Character Education

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Abstract

Character education is both popular and controversial. A psychological approach to understanding its central constructs is proposed. We review philosophical conceptions of virtues and conclude that character education cannot be distinguished from rival approaches on the basis of a distinctive ethical theory. We review several educational issues, such as the manner in which the case is made for character education, the implications of broad conceptions of the field, whether character education is best defined by treatments or outcomes, and whether character education is best pursued with direct or indirect pedagogies, a debate that is placed into historical context. We note that character education requires robust models of character psychology, and review several new approaches that show promise. Six general approaches to character education are then considered. Integrative Ethical Education is described as a case study in order to illustrate theoretical, curricular and implementation issues. We summarize issues of implementation that are challenges to research and practice. We conclude with several challenges to character education, chief of which is the need to find a distinctive orientation in the context of positive youth development. Problem free is not fully-prepared, but fully-prepared is not morally complete.

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Character Education

I. Background to Character Education: Issues, Theories Controversies

The moral formation of children is one of the foundational goals of socialization. The ambitions that most parents have for their children naturally include the development of important moral dispositions. Most parents want to raise children to become persons of a certain kind, persons who possess traits that are desirable and praise-worthy, whose personalities are imbued with a strong ethical compass. Moreover, other socialization agents and institutions share this goal. The development of moral character is considered a traditional goal of formal education. It is a justification for the work of youth organizations, clubs and athletic teams. It is the object of homily and religious exhortation. It shows up in presidential speeches. It has preoccupied writers, educators, curriculum experts and cultural scolds. The number of titles published on character and its role in private and public life has increased dramatically over past decades. So have curricula for teaching the virtues in both schools and homes. Several prominent foundations have thrown their resources behind the cause, and professional meetings dedicated to character education are marked by significant commitment, energy and fervor. And in 2003 a new periodical, the *Journal of Research in Character Education*, was launched to bring focus to scholarly inquiry.

Yet for all the apparent consensus about the need to raise children of strong moral character, and for all the professional attention devoted to the cause it is a striking fact that character education occupies contested ground in American society. Indeed, the issues that surround character education are riven with such partisan rivalry that the very terms of reference seem to function like code words that betray certain ideological and political commitments. Whether one is for or against the character education movement is presumably a signal of whether one is a liberal or conservative; whether one is sympathetic towards traditional or progressive trends in education; whether one thinks the moral life is more a matter of cultivating excellence than submitting to obligation, or whether moral evaluation is mostly about agents than about acts; or whether one prefers the ethics of Aristotle and classical philosophy to that of Kant and the "Enlightenment Project."

This ideological division sometimes surfaces as a technical argument about pedagogy, for example, should one endorse direct or indirect methods of instruction. It shows up in how one conceives fundamental questions concerning, for example, the source of our moral values or the epistemological status of our moral claims. It shows up in our understanding of the very goals and purposes of education in liberal democratic polities; and in our understanding of what an ethical life consists of — what it means to be a moral agent, to possess virtue, and to live well the life that is good for one to live. It shows up, too, in the sort of developmental literatures, constructs and metaphors that one finds compelling.

There is a certain value, of course, in casting large, fundamental and deeply felt perspectives into such stark relief. It often is useful to draw sharp boundaries around contesting points of view in order to discern better their strengths and weaknesses. Yet Dewey (1938) warned of the folly of construing educational options in terms of Either/Or. In so doing, he argued, one runs the danger of advancing one's view only in reaction against the rival, which means that one's vision is controlled unwittingly by that which one struggles against. "There is always the danger in a new movement," he writes, "that in rejecting the aims and methods of that which it would supplant, it may develop its principles negatively rather than positively and constructively" (Dewey, 1938, p.20), with the result that it fails thereby to address "a comprehensive, constructive survey of actual needs, problems and possibilities" (Dewey, 1938, p. 8).

In this chapter we review the literature on character education but in a way that avoids, we hope, the dangers of Either/Or. It will be necessary, of course, to sketch the contours of the great debates that have characterized this field. Fortunately, however, there has emerged in recent years a literature that has attempted to bridge conceptual and ideological divide (e. g., Benninga, 1991a,b; Berkowitz & Oser, 1985; Nucci, 1989; Goodman & Lesnick, 2001; Ryan & Lickona, 1992a), or at least to face it squarely. Our search is for the *via media* that provides, in Dewey's words, the "comprehensive, constructive survey of actual needs, problems and possibilities."

We do not approach our task in complete neutrality. Our own view is that character education would profit from advances in other domains of psychological science (Lapsley & Narvaez, 2005). Indeed, character is a concept with little theoretical meaning in contemporary psychology, although it has been the source of ethical reflection since antiquity. An approach to character education that is deeply "psychologized" would look for insights about moral functioning in contemporary literatures of cognitive and developmental science, in the literatures of motivation, social cognition and personality. Of course, researchers in these areas rarely draw out the implications of their work for understanding the moral dimensions of personality and its formation. Yet it is our contention that a considered understanding of what is required for effective character education will be forthcoming only when there emerges a robust character psychology that is deeply informed by advances in developmental, cognitive and personality research. Moreover, effective character education will require deep integration with the educational psychology literatures that constitute the knowledge base for instructional best practice. In short, *character* education must be compatible with our best insights about psychological functioning; character *education* must be compatible with our best insights about teaching and learning (Lapsley & Power, 2005; Narvaez, 2005a).

