serves as:

a 'professionalized' version of our quest to extract more meaningful understandings from our interactions with the world (physical and social) and others, especially with respect to ascertaining our own place in these interactions" (p. 120).

I wish to augment Martin's (1994) interpretation of the therapeutic context in light of Taylor's (1988a, 1989, 1991) views concerning the inextricable moral goods that permeate our theories of self. I contend that much of what therapeutic conversation is about can be interpreted as moral reflection. Psychotherapeutic conversations are conversations of a moral sort. Clients' problems and concerns can be construed fundamentally as questions of moral judgment. Both therapists and clients bring constitutive moral goods to the therapeutic arena and such goods steer the nature of the conversation. Due to the plurality of moral sources in human life, the multiplicity of our goals, needs, and life goods, and the myriad of social conventions that constrain our activities, constitutive moral goods are sometimes brought into conflict given particular life circumstances. Many of the dilemmas for which clients seek therapy ensue when internalized moral goods become discordant with their current life situation. This is the case even if the problem is construed in terms of past childhood experiences that are thought to be surfacing and interfering with the client's current state of

mental health (note the underlying expressivist theme). As clients articulate and elaborate upon their recollections and understanding of difficulties and concerns, they make evident these particular moral goods. They reveal what it is that matters to them, and what matters for them are essentially, concerns of a moral nature. At the same time, therapists also hold an allegiance to particular moral goods that inform their contributions to the therapeutic conversation. From this perspective, I believe that therapy serves principally as a vehicle for moral reflection. Answers to the question, "why or how is this a problem for you?" can be seen to enframe or be undergirded by moral concerns.

Taken together with the ontological interpretation of self I have offered, Martin's (1994) work provides a framework for describing and interpreting the context of psychotherapeutic work. The terms conversation, moral goods, self-description or personal theory, and episodic memory, provide a set of interpretive lenses through which to view the conversational context of psychotherapy. To illustrate the intersubjective/conversational and moral nature of psychotherapy, I shall be presenting a brief re-analysis of the content and context of excerpts of audiotaped and transcribed discourse drawn from an actual psychotherapeutic session. The case I am using for this demonstration is drawn from a previous study (Martin, Cummings, & Hallberg, 1992), consisting of the therapeutic dialogues of therapists in four dyads of experiential psychotherapy (7 to 13 sessions per each dyad). The therapists were directed to use metaphors whenever they forecast that such interventions would further clients' therapeutic work. Immediately following therapy sessions, both therapists and clients were asked to recall therapeutic

events found to be most memorable, and to account for the memorability of these events. In light of the theory of therapeutic change outlined, I present a re-examination of the therapeutic conversations of one case drawn at random from the four collected in the Martin et al. study. My analysis will rely on information presented both within and across therapy sessions as well as the participants' written recollections of psychotherapeutic experiences. Using the client's and therapist's written comments, and transcribed discourse from therapeutic conversations, I illustrate the ideas of episodic memory elaboration and conversational appropriation outlined in Martin's (1994) account. Consistent with my integration of Taylor's (1988a, 1989, 1991) moral philosophy, I also have interpreted the client's and therapist's contributions to the therapeutic discourse in terms of the moral goods and commitments undergirding their personal theories and strong evaluations. Additionally, I have examined the client's conversational appropriations, in light of her assessment of what was both memorable and helpful to her, to see the manner in which these appropriations enabled her to face her moral concerns.

It is important to note that the provision of this case study is for illustrative purposes. My aim is not to warrant my claims evidentially in the tradition of empirical psychological science. Rather, my intention is to provide something of an instantiation of my interpretation of psychotherapy in a real psychotherapeutic context. That is, I am going to attempt to show interpretively, consonance between my interpretation and the intentions, actions, and experiences of persons participating in such a context. I intend that the account I will give be considered in terms of its capacity to elucidate

the conversational/intersubjective and moral character of the psychotherapeutic context. Moreover, I hope to reveal that therapy takes place principally in a moral climate. Human intentions, actions, and experiences repose upon the personal theories that constitute our actions as such. Our intentional actions and our experiences are circumscribed by the personal and collective theories we hold about them. In turn, such personal and collective theories depend upon moral goods and commitments. Hence, making sense of human psychology demands locating persons in relation to the goods and commitments constitutive of their intentionality. As I hope to show, if we are better to understand what it means to help people, we need to be able to comprehend the substantive moral goods that guide human actions and experience, to cultivate an account of the conversational/practical means and activities through which we express these goods in our living, and to evaluate strongly the goods therapists countenance in the morally reflective practice of psychotherapy. With these points in mind, I now turn to the case study.