In the next section we take up important preliminary issues that establish the context for our review. First, we attempt to understand the various ways in which character has been conceptualized. Second, we discuss what is at stake with these different conceptualizations for the various theoretical, philosophical, and educational perspectives that have taken up positions on the question of moral character. Third, we attempt to place this discussion within an historical context. As we will see, there is an enduring quality to much of the debate around character education. Fourth, we review recent research on moral personality that could serve as a basis for an integrated psychology of character. Following this discussion we review promising character education strategies, describe an integrated approach to ethical education, discuss various implementation issues that are common to character education, and outline possible futures for the field.

How is Character Defined?

Character is derived from a Greek word that means, "to mark" as on an engraving. One's character is an indelible mark of consistency and predictability. It denotes enduring dispositional tendencies in behavior. It points to something deeply rooted in personality, to its organizing principle that integrates behavior, attitudes and values. There have been numerous attempts to define character more precisely. It is a "body of active tendencies and interests" that makes one "open, ready, warm to certain aims and callous, cold, blind to others" (Dewey & Tufts, 1910, p. 256). It is made up of dispositions and habits which "patterns our actions in a relatively fixed way" (Nicgorski & Ellrod, 1992, p. 143). It refers to the good traits that are on regular display (Wynne & Ryan, 1997). Character is an individual's "general approach to the dilemmas and responsibilities of social life, a responsiveness to the world that is supported by emotional reactions to the distress of others, the acquisition of prosocial skills, knowledge of social conventions and construction of personal values" (Hay, Castle, Stimson & Davies, 1995, p.24). It includes the capacity for self-discipline and empathy (Etzioni, 1993). It allows ethical agents, as Baumrind (1999, p. 3) put it, "to plan their actions and implement their plans, to examine and choose among options, to eschew certain actions in favor of others, and to structure their lives by adopting congenial habits, attitudes and rules of conduct."

As one can see, defining character is no straightforward matter. Still, one can point to habits, traits and virtues as three concepts that are foundational to most traditional accounts of moral character. These concepts are interdependent and mutually implicative. Moral character, then, on this view, is a manifestation of certain personality *traits* called *virtues* that dispose one to *habitual* courses of action. Habits and traits carry a heavy semantic load in the history of psychology that complicates their being used in the context of character education with much conceptual clarity. Virtues is a notion derived from ethics but has very little traction in psychological science unless it is translated into terms like habits and traits that are themselves larded with conceptual implications that are controversial.

The Problem with Habits. According to a traditional view a habit is a disposition to respond to a situation in a certain way. Repeating a behavior or set of procedures over the course of socialization develops this disposition. But right behavior serves not only to establish habits; they are its consequence as well. Persons of good character behave well without much temptation to do otherwise (Bennett, 1980), nor is their right behavior a matter of much conscious deliberation —"they are good by force of habit" (Ryan & Lickona, 1992, p. 20). Habits are sometimes used as synonyms for virtues and vices, as in the claim that "character is the composite of our good habits, or virtues, and our bad habits, or vices" (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999, p. 9), and habits also stand in for the dispositional (or "trait") qualities of character as well.

The appeal of character educators to the role of habits in the moral life has important classical sources. In Book II of the *Nichomachean Ethics* (NE) Aristotle takes up the nature and definition of virtues. He argues that moral virtue is not a natural part of the human endowment but rather must come about as a result of habituation. We acquire virtues, on this account, by exercising them. We learn what virtue requires by acting virtuously. No one has the prospect of becoming good unless one practices the good. This would not be unlike the acquisition of the arts or of crafts. Just as individuals become "builders by building and harp players by playing the harp, so also, then, we become just by doing just actions, temperate by doing temperate actions, brave by doing brave actions." (Aristotle, NE, 1103b).

According to Steutel and Spiecker (2004; Narvaez & Lapsley, 2005) the Aristotelian notion of habituation is best understood as learning by doing with regular and consistent practice under the guidance and authority of a virtuous tutor. This is not unlike the cultivation of skills through coached practice, although the affinity of skills and virtues is controversial (Peters, 1981; Ryle, 1972). The habits that result from Aristotelian habituation are permanent or settled dispositions to do certain kinds of things on a regular basis but automatically without reflective choice, deliberation or planning (Steutel & Spiecker, 2004). In our view there is a way of understanding Aristotelian habits that is completely compatible with contemporary models of social cognition and cognitive science, including the requirement of automaticity (Lapsley & Narvaez, 2004). For example, Aristotelian habituation can be understood by reference to developing expertise and skill development, notions that underwrite an integrative approach to ethical education that we discuss later (Narvaez, 2005a).

However, retaining the language of habits comes at a cost. When the notion of habits is invoked in the present context what comes to mind is not classical ethical theory but rather a certain strand of behavioral learning theory whose core epistemological assumptions have long been challenged. It is linked with an epistemology that locates the developmental dynamic solely in the environment and not with the active child. It is linked with a mechanistic world view that understands the person to be reactive, passive in her own development, and shaped by external contingencies arranged by others. It suggests that learning takes place from the outside-*in,* where learning is the acquisition of a repertoire of conditioned responses -- habit family hierarchies -- that take little notice of the child's own initiative in transforming the learning environment in constructive acts of cognitive mediation.