Illustrative Case Study

The client was a 29 year old woman who had been married for six years. She was employed full-time as a school teacher and was well educated having completed MSc, BEd, and BA degrees. Her husband was also an employed professional. They did not have any children. The client said she had sought therapy due to marital difficulties. The therapist was a full-time, highly experienced female practitioner. She identified her therapeutic

orientation as person-centered/experiential. She met with the client for 10 one-hour sessions over a four month period during 1990. The therapist had met the previous year with the client for 12 sessions. After the third session, the client wrote the following response to the question: "What did you learn from this session?"

That I can't carry the responsibility of making my marriage work by myself. H has to help. Therefore, I need to tell him how I feel and see what happens. I can't stay in this position forever, I will have to do something to advance or change things.

In the following transcribed segments of the third session, I shall attempt to show that what the client learned from the session was based upon appropriations from co-constructed conversational elaborations. Further, these appropriations enabled her to locate herself relative to a kind of moral understanding. I offer that key terms such as "carry," "responsibility," and "forever," used by the client in her response above, were introduced initially by the therapist into the therapeutic conversation. These terms were not used in the previous two therapy sessions. I contend that the client's use of these terms in her response is not merely coincidental. Rather, these terms first were broached by the therapist to elaborate specific aspects of the client's episodic memories. Through the course of the session, the therapist interpreted the client's episodic memories as reflecting both the client's feelings, and certain moral concerns underlying or connected to those feelings. In the co-sponsored conversational elaboration of the client's episodic memories, the therapist speaks of the client's "guilt" and also of the client's sense of "responsibility." The therapist depicts the client's concerns

about her marriage as a "burden" that the client "carries" in the form of an obligation to sustain and/or repair her marriage. The term "responsibility" expresses the therapist's understanding of the client's moral concern. Throughout the therapy session, the therapist furnishes the conversation with the term, building her elaborations of the client's concerns around it. Though the client does not use the term explicitly during the session, her appropriation of it is inferred from her written response. The following conversational segment takes place at the beginning of the third session. The client is recounting an episode that manifests her uncertainty over her husband's desire to spend time with her, and her attitudes towards making an effort to approach him to do things together.

1. *CL: Although he did go to the naturalist meeting with me, which was really nice 'cause I said to him, "I'm going, do you want to go?" And he said, "Well, I'll let you know" . . . And, you know, I had to make the effort to call him but he did come. So that was nice, we had a good time. We went out for dinner. It was really nice. But, um, yeah, I notice that I don't really, um, slot time to spend with H per se, you know. It just sort of happens by accident so . . .*
2. *TH: Right, like all the other things that are priorities somehow get clearly stated where they're going to go.*
3. *CL: Yeah, but they go on my calendar, but.*
4. *TH: (interrupting) There's a kind of a taking for granted about what time's going to go . . . is just like . . . it just happens by accident almost.*
5. *CL: Yeah, you know, I make plans to go away with my friends . . . but I don't make plans to go away with H, you know . . . and I don't know . . . I think that um, in the summer I tried to do that and he wasn't interested, you know, there*

was always some work to do on the house, or some work to do at work and um . . .

6. *TH: So you almost felt rebuffed a little bit.*

7. *CL: Yeah, and I think I just naturally turn to my friends for those kinds of things now. Like I think many of the things I've done with . . . with friends in the last year or two, things I really enjoyed, that I've never done with H, you know, like um, like go to ballets, go stay at like a country inn or something like that, you know . . . and I don't do those things with H. You know, so maybe that's fine. Maybe I could have a marriage where I do certain things with him and not with these other people, but it bothers me that I don't slot time to do things with him.*

8. *TH: Well it's not clear that you are doing certain things with him.*

9. *CL: No, no (in agreement) . . . usually its quite by accident that we end up together, you know, like . . . we did some work at the fair last week, but it just sort of happened. It hadn't really been planned. And I thought to myself, that's kinda strange, why doesn't he want to . . . like with a person who's schedule is getting as busy as mine and his is, you'd think that once and a while he would say, you know, leave Friday night for me or something like that but . . .*

10. *TH: And when you try, try to do that, there's a noninvolvement from him?*

11. *CL: That's what I feel like. Yeah, because a lot of times I may have plans but I say to him, please come, or, come to London with me, or um, come do the laundry with me whatever, you know, and quite often he doesn't want to . . . so I guess I've sort of stopped asking a lot, you know.*

To this point, the conversation illustrates how the client and therapist elaborate the client's episodic memories of events pertinent to the client's

concern. The dialogue continues with the therapist tagging with the term "guilt," the client's feelings as expressed in the therapeutic elaboration of these memories (#14, #16, & #17). The therapist also introduces the term "responsibility" (#14) as something associated with the client's feelings.

12. TH: *So you're not sure . . . you think that's what he'd like . . . you're not sure if you're taking him for granted, he can't be bothered, or whether he's.*

13. CL: *(interrupting) Yeah, I don't know, you know. Like, I don't know if it's me who's pushing him away or him who's showing noninterest.*

14. TH: *So do you need to feel guilty or responsible or not . . .*

15. CL: *(interrupting) Yeah, no, I need to do something.*

16. TH: *Yeah, do you need to be annoyed about this or do you need to be guilty about this if it's kinda lost.*

17. CL: *Yeah, that's right, that's exactly it. Yeah, you know, should I be doing something about this, or should I say to myself I'm pissed off that he doesn't care enough to plan time with me . . . Because deep down inside I don't know if I really want to do those things with him anyways . . . you know, like I'm really quite content to do them with other people. So I think deep down I'm feeling like I should be, should feel guilty you know . . . because I should want to, um . . . spend time with him. And people, you know, older people at school are funny because when they see me going out with, with other people a lot, like other girls at school, or going to meetings and stuff. They say "well what is your husband doing?" . . . you know and I hate that kind of statement because, first of all, H's a human being who's perfectly capable of looking after himself. It's not like I have to go home and feed him or anything. You know, although maybe I should, but . . .*

18. TH: *(interrupting)* According to them.
19. CL: According to them.
20. TH: *But not according to you.*
21. CL: *And the way I know he doesn't eat very well when I'm not around . . . and . . . but I think wow, that's really a terrible thing for people to say. Why shouldn't . . . why should I feel guilty about enjoying my life. You know, they have no idea what my relationship is like with H. Like maybe we do spend a lot of quality time together, you know. So I think to myself, this is weird, you know, are people trying to tell me something. And I'm not sure that I want, um.*
22. TH: *(interrupting)* And this is the older women?
23. CL: *Yeah, the old, the sort of older married women who you know . . . so I decided that I don't think I . . . You have to be careful at school. There's a lot of staffroom talk, you know. And you know what happens in every . . . in every type of business . . . but um, I thought to myself, I don't think I want them knowing everything I do because, then, you know, they're going to form some kind of opinion that they're going to pass on to other people without understanding my life. I think I want to be careful. Yeah, but this feeling about whether I should feel guilty or whether . . . I don't know, it feels strange.*

The therapist has drawn out a conflict in the client's personal theory about how she ought to feel toward her husband--whether or not she ought to be or "needs to feel" annoyed or guilty/responsible (#14 & #16). At #17 the client acknowledges having conflictual feelings and appropriates the term "guilty." The client continues to use the term "guilty" in subsequent conversation (#21 & #23). The client also speaks of herself as having a feeling "deep down" or "deep down inside" (#17, see also #25, #27, #29, #37) as

though there are feelings she experiences that are somewhat inner and mysterious, that they are difficult to get in touch with, but that she is nonetheless obligated to try to discover them. This nicely illustrates what Taylor (1989) refers to as the moral source of inwardness. At #23 the client makes a strong evaluation about whether she "should" feel guilty ("should" connoting moral responsibility), and she indicates that there might be an alternative that is somehow obfuscated for her. The conversation continues with the therapist picking up on what she understands to be conflictual in the client's moral concerns (#24).

24. TH: *It seems like you're caught between what value system to adopt. Part of you is saying that you're supposed to be looking after H, you're supposed to be wanting to be with H. H is supposed to be your first priority. And there's part of you that kind of likes that idea.*

25. CL: *Yeah, I think that, you know, deep down inside.*

26. TH: *(interrupting) And that's what these women are stirring up.*

27. CL: *Sure, yeah . . . deep down inside, I think I would, I really want to go, want to go home, and be happy.*

28. TH: *(interrupting) Yeah, you want that to be the core.*

29. CL: *(continuing, speaking overtop the therapist) and want to do things with my mate. And want to plan to go away with my mate, but I'm not getting that, any encouragement from H and deep down inside me, therefore I'm sort of feeling why do I really want to be with him, you know, so.*

30. TH: *So you feel guilty, but you also feel really disappointed.*

31. CL: *Uhum, that's the feeling lately, is disappointment, you know, and almost sort of um . . . for the last couple of weeks I almost felt a bit um, like I*

was a failure because . . . or rejection or something you know. Like here I felt like I wasn't wanted, you know, and I thought well, and all of a sudden it hit me the last couple of weeks, why doesn't he want to spend time with me, what is it, that's either not attractive to him or has pushed him away.