Hence an unvarnished behavioral account of habits is belied by contemporary models of developmental science that emphasize the cognitive-constructive activity of the developing child who is in dynamic interaction with changing ecological contexts across the lifecourse. Consequently when the notion of habits is invoked to account for moral character it seems at odds with what is known about developmental processes and constructivist best practice in education (Kohn, 1997). Although invoking habits seems to keep faith with a certain understanding of character in the classical sources it also has made it more difficult for educators and researchers who reject the behaviorist paradigm to rally around the cause of character education with much enthusiasm (Nucci, 2001). This is unfortunate, in our view, because Aristotelian habits are not coterminous with the habits of behavioral theory. Aristotelian habituation is not coterminous with behavioral laws of learning that use the same term. Aristotelian perspectives contribute much of value to our current understanding of character and its formation, although an understanding adequate for psychological analysis will require translation into contemporary models of developmental and cognitive science.

The Problem with Traits. The language of traits also presents a

terminological challenge. The notion that the dispositional features of character are carried by a set of personality traits called *virtues* is both deeply entrenched and controversial. In one sense there is something completely obvious about trait language, at least in common parlance. Human personality is marked by important continuities. We are disposed to reach certain cognitive interpretations and judgments of events and to experience certain affective and behavioral responses in ways that are predictable and consistent, and these dispositional patterns we designate with the language of traits. We use trait terms to pick out the dispositional tendencies that serve as the basis for charting individual differences. Moreover, our differential valuation of these trait differences provides the basis for moral evaluation of persons. Some displays of individual differences warrant praise and encouragement, and we designate them virtues; others warrant condemnation and admonishment, and we designate those vices.

This view of traits typically comes with two additional assumptions. One is that traits denote stable behavioral patterns that are evident across situations. Another is that traits coalesce as a unity within the person of moral or vicious character. Both assumptions are problematic. The first assumption follows from a traditional understanding that traits-of-character generate dispositional tendencies that are on "regular display." They are adhesive, deeply constitutional aspects of our personality, thins that are engraved "on our essence" (Ryan and Bohlin,1999, p. 10) that bid us to respond to situations in ways typical of our character. Ryan and Bohlin's (1999, p. 9) example of character is instructive:

> If we have the virtue of honesty, for example, when we find someone's wallet on the pavement, we are characteristically disposed to track down its owner and return it. If we possess the bad habit, or vice, of dishonesty, again our path is clear: we pick it up, look to the right and left, and head for Tower Records or the Gap.

This example illustrates what we take to be the received view: dispositions are habits; some habits are good and carry the honorific title "virtues, other habits are bad and are designated vices, and habit possession clears the path to predictable and characteristic action. Indeed, a dispositional understanding of traits seems part of our folk theory of human personality, and would seem to translate into a straightforward goal for character education: see to it that children come to possess the virtues as demonstrable traits in their personality; see to it that children come to possess good habits.

Yet to say that moral dispositions coalesce in individuals as traits (or even as "habits") strikes many researchers as a peculiar thing to say. Indeed, in personality research the nomothetic trait approach has not fared well. This is because the cross-situational generality and consistency of trait behavior has not been demonstrated empirically, nor do trait models have much to say about how dispositions are affected by situational variability. As Mischel (1968, p. 177) put it, "individuals show far less cross-situational consistency in their behavior than has been assumed by trait-state theories. The more dissimilar the evoking situations, the less likely they are to produce similar or consistent responses from the same individual."

This is remarkably close to conclusions reached by Hartshorne and May (1928-1930) in their classic *Studies in the Nature of Character*, published in three volumes. In one "terse but explosive statement" (Chapman, 1977, p. 59) Hartshorne and May (1929, p. 379) concluded that the

> consistency with which he (*sic*) is honest or dishonest is a function of the situations in which he is placed so far as (1) these situations have common elements, (2) he has learned to be honest or dishonest in them, and (3) he has become aware of their honest or dishonest implications or consequences.

These studies indicated that the virtue of honesty is not an enduring habit marked indelibly on the essence of a child's character, nor is dishonesty a similarly enduring vice. Children cannot be sorted cleanly into behavioral types on the basis of presumptive traits, habits or dispositions. In these studies traits associated with moral character showed scant cross-situational stability and very pronounced situational variability, which is precisely the findings that later personality researchers would report for other traits.

The pessimistic conclusions of Hartshorne and May have been described variously as a “body blow” (Leming,1999, p. 34) or “death blow” (Power, Higgins & Kohlberg, 1989a, p. 127) to the cause of character education, and, indeed, are often cited by partisans of the cognitive developmental tradition as evidence of the poverty of the character approach (e.g., Kohlberg, 1987). Certainly these studies, along with Mischel’s (1990, 1999) analysis, seemed to cast doubt on the fundamental assumption of the received view of character traits. Consequently, the ostensible failure of traits in the study of personality made recourse to virtues an unappealing option for many researchers in moral psychology (Lapsley & Narvaez, 2004).

Still one should not draw the wrong conclusions from evidence that traits show significant situational variability. What is doubted is not the fact that personality shows important dispositional continuity, what is doubted is the implausible view that trait possession invariably trumps the contextual hand that one is dealt. The reality of cross-situational variability is not a failure of the dispositional approach to personality; it is a failure only of the received view of traits. There is, indeed, coherence to personality, but personality coherence cannot be reduced simply to mere stability of behavior across time and setting (Cervone & Shoda, 1999). Instead coherence is evident in the dynamic, reciprocal interaction among the dispositions, interests and potentialities of the agent and the changing contexts of learning, development and socialization. Person variables and contextual variables dynamically interact in complex ways, both are mutually implicated in behavior, and it is here, at the intersection of person and context, where one looks for a coherent behavioral signature (Mischel, Shoda & Mendoza-Denton, 2002; Mischel & Shoda, 1995; Shoda, Mischel & Wright, 1994).

The inextricable union of person and context is the lesson both of developmental contextualism (Lerner, 1991) and social cognitive approaches to personality (Mischel, 1999; Cervone & Shoda, 1999) and a robust character psychology will have much in common with these paradigms. Indeed, recent research already vindicates the promise of this perspective. For example, Kochanska’s research program shows that the development of conscience and internalization in early childhood requires a goodness-of-fit between styles of parental socialization and children’s dispositional temperament (Kochanska, 1993, 1997; Kochanska & Thompson, 1997). In one study toddlers (age 2-3 years) who were temperamentally fearful showed strong evidence of internalization when maternal discipline was mildly coercive, while toddlers who were temperamentally fearless profited from mother-child interactions that were mutually-cooperative, positive and responsive (Kochanska, 1995), a pattern that was longitudinally stable two years later (Kochanska, 1997). Other studies showed that the quality of the parent-child relationship, as reflected in attachment security, can itself moderate the relationship between parenting strategies and moral internalization (Kochanska, Aksan, Knaack, & Rhines, 2004), and that power assertion can have heterogeneous outcomes for moral behavior and moral cognition (Kochanska, Aksan & Nichols, 2003). Similarly, Eisenberg and her colleagues showed that a prosocial personality disposition emerges in early childhood and is consistent over time (Eisenberg, Guthrie, Cumberland, Murphy, Shepard, Zhou & Carlo, 2002), although the manifestation of the “altruistic personality” is mediated by individual differences in sympathy (Eisenberg, Guthrie, Murphy, Shepard, Cumberland & Carlo, 1999) and the demand characteristics of social contexts (Carlo, Eisenberg, Troyer, Witzer & Speer, 1991). Finally, Mischel and his colleagues showed that dispositional aggression in children is not, in fact, on regular display across settings but is observed typically when aggressive children are placed in settings of a certain kind, in settings, for example, where demands are placed on their sense of competence (Shoda, Mischel & Wright, 1993). In these examples evidence of dispositional coherence requires contextual specification.

A second assumption is that traits hang together to form a unitary consistency within a person. On this view the various virtues cohere in unified practice. One cannot adequately display courage unless one was also prudent; one cannot be just without temperance, one cannot display any one virtue without all the others. The unity of virtues is a notion that has classical sources, and it is at least implicitly assumed in many discussions about the role of character in public life. Carr (1991) points out that the unity-of-virtues perspective is simply the claim that “if a quality of character is a *genuine* virtue it is not *logically* inconsistent with any other real virtue,” and that virtues “form a unity because they stand in a certain direct relationship to the *truth* in human affairs” (p. 266). The unity of virtues is a logical possibility; it is an ideal aspiration of the virtuous life.

Still, there are doubts about the adequacy of the unity thesis on both ethical (MacIntyre, 1981; Kent, 1999) and psychological grounds. One is not so much concerned with whether the various virtues cohere as a logical possibility, but with whether the unity thesis satisfies a basic criterion of minimal psychological realism that it be a possibility for creatures like us (Flanagan, 1991). It is possible after all, given the exigent contingencies of human development, that not all good qualities are equally compatible, or that a good life lived well requires the full range of human excellence. Rather we become specialists in limited domains of application as a result of the particularities of our developmental experiences, the choices we make, and the environments we select. Our choices canalize the development of dispositions proper to our commitment and to our aspiration, while leaving others unselected, undeveloped, and unobserved in our behavioral repertoire. As a result certain character blindspots might well be the price one pays for cultivating excellence in other domains of one's life. It may even be the case that our virtues are made possible *just because* other aspects of our character have gone undeveloped.

The Problem with Virtues. The Character Education Manifesto (Ryan,& Bohlin, 1999, p. 190) asserts that the business of character education "is about developing virtues---good habits and dispositions which lead students to responsible and mature adulthood." We have seen that the appeal to habits and dispositions is not entirely satisfactory given the status of these notions in contemporary psychology. But talk about virtues is also fraught with difficulties. One problem for virtues is the specification of what it entails. How does one "fill out" a particular virtue? How should any virtue be manifested in concrete situations? Aristotle argued famously that virtue lies in the mean between excess and defect. Virtue aims for the intermediate of passions, appetites and actions: "to feel them at the right times, with reference to the right objects, towards the right people, with the right motive, and in the right ways, is what is both intermediate and best, and that is characteristic of virtue" (Aristotle, NE 1106b). Of course, it is a complication that some actions and passions have no mean, and many states of character have no name ---"Now most of these states also have no names, but we must try, as in other cases, to invent names ourselves"(Aristotle, NE 1108a). Kupperman (1999) points out that Aristotle's main point here is not moderation, as many assume, but judgment and flexible response to individual cases. The virtuous person does not follow habits or rules inflexibly but adapts conduct to particular circumstances.

Noddings (2002) noted that the specification of the content of virtue often derives from one's religion or philosophy. Take, for example, Lickona's (1991) view that character education must take a stand on whether it's a good idea for adolescents to masturbate, use condoms or engage in sexual activity—this is something "which is clearly wrong for students to do" (Lickona, 1991, p. 364). "The truth is," he writes, "that sexual activity by unmarried teenagers is harmful to them and harmful to society. The morally right value is for young people to avoid such activity" (p. 364). While this makes the content of virtue quite clear, and quite possibly correct, it does not entirely settle the matter, and one suspects that very different calculations of what is "clearly wrong" and "harmful to society" are possible given a different starting point.