32. TH: *Like it's your fault.*

33. CL: *Yeah, and so the last couple weeks that starts hitting me . . . so I said this is not good (laughs anxiously). Yeah, I had a new set of feelings, a new set of feelings coming in. But um.*

34. TH: *(interrupting) And so the guilt about having to pretend that things (CL: Yeah) are ok, giving way to a sense that . . . to an acceptance that it doesn't feel right at home (CL: Uhum) . . . and then a struggle to understand why it doesn't fit, and what happened and how come it's not what you want it to be. (CL: Yeah) . . . and who's responsible.*

35. CL: *Uhum.*

At #24 the therapist articulates something of what Taylor would term the client's moral source of ordinary life. Implicit in the client's personal theory is that she has a moral obligation to sustain her marital relationship. The therapist describes this moral good as the "core" of the client's personal theory (#28). The client acknowledges this (#25, #27, & #29). The therapist further formulates as "disappointment" what she believes conflicts with or is at least different from, the client's experience of guilt (#30). The client appropriates the term "disappointment" (#31). The therapist articulates her understanding of the client's fulfillment of the good of ordinary life as being obstructed by current circumstances (#34). At #34 the therapist also imparts the moral good of autonomy (i.e., individual responsibility). By posing

"who's responsible," the therapist conveys that both the client and her husband hold individual responsibility for sustaining marital relations. The implication is that it is not solely the client who is responsible but, also, her husband is morally accountable. This idea, developed further in the subsequent segment (#38), would seem to have been appropriated by the client as indicated in the client's response on the questionnaire. As well, given the client's written response, the therapist's contributions to the conversation (particularly #38 & #40), as appropriated and transformed by the client, were taken by the client to be helpful in dealing with her concerns. By accentuating the idea of shared individual responsibility for the success of the marriage, the moral good of autonomy is elevated to take precedence over the moral good of ordinary life. This privileging of one particular moral good over another, spawned dialogically as a solution to the client's concern, is elaborated during the subsequent conversational segment. In the following segment, there is further articulation of the client's and therapist's personal theories pertaining to moral goods. As a consequence, relevant conversational resources are made available for the client's potential appropriations.

36. TH: *Basically you're not getting anything out of this.*

37. CL: *(exclaiming loudly) No! That's how I feel. And when I say that, deep down inside, I still feel slightly guilty that it's my fault that, you know, deep down . . . as soon as I said that, deep down inside I felt like yeah, but maybe you're not doing this right, you know, instead of thinking why doesn't he do anything.*

38. TH: Well there's a couple of things there. First off, I think it's really hard for us to feel entitled to anything. Like we're . . . I think that women tend to be uh . . . we're raised to be the caretakers of everybody else . . . (CL: Uhum) . . . and we aren't really entitled to demand caretaking back. Our job is to give the caretaking and so there's always a guilt that comes when we say . . . (CL: Right) . . . I want, I want it back . . . (CL: Yeah) . . . that's part of it . . . (CL: Yeah) . . . and part of it too is that, in terms of relationship, we . . . we feel that we are the one's responsible for the relationship and . . . and in this society it's . . . men are not socialized as much to take responsibility for relationship and it's scary and hard for them, and, and it's hard on us 'cause we think it's our fault. (CL: Uhum) We think it's always our responsibility . . . (CL: Yeah) . . . The relationship feels like the woman's responsibility . . . and a woman can't do it all (CL: No) because a relationship is two people. Two people are responsible.

39. CL: It's a lot, It feels like (two indecipherable words).

40. TH: (interrupting) So that's your struggle there. You are, it is . . . you are helpless until you can get . . . get him engaged in some way. And yet, that's very hard for you to get him engaged . . . and it's scary.

41. CL: I think to myself, you know, I've . . . I've sort of given him a lot of signals that I need help, you know.

42. TH: Uhum. Uhum. Right.

43. CL: I mean he knows I'm going to counseling. He knows I'm starting to spend a lot of time with other people.

The solution of ascribing greater priority to the moral good of autonomy over that of ordinary life is entertained explicitly by the client (#37). At #38, the therapist articulates her understanding of the moral goods

of autonomy and ordinary life and what she understands to be the greater good of autonomy in marital relations (i.e., "Two people are responsible"). The therapist's conversational elaboration (#38) is replete with the word "responsibility" making this term highly accessible to the client. The therapist also puts forth the idea that the client needs to find a way to engage her husband (#40). It is of interest to note that this statement by the therapist seems to be somewhat contradictory to her earlier statements. Here, she seems to be telling the client that it is still the client's responsibility to instigate marital repairs or at least initiate contact with her husband. The client's initial conversational responses (#41 & #43) would seem to indicate that she is somewhat apprehensive to agree with the therapist. However, as revealed by subsequent conversation (#47 to #53) and the client's written response, the client does come to appropriate this idea that it is she who must initiate contact.

The following segment, taking place a little later in the session, follows the client recounting an episodic memory concerning her attempt to approach her husband about contacting some of his old friends. The client recalls an incident in which she told her husband of a dream she had about her husband's old friends and how her husband responded with antipathy toward the client's suggestion that he contact them. She also spoke about how she used to try and keep in touch with her husband's friends and resented that this seemed to be her responsibility. This shows again, elements of her personal theory regarding a moral commitment to ordinary life.