Other times the moral basis for a specification of virtue is not entirely apparent. One account of the characteristics of a moral teacher suggests, for example, that teacher morality is made evident by small actions, such as "presenting well-planned, enthusiastically taught classes," not being petty, not gossiping, getting homework and test papers returned to students promptly, removing the wad of gum from the water fountain, planning a surprise birthday party for a fellow teacher, going the "extra mile" for a struggling student (Wynne & Ryan, 1997, p.123). Good student character is similarly reflected in small acts: being a member of the math team, tutoring, cleaning up the classroom, joining a sports team, serving as an aide or monitor. One should not minimize praiseworthy behavior or gainsay the value of small kindness and good deeds well-done, yet the present examples either under specify the content of moral virtue (insofar as these behaviors could be motivated not by a consideration of virtue but of duty and obligation) or else link it with such commonplaces that virtue is indistinguishable from any behavior that is simply well-regarded by others.

Most approaches to character education stress the importance of practical reasoning in the life of virtue (e.g., Ryan & Bohlin, 1999; Lickona, 1991). Knowing the good, sizing up the situation, gaining insight about how to apply or use moral rules, are the work of practical wisdom. Its importance to virtue is evident in Aristotle's (NE, 1107a) definition of virtue: "It is a state [of character] concerned with choice lying in a mean

relative to us, which is defined by reference to reason and in the way in which the person of practical wisdom would determine it." Moreover, Aristotle seems to acknowledge that the proper display of virtue would require keen attention to situational complexity, "to know the facts of the case, to see and understand what is morally relevant and to make decisions that are responsive to the exigencies of the case" (Sherman, 1999, p. 38). Or, as Aristotle (NE, 1109b) put it, "for nothing perceptible is easily defined, and since these circumstances of virtuous and vicious actions are particulars, the judgments about them *depend on perception"* (emphasis added).

So if virtues are habits, they must be habits of a certain kind. The kind of habituation proper to virtues is a critical facility; it includes learning how to discern, make distinctions, judge the particulars of the case, and make considered choices (but sometimes automatically). They are dispositions of interpretation (Rorty, 1988) that cognitive psychologists might conceptualize as schemas, prototypes or scripts whose accessibility and activation make possible the discriminative facility that allows one to act in ways appropriate to the situation (and whose functional readiness could approach automaticity).

The context specificity that attaches to the work of virtues would suggest that one goal of character education would be to help children sort through moral ambiguity by learning when and how to activate what virtue requires given the concrete requirements of a specific context (Noddings, 2002). Of course, what the concrete situation requires of us, say, by way of honesty might well conflict with the demands of compassion (for example), which means that no account of the virtues can be absent the lesson of developmental contextualism, which is that person and context interpenetrate in complex ways and cannot be separated. One must learn, during the course of character development, that the exercise of virtue requires contextual specification; it requires *triage* with respect to the dispositions required for particular settings, and an ordering of priorities for their expression given the requirements of the situation. The work of virtues is not unlike the work of any dispositional quality in that the coherence of moral character, its dispositional signature, is to be found at the intersection of person and context.

Philosophical Considerations

Bag-of-Virtues and Foundations. One suspects that there is deep ambivalence among theorists of character education to consider how virtue works in context for fear that it invites comparison to "situational ethics" and ethical relativism. This is a charge that character education has had to fend off ever since Kohlberg derisively characterized character education as the "bag of virtues" approach. For Kohlberg and the cognitive developmental tradition the study of moral development was a way to provide the psychological resources by which to defeat ethical relativism. In answer to the ethical relativist who claims that moral perspectives are incommensurable Kohlberg asserted Piaget's "doctrine of cognitive stages" (Kohlberg, 1969, p. 352) that provides a developmental criterion for assessing the adequacy of moral judgment. Moral judgments that approach the moral ideal represented by the final stage of moral reasoning were more adequate on both psychological and ethical grounds (Kohlberg, 1971, 1973). Moreover, justice reasoning at the highest stages made possible a set of operations that could generate consensus about hard case moral quandary. One defeats ethical relativism, then, by motivating justice reasoning to higher stages of development (Lapsley, 2005).

But Kohlberg's project left no room for traits, virtue or character, for two reasons. First, there was no sensible way to talk about virtues if they are conceptualized as traits-of-character. After all, the Hartshorne and May studies appeared to show that the psychological reality of traits could not be empirically confirmed (see also, Puka, 2004, for trenchant doubts about the reality of virtues) or else could not be relied upon to document dispositional consistency in moral behavior. Second, and perhaps more to the point, the language of traits did not provide what was wanted most, which was a way to defeat ethical relativism on psychological grounds. For Kohlberg any compilation of favored or approved virtues is completely arbitrary. It entails sampling from a "bag of virtues" until a suitable list is produced that has something for everyone. What's more, and worse, given Kohlberg's project, the meaning of virtue trait words is relative to particular communities, for, as Kohlberg and Mayer (1972) put it, one person's integrity is another person's stubbornness; one person's honesty in expressing true feelings is another person's insensitivity to the feelings of others. Not surprisingly, the character education movement uniformly

rejects the notion that character education gives comfort to ethical relativism. Indeed, as we will see shortly, the reconstruction of educational history favored by advocates of character education typically pins the blame for "youth disorder" on the ethical relativism promoted by other trends in American culture and education for which character education is the remedy.

If the problem of settings and context-specificity is taken up at all it takes the form of addressing the question of "whose values" are to be taught in the schools. But this is unproblematic for many character educators because, it is asserted, there are objective values universally agreed upon that schools should address with confidence (Lickona, 1991). One might, for example, appeal to natural law theory in order to "define morality in rational terms agreeable to all" (Lickona, 1991, p. 141). One might distinguish between universal core values that we all do agree upon (e.g., respect, responsibility, honesty, justice, caring) possibly because they meet certain canons of objectivity (e.g., Kant's categorical imperative or Kohlberg's "Piagetian" criteria of reversibility) and additional values that are unique to certain communities, such as the Amish, who might endorse, in addition to core values, such things as piety, simplicity and modesty (Davidson, 2005). Although the list of "common moral values" might differ among communities, there is, nonetheless, a "core" and a "large overlap in the content that emerges" (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999, p. 50).

Still, we think this debate has gone on long enough. The specter of ethical relativism has been a bogey haunting moral psychology and education for decades, but it has been a distraction, and it has distorted the work of both the cognitive developmental and character education paradigms. It has prevented the cognitive developmental tradition from considering the role of personality and selfhood in moral reasoning because these variables could not secure the autonomy of reason or the universality of judgments (Walker, 2002; Lapsley, 1996). It has distracted character education with worries about moral objectivity and foundations, and with the seeming necessity to show that it is just as sternly anti-relativist as the committed stage theorist. However, whether moral claims are universal or incommensurable, whether there is anything like objective moral facts that vouchsafe our moral convictions, are ethical-philosophical or theological issues that psychological research is ill equipped to address with its armamentarium of empirical tools (Blasi, 1990). The attempt to resolve philosophical problems with empirical data has been a big mistake, in our view, and has led to cramped and truncated research programs restricted by perceived philosophical restrictions and boundaries.

Carr (1991) suggested that much of the anxiety about foundations in moral education has got things the wrong way round. In his view we do not start with principles and then derive practices, rather the principles are induced from within the practices and experiences of our social life. The principles, in other words, are underwritten by practices, not practices by the principles. Practices are the " product of a fallible human attempt to understand the web of moral association by reference to consideration of…what sort of conduct conduce to good and ill, wellbeing and harm." (p. 4). One can reject the balm of foundationalism and still affirm that workable criteria of right and wrong, of good and evil, of virtue and vice, can be discovered "in the rough and tumble of human interpersonal relations and conduct"(p. 4). Virtues, then, are not foundational axioms or first principles; they are not

> hard and fast principles which may be applied to any conceivable circumstance but general patterns or tendencies of conduct which require reasonable and cautious adjustment to particular and changing circumstances and which may even, in some situations, compete with each other for preference and priority (p. 5).

And although different communities may well flesh-out the meaning of virtues (e.g., courage, or caring) in different ways, "it is hard to envisage a human community in which these qualities are not needed, recognized or held to be of any value at all" (Carr, 1991, p. 6;) given the affordances of our shared biological and social nature (see also, Nussbaum, 1988).

One appreciates in Carr's (1991) account of virtues and foundations the notion broached earlier that virtues, and traits generally, do not trump invariably the contextual hand one is dealt; that virtues must be contextually-specified and situationally-ordered; that virtues are socially implicated dispositions; and that the desired schedule of virtues, their meaning and mode of expression, are deeply embedded in the practices, customs and expectations of communities—and that none of this should give comfort to the ethical relativist (or else the issue of ethical relativism is

a different sort of conversation). This also suggests, as we will see later, that moral education can never be simply about the character of children without also addressing the context of education, that is to say, the culture, climate, structure and function of classrooms and schools (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005). Persons and contexts are inextricably linked and cannot be separated.

If Carr's (1991) view is correct that virtues are dispositional templates induced from social practices, whose meaning can be discovered in the "rough and tumble of human interpersonal relations" (p. 4), then one way to approach the problem of whether there are "core values" that overlap is to determine if such templates are evident in the way ordinary people think about character. That is, rather than nominate core values from some alleged objective standpoint, from natural law or the perspective of eternity; one might proceed inductively from the standpoint of individual informants. There have been recent attempts to address the matter empirically. Lapsley and Lasky (1999) provided evidence that conceptions of good character are organized as a cognitive prototype, and that this prototype has a significant influence on recognition memory and information-processing. In this study the "top ten" traits with the highest prototypicality ratings are honest, trustworthy, genuine, loving, dependable, loyal, trusting, friendly, respectful, caring.

Similarly, Walker (2004; Walker & Pitts, 1998) has pursued naturalistic studies of the prototype structure of a "highly moral person" and has identified clusters or themes that commonly show up in people's understanding of moral maturity. One cluster, for example, is a set of "principled-idealistic" commitments to strongly held values. Another includes themes of "fairness." Other clusters identify dependable-loyal, caring-trustworthy, and confident-agency themes. Although these attributes differ somewhat from the prototypic good character, as one might expect with different targets, it would appear that a common core of trait attributes for character and moral personality can be identified empirically

Character and Virtue Ethics. It is widely assumed that Kohlberg's cognitive developmental approach to moral education represents an instantiation of an ethical theory associated with Kant; whereas character education focuses on a different set of ethical concerns represented by Aristostelian virtue ethics. Indeed, Steutel and Carr (1999; Carr & Steutel, 1999; Steutel, 1997) argued that if character education is to be distinguished from other forms of moral education, such as Kohlberg's, it must be grounded by an explicit commitment to virtue ethics and not to other ethical theories. If character education is in fact committed to virtue ethics, what might that entail?