44. TH: You feel like all the responsibility has to be on your shoulders 'cause he's incapable of taking it. So it really is all on your shoulders . . . (CL: Yep) . . .

and, then you feel, then you feel sad and scared for him, but you also resent somehow that you have to have . . . that you carry this whole burden and he's not able to (CL: Yeah) to be . . . and to.

45. CL: *(interrupting) He could try.*

46. TH: *Yeah, I think he's not trying. And you're really frustrated with him not trying.*

Here, the therapist has framed the moral good of ordinary life (i.e., the client's responsibility) using the metaphor of a "burden" that the client feels that she has to "carry." As revealed in her written response, the client appropriates the term "carry" and replaces the term "burden" with "responsibility" transforming (or instantiating) the metaphor (i.e., "That I can't carry the responsibility of making my marriage work by myself."). Subsequent conversation shows further co-construction of the solution that the client appropriates (i.e., "Therefore, I need to tell him how I feel and see what happens. I can't stay in this position forever, I will have to do something to advance or change things."). In her written response, the client appropriates the term "forever" broached by the therapist (#50). The moral concerns continue to be played out and elaborated.

47. CL: *And you know, I know it's going to be up to me (i.e., getting H to talk to her), so I just, I think, I can go on for ages or I can . . .*

48. TH: *(interrupting) Well the point right now is you're . . . it is all up to you and you're really pissed off about that, but you've got to find some way of telling him that he's got to make an effort and move towards you . . . that he has to hear that message . . . (CL: Yeah) . . . that at least you have to . . . you have to get*

to him and then if he chooses not to move towards you then that gives you information about where he's at.

49. CL: *Yeah, at least I'm not guessing anymore about what's going on.*

50. TH: *(interrupting) But you don't know that. Yeah, cause yeah, you don't want to take responsibility forever, and you feel sick of that.*

51. CL: *Yeah.*

52. TH: *But he needs . . . and he needs to know that you don't want to do that anymore.*

53. CL: *Yeah.*

54. TH: *Somehow.*

55. CL: *And I feel I want to know because I don't . . . if he's not going to want that, that kind of relationship . . . I need that kind of relationship.*

56. TH: *Right, you're learning what you need.*

57. CL: *Yeah.*

58. TH: *And you're also . . . learning what he seems to be now. But you don't know yet what his potential is.*

59. CL: *Yeah. Right.*

60. TH: *And you can't deny what you need. That's really important, you have to honor that. That's real clear.*

The following two conversational segments taken from the next (fourth) therapy session further illustrate my interpretations. In the first of these segments, the client has just recounted events during the past week (since the third session). Having approached her husband with her concerns, she has just described how H has told her that he is feeling discouraged and depressed and that it's not her fault. Rather, the problem is something that

resides within him. She expresses her sense of relief at knowing that it's not so much her failure in the relationship and, that also, the responsibility for the failure of the relationship is in large part his.

61. TH: *And you had been taking a lot of responsibility that you now don't need to take . . . (CL: Yep) . . . for how things are.*

62. CL: *Right. These six years with him have really made me doubt if I am capable of maintaining a relationship because I haven't had one with him. And then, the fact that I've had these intermittent relationships with other people have really scared me, you know, into thinking that I'm not capable. But now I consider myself . . . it wasn't all me and um, I still don't know, you know, but . . . that it's not my fault.*

63. TH: *In fact, what stayed alive for you was your need for relationship. What became unbearably painful for you was the sense of living without relationship.*

64. CL: *Uhum. Yeah.*

65. TH: *You began to struggle, to figure out how to reconnect with people.*

At #63 the therapist once again interprets and acknowledges the client's commitment to the good of ordinary life, and particularly the idea that fulfillment requires relationships of a particular sort. The therapist theorizes that the client's difficulties stem from being frustrated in this fulfillment. In the following segment, the therapist marks the strong evaluation of failure (#67 & #69). The client appropriates and makes use of the term "failed," introduced by the therapist, to describe and evaluate the marriage (#70). The client again reaffirms the importance of the good of ordinary life (as a good central to her personal theory) as she laments the inability of herself, H, and others, with respect to its fulfillment (#66).

66. CL: *I feel sad that he's not enjoying life . . . (TH: Uhum) . . . and that . . . uh . . . that it . . . that it wasn't . . . I still feel sad that it, it's not what I thought it would be, you know. You know we're just another one of those groups of people who kinda came together and now we're going to drift apart.*

67. TH: *It's like it failed and that feels really.*

68. CL: *(interrupting) Yeah, that feels bad.*

69. TH: *(interrupting) Yeah, its a real loss that it failed.*

70. CL: *Yeah, cause I guess I have to admit to myself that marriage was important to me and that um, now that its failing, I feel like its a really big failure in my life.*

CHAPTER V

CONCLUDING COMMENTARY

My major purpose in this dissertation has been an attempt to render a clearer and more coherent account of the nature of the phenomena of interest to psychology. The interpretation I have offered situates the development of a theory of self at the core of human agency and the structuring of human psychology. I have conjectured that there are two interlocking dimensions (i.e., the intersubjective and the moral) necessary to the development and practice of selfhood. As well, in the third chapter I have discussed some of the implications of this ontology for psychological research. In this final chapter, I shall consider some additional implications of my transcendental interpretation, and description of psychotherapy as moral reflection, for academic psychology and the practice of psychotherapy.

I have described how conversation provides the medium through which a personal theory of self is imbibed and expressed, and through which psychotherapeutic change takes place. Further, I have indicated how moral goods and commitments, steeped in our memories and conversations, figure centrally in our strong evaluations, the production of personal theories and identities, and human intentional agency. Our intentional actions are shaped by the moral goods towards which we are oriented and, although moral goods often may be ensconced in our discourse, they nonetheless are always there, forming the background from which human agency arises. The conversational elaboration of episodic memories in psychotherapy serves the

articulation and examination of moral goods and commitments residing at the core of our personal theories. By illuminating this moral background, psychotherapeutic conversation can assist individuals to recognize, acknowledge, and come to grips with, what it is that is important to them.

Psychotherapy is moral reflection. The pressing issues and concerns in the domain of psychotherapeutic change are not efficiency and effectiveness, but rather, moral mattering. The concerns germane to psychotherapy are moral ones, questions of the good, questions of moral commitment and judgment, and the way these come to figure in our personal theories and interpretations of experience. From this perspective, any account of human psychology or psychotherapeutic change that elides this moral dimension will be a somewhat thin rendering. To borrow and append Harré's (1984) admonishment, in its failure to consider carefully the forceful and necessary impingement of the intersubjective, moral character of human life, psychology has spuriously exchanged causal orders for moral ones.

My analysis of psychotherapy reveals that enhancing or promoting a person's sense of autonomous well-being requires ironically enough, a bringing them "out of themselves" so to speak, out of their experience of isolation and inwardness. It is concerned with one's otherness and belongingness, with "re-collecting" and "re-remembering." The kind of psychotherapy that reverberates with a sovereign responsibility on the part of the therapized to determine what is the good for themselves, ironically not only affirms particular moral goods, but also, propounds goods that negate the experiential reality of the person seeking therapy.

The act of seeking therapy is somewhat of a denial of one's radical subjectivity. It is a rejection of the notions of an omnipotent, guiding inner essence and an autonomous disengagement through which one can determine on one's own what is the good. It is an acknowledgment of the fact that one cannot do it alone, that one lacks such "inner" resources. Therapy is an expression of the fundamental ontology of selfhood, that one belongs to and with others. It is admitting the need to partake in the dialogical space of shared goods from which the public and collective moral resources, the grammars of our form of life, can be appropriated. Further, therapy betrays an incapacity to be purely instrumental, an inability to take up or discard simply at will whatever moral goods and values suit one's immediate purposes. Moreover, it contradicts the idea that self-descriptions and strong evaluations are arbitrary or optional, that our understandings of what people are and can become are solely a matter of our making. This is because our self-descriptions and strong evaluations are not merely something that we create. They are also something that we find. Individuals sense a demand (i.e., of questions) not simply for making, but also for finding the right articulation of their concerns and their agentic empowerment. The reason why people seek therapy is that they understand the need "to get it right." Our self-understanding tells us that there is a getting it right and a getting it wrong, and whether or not we have done so. As Taylor (1989) alleges, we are a blending of finding and making.

Human agency depends upon an understanding of one's commitments to certain goods. All decisions, all intentional actions rest on this understanding embedded in our conversations and practical activities. As I

have mentioned, much of this background understanding of our engaged agency is inarticulate. The difficulty we may have in contacting this understanding, in articulating it, is why we may describe ourselves as having trouble "getting in touch with our feelings," or speak of such feelings as "deep." But this metaphor of depth misleads. There is no turn inward, no descent to a private inner depth from which to plumb a better account of ourselves. Rather, it is in turning to forms of public discourse, our conversations with others (e.g., in the context of psychotherapy), that one "ascends" to a more perspicuous account of such feelings. As Taylor (1989) contends, it is within the intersubjective condition of our being immersed in "webs of interlocution" (p. 39) that we find authenticity in our individual lives.