Watson (1990) suggested a useful tripartite division of ethical theory: the ethic of requirement (where the primary moral considerations concern rational judgments of obligation and duty and the moral appraisal of action), the ethic of consequences (various forms of utilitarianism) and the ethic of virtue. An ethics of virtue is distinguished from the others by its claim that the basic moral facts are facts about the quality of character (*arête*); that judgments about agents and their traits have explanatory primacy over judgements about duty, obligation and utility; and that deontic judgments about obligation and action appraisal are, in fact, derived from the appraisal of character and is ancillary to it. "On an ethics of virtue," he writes, "how it is best or right or proper to conduct oneself is explained in terms of how it is best for a human being to be" (Watson, 1990, p. 451).

Hence a virtue ethics has two features: (1) it makes a claim of explanatory primacy for aretaic judgments about character, agents and what is required for flourishing; and (2) it includes a theory about "how it is best or right or proper to conduct oneself" in light of what is known about human excellence. Surprisingly, neither feature has much resonance in character education. In most accounts of character education one cultivates virtues mostly to better fulfill one's obligation and duty (the ethics of requirement) or to prevent the rising tide of youth disorder (character utilitarianism or the ethics of consequences). Although one can conceive of virtues as providing action-guiding prescriptions just like deontological theory (Hursthouse, 2003) the point of virtues in most accounts of character education is to live up to the prescriptions derived from deontic considerations: to respect persons, fulfill one's duty to the self and to others, submit to the natural law. When the goal of character education is to help children "know the good" this typically means coming to learn the "cross-cultural composite of moral imperatives and ideals" (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999, p. 7). Rather than emphasize agent appraisal the animating goal of many character educators is appraisal of actions, for, as Wynne and Hess (1992, p. 31) put it, "character is conduct," and the best test of a "school's

moral efficiency" is, "pupils' day-to-day conduct, displayed through deeds and words" (Wynne 1991, p. 145).

It would appear, then, that character education and cognitive developmental moral education cannot be distinguished on the basis of the ethical theory that animates them. Character education, for all its appeal to virtues, seems to embrace the ethics of requirement just as surely as does moral stage theory, rather than an ethics of virtue. The most important moral facts for both paradigms are still facts about obligation, universal principles and duty. The most important object of evaluation for both paradigms is still action and conduct; it is still deciding the good thing to do rather than the sort of person to become. The fact that character education is so thoroughly deontological and utilitarian with so little in common with virtue ethics is not inherently problematical, although it does attenuate some hope that virtue ethics would open up a new front in moral psychology and education (Campbell, Christopher & Bickhard, 2002; Campbell & Christopher, 1996; Punzo, 1996).

Educational Considerations

Genre of Discontent. If character education cannot be distinguished from rival approaches in terms of its justifying ethical theory then perhaps its singularity is to be found elsewhere, say, in terms of its educational practices or in the way that it frames its educational mission. There does seem to be something quite distinctive about the way the case is made for character education, what has been called the *genre of discontent* (Lapsley & Power, 2005) and the *litany of alarm* (Arthur, 2003).

Typically the first move in "making the case" for character education is to review a long list of social ills that characterize children and adolescents in order to document the rising tide of youth disorder. Brooks and Goble (1997, p.6) point to youth crime, violence, drug addiction and "other forms of irresponsible behavior." Wynne & Hess (1992; also, Wynne & Ryan, 1997) review the statistics for homicide, suicide, out-of-wedlock births, premarital sex, illegal drug use, delinquency and crime rates, and plunging academic achievement test scores. Lickona (1991) notes the increase in violence and vandalism, stealing, cheating, disrespect, peer cruelty, bigotry, bad language, self-centeredness and use of illegal substances.

After cataloguing these trends there is an attempt to understand their source. Lickona's (1991) account is paradigmatic. Like other writers in this genre he draws attention to troubling evidence of cultural decline that is attributed to broad changes in American education. There was a time in the early days of the republic when children were instructed intentionally on matters of character by the exhortation, discipline and example of teachers, by the models of virtue encountered in the Bible and the McGuffey Reader, and elsewhere in the curriculum. Eventually, however, this "old-fashioned character education" was forced into retreat by a convergence of larger forces that undermined the confidence of schools in taking on their traditional moral educational responsibilities.

The influence of Darwin's theory, for example, led people to wonder if even moral sensibilities could be uprooted from fixed and static foundations and regarded as something changeable and evolutionary. Einstein's theory of relativity encouraged a kind of moral perspectivism that viewed moral claims as relative to a certain point of view. The Hartshorne and May studies highlighted the role of situations in moral behavior. And the general rise of logical positivism encouraged the view that the only sensible things to say were those amenable to publicly verifiable empirical demonstrations (as "facts"), while everything else ("values") was held to be subjective, personal and quite literally "non-*sense*" (see, e.g., Ayer, 1952).

These four trends, then, according to Lickona (1991), forced character education into retreat. "When much of society," he writes, "came to think of morality as being in flux [Darwin], relative to the individual [Einstein], situationally variable [Hartshorne and May] and essentially private [logical positivism], public schools retreated from their once central role as moral educator" (p. 8).

This reconstruction of history, and others like it, has been called the "cultural declinist" perspective (Nash, 1997) for perhaps the obvious reason that it sees an empirical relationship between the neglect or abandonment of intentional character education and the rise of disorder and immorality among young people. This way of making the case serves as a preface for three additional issues that we will consider here. The first issue

concerns whether the singularity of character education can be identified on the basis of the sort of problems that it attempts to address, or the manner in which it attempts to address them, or whether any conceivable intervention targeting problematic behavior would qualify as an instance of character education. Second, is character education identified by a commitment to direct or indirect methods of instruction? We will see that this debate is best understood in the context of much larger histories of teaching practice and of the idea of liberal education. Third, in what sense is the cultural declinist genre itself a recurring movement in educational history, and how can we understand its resurgence over the last two decades? An examination of the historiography of character education will show that there are recurring cycles of concern about character education during periods of rapid change, and that character education movements typically fail without well-attested models of self and personality.