As Taylor states:

a common picture of the self, as (at least potentially and ideally) drawing its purposes, goals, and life-plans out of itself, seeking 'relationships' only insofar as they are 'fulfilling,' is largely based on ignoring our embedding in webs of interlocution. . . . It seems somehow easy to read the step to an independent stance as stepping altogether outside the transcendental condition of interlocution--or else as showing that we were never within it and only needed the courage to make clear our basic, ontological independence. Bringing out the transcendental condition is a way of heading this confusion off. And this allows the change to appear in its true light. We may sharply shift the balance in our definition of identity, dethrone the given, historic community as a pole of identity . . . But this doesn't

sever our dependence on webs of interlocution. It only changes the webs, and the nature of our dependence. (p. 39)

While self-interpretation, like all theoretical interpretation, is always underdetermined by experience, speech provides the vital medium in which we can articulate at least something of this experiential understanding. Speech has the power to make explicit, at least partially, what is already taking place in our practices. I contend that therapy is in the service of helping persons move, through articulation and expression, to a clearer interpretation of something they already understand implicitly. Therapy is about getting persons to make manifest something of the moral orientation imbued in their strong evaluations. This is accomplished by the sorts of discourse that enable persons to express what are initially inchoate moral intuitions and feelings about their concerns. Such intuitions and feelings are kinds of unarticulated moral understanding. They are the sense one has of one's engagement in agentic practices, of how one moves about in the world. Making sense of our lives is accomplished by giving reasons for these engagements and our feelings about them--our moral reactions. The attempt at articulation, and of giving reasons for feelings and understandings of concern, leads us to values, to strong evaluations. Strong evaluations are the setting for embedding moral goods in our practices. In this way, strong evaluations are the access to our moral topographies and, thus, my metaphor of therapy as a kind of moral reflection.

On the basis of Taylor's (1988a, 1989, 1991) account of what must be in place or what is conceivable for human intentional agency and experience, I believe that constitutive moral goods stand as a necessary condition. The

claim for the necessity of constitutive moral goods in the constitution of self and human agency is somewhat of an analytic one. By that, I am implying that constitutive moral goods are part of how persons and selves are to be defined. Nonetheless, there is a contingent element here with regard to the substantive character, the make-up of constitutive goods. Our expression and articulation of what we believe to be answers to our moral predicament are carried on in the public domain of conversation amongst others. Because our moral goods and commitments grant certain sorts of conversation, they are susceptible to interpretive scrutiny. I have put forward the view that a fundamental focus of psychological research ought to be the illumination of these moral aspects of our conversations and practices. Explorations of the moral aspects of ordinary and, in particular, psychotherapeutic discourse would seem to hold promise for a deeper understanding of the moral character of human psychology and the moral nature of the psychotherapeutic context.

However, elucidating, disclosing, and evaluating the moral tones of conversation is much less an empirical challenge than an hermeneutic one. Many psychologists may find this methodological turn a disconcerting prospect given psychology's long-standing preoccupation with and commitment to, strictly empirical kinds of research. Given this state of affairs, I would expect my advocacy for a more philosophical and "interpretive turn" (cf. Hiley, Bohman, & Shusterman, 1991) in psychology to meet with a great deal of resistance. Further, given the turbidity of interpretation, disagreements concerning articulations of the nature of the moral goods that steer our experiences, our intentional actions, and the character of our discourse, are inevitable. However, I contend that debate

and discussion concerning constitutive moral goods has an important place on the agenda of psychological study, and particularly the study of psychotherapy. Further, I believe that discourse analyses of the sort I have attempted in this project might provide a point of departure for scholarly discussions of such concerns. Most importantly, psychologists must face up to the moralities we advocate.

Psychologists should no longer feel secure behind the affectations of a scientific value-neutrality, denying the moral goods by which they actually abide. Taylor's (1989) account shows how the attempt to capture the grammars of human forms of life from a disengaged, absolute perspective, ignoring the modes and custom in which human beings themselves actually describe their lives and what has meaning for them, is found wanting. It neglects the moral marrow of the human aspiration towards meaning. We need to keep in view that selfhood is predicated on dealing with a space of moral questions to do with what and how one ought to be. Further, it glosses the fact that both natural and social science are not severed from human interpretation, but rather, are themselves a kind of practice grounded in our intersubjectivity and moral topography. Psychology can not furnish us, therefore, with an objective external standard that is somehow above human interpretation and that can be used as a warrant for disowning or disqualifying other of our equally profound concerns.