Broad Character Education. When the case is made for character education by appealing to troubling social trends or to the epidemiology of adolescent risk behavior, there is an implication that any program that attempts to drive down these trends or ameliorate the incidence of risk behavior might reasonably fall under the broad umbrella of character education. If getting bad grades, cheating, dropping out of school, having sex, bearing children, using drugs, getting into fights, committing status offenses, breaking the law, attempting suicide, showing disrespect, being a bully ---if these are the mark of poor moral character, then programs designed to encourage school persistence, prevent teen pregnancy, discourage the use of drugs and alcohol, improve social skills and social problem-solving, increase resilience to social-affective problems, and the like, might qualify as moral character interventions. There is evidence for such a sweeping view of character education. In her study of the character education practices of 350 Blue Ribbon schools, Murphy (1998) reported a wide range of practices including self-esteem programs, general guidance counseling, drug education, citizenship, discipline and conflict management. However, in only 11% of schools was there explicit mention of any program called "character education."

Similarly, Berkowitz & Bier (2004) identified twelve recommended and eighteen promising practices in a review of what works in character education These practices covered a wide range of purposes, including problem-solving, health education, empathy, social skills and social competence training, conflict resolution, peace making, life skills training, developmental assets and positive youth development, among others. Although Berkowitz and Bier (2004a) concluded that these programs "work" they also noted that most of these programs do not use the term "character" to describe their intentions and objectives. Very few of them were designed with any notion of virtues, character or morality in mind, and were not described as instances of moral or character education. Nonetheless the success of these programs is claimed for character education just the same because their methods, outcomes and justifications are similar to what might be expected of character education programs. "After all," they write, "they are all school based endeavors designed to help foster the positive development of youth" (p. 5).

Of course by these criteria it is difficult to imagine what would *not* count as character education or be excluded from its purview. If character education is all of these things, and if the success of character education is parasitic on the success of any well-designed intervention or prevention program, then the singularity of character education as a distinctive educational objective or pedagogy, with unique curricular and programmatic features, appears to vanish.

It would seem paradoxical that the manner in which the case has been made for character education actually results in its disappearance as a distinctive educational objective in its own right. If the case is made on the basis of disturbing trends in the epidemiology of adolescent risk behavior, then it bids one to look for the success of character education in the diminution of this behavior. But then character education becomes any program that has a positive outcome with respect to adolescent risk behavior. It becomes a catalogue of psychosocial intervention, promotion and prevention programs whose objectives are framed by reference to an entirely different set of theoretical literatures that make no reference to morality, virtue or character. Moreover, there is little reason to appeal to character education, or use the language of moral valuation, to understand the etiology of risk behavior, or how best to prevent or ameliorate exposure to risk or promote resilience and adjustment.

The problem with the broad view, then, is that it does not point to anything distinctive about character education. Yet perhaps the problem of

singularity derives from the fact that all good causes in education, from social-emotional learning, positive youth development, risk reduction, psychosocial resilience, academic achievement and character education are driven effectively by a common set of school practices. Just as problem behaviors are interrelated and are predicted by a similar profile of risk factors, so too are adaptive and prosocial behaviors interrelated and linked to a common set of developmental factors and instructional practices. Indeed, Berkowitz and Bier (2004b) nominate the term "positive youth development" as the inclusive term to cover all of the program objectives, and suggest that these objectives are simply part of "good education" generally. The downside of this maneuver is that character education appears to lose its singular focus. But the loss of conceptual distinctiveness for character education is offset by the gain in instructional clarity for practitioners. The problem for the practitioner is less the problem of knowing which program "works" or of correctly labeling curricular and programmatic activities, but rather one of mastering the instructional best practices that are common to all of them (see also Howard, Dryden & Johnson, 1999, for a similar point with respect to promoting resilience)

Yet there is a case to be made for character education that has little need for troubling epidemiological trends. The case is made simply by pointing to the fact that moral considerations are immanent to the life of classrooms and schools; that teaching and learning are value-laden activities; that moral aims are intrinsic to education (Bryk, 1988; Goodlad, 1992; Hansen, 1993; Strike, 1996). The case is made by reference to the developmental objectives of schools; and to the role of schools in inculcating the skills proper to democratic citizenship and to full participation in the life of the community. The immanence of values and the inevitability of moral education is an argument almost always found in the character educator's brief, but mostly for countering the charge of indoctrination rather than for "making the case." Yet the immanence-and-inevitability thesis would seem to arm the character educator with all the resources that are needed to defend an intentional and transparent commitment to the moral formation of students. Moreover, the case that is made from this standpoint is a positive one; it makes reference to developmental purposes; to a conception of what it means to flourish; to the skills, dispositions and excellences that are required to live well, and competently, the life that is good for one to live in a democratic society. This is in contradistinction to the traditional argument that builds the case negatively by making character education just another prevention program; that views character education as a kind of prophylaxis or cultural defense against "youth disorder."

Direct and Indirect Methods. In an early essay Dewey (1908) laid down the markers of this debate. It "may be laid down as fundamental," he asserted, " that the influence of direct moral instruction, even at its very best, is *comparatively* slight in influence, when the whole field of moral growth through education is taken into account" (p. 4, emphasis in original). Rather