Psychologists and psychotherapists must recognize and consider the moral goods we endorse and, moreover, the consequences of our endorsements. As Taylor (1989) warns, the consequence of adopting an instrumental stance toward our feelings "divides us within" (p. 500) by

cleaving reason from the genuine sensibilities we have in our engaged agency. Reasoning is a practice that is rooted in our self-understanding. Touting a fetish for the completely autonomous social atom pursuing its own ends via radical subjectivity, "dissolves community and divides us from each other" (Taylor, 1989, p. 500). It leads to a climate of increasing fragmentation, invidious self-interest, and alienation. Skepticism about the defensibility of moral perspectives, like agnosticism about the self, bolsters a gratuitous relativism. It fosters a public atmosphere in which advocacy of a genuine moral preference, something found deeply felt, is cold-shouldered as a political faux pas. Authentic acknowledgment of our otherness, of respect for the ways a shared, moral sociality is reflected upon, transformed, and published for appropriation by others, is supplanted by a superficial tolerance for pluralism, wrought by the unreasonable demand to respect diversity and difference unconditionally (Taylor, 1992). But as Gutmann (1992) points out, respect is more discriminating than this sort of shallow tolerance. To respect difference requires recognition. It requires listening. It is not necessary to agree with a view to respect it. However, we should take genuine disagreement as indicating that there is indeed something there over which the disagreement is taking place. It points to what is there in common for us that merits our respect, that matters for us.

In concluding, I should like to return to the questions I posed in the beginning of this work regarding the status of self and in summarizing the debate between Charles Taylor and Richard Rorty. These questions might now be interpreted more clearly in light of what I take to be their moral significance. Simply put, such questions and the favored answers conjectured

by Taylor and Rorty are part and parcel to the intersubjective/conversational metamorphosis of moral self-interpretations and self-descriptions I have described. Self indeed strikes something. What it strikes, is that to which we are so finely attuned in our debates and disagreements. Self marks the necessarily intersubjective and moral nature of our knowing and our being. To borrow a term from Shotter (1975), it reveals our "second nature." However, continuing our quest for a better account of our condition (i.e., both intra- and extratherapeutically) by maintaining a narrow focus on what is taken to be the disengaged, autonomous, knowing individual will fail to illuminate this second nature. We are mosaics, not islands. Self is dispersed more broadly and more deeply than the majority of our psychological theories, methods, and therapeutic applications have tended to acknowledge.

NOTES

¹The points of contention between Rorty and Taylor also are summarized by Guignon (1990, 1991).

²In this admittedly cursory and overly simplistic preamble, I have relied heavily upon interpretations of the affinities in Wittgenstein's and Heidegger's ideas explicated by those such as Edwards (1990), Guignon (1990, 1993), Rorty (1979, 1991b), and Taylor (1987).

³I am indebted to David Hammond for a collective fashioning of the term "transcendental interpretation." I shall be discussing my purposes in using it in a subsequent chapter.

⁴Nonrealist accounts of morality can be seen in the works of some who would fall under the general rubric of social constructionism such as Harré (1984, 1987b), Gergen (1991, 1992), and Rorty (1989, 1991b). Harré and Gergen would see morality more specifically as the preservation of institutionalized social roles. There are also those such as Mackie (1977), Skinner (1971), and Wilson (1978), who come to a nonrealist account of morality by viewing it through the lenses of scientific naturalism. Mackie and Wilson subscribe to a projectivist position. While Skinner denies any interest in mental events, and probably would wish to avoid talking about projectivism, he rejects moral realism on scientific naturalist grounds.

⁵It is of interest to note that in the new edition (1993, 2nd edition) of Harré's Social Being, Harré explicitly is dismissive of the spiritual and religious solutions that have been tendered in response to the human

aspiration for meaning. Harré sees a less than significant place for these kinds of concern in the figuring of a theory of self. As Harré states:

There are many people who would insist on adding a fourth category of existence or mode of being to my list of three. For Christians, Muslims and Jews the fourth way of being is to be in relation to a personal God. Other religious stances to the universe require us to conceive of spiritual being in other ways. . . . To be fully human, from the point of view of the philosophical anthropology to the development of which my studies are directed, it is enough that we each have an intuition of ourselves as existing in the three mundane modes: social, personal and corporeal.

⁶Koch's claim that early psychologists did not begin with a conception of the subject matter is disputed by Danziger's (1990) work. According to Danziger, Wundt envisioned psychology to be founded upon Kantian theories of mind.

⁷These positions are based upon the idea that subject-related phenomena can be reduced and described in terms of neurophysiological states. See Bechtel (1988b) for a concise but clear explanation of these views.

⁸My interpretation of Kant's transcendental argument is derived in large part from accounts given by Guyer (1992), Holiday (1988), Sandel (1982), Solomon (1988), and Taylor (1978/79).

⁹Taylor (1985a) speaks about these features of language in terms of its expressivist dimension. Taylor distinguishes his expressivist account of

language from a designativist account (i.e., the representationalist view of language that limits its function to naming things).

¹⁰Other accounts that could be construed under the rubric of "relational" have been offered by Bhaskar (1989), Greenwood (1991), and Shotter (1984).

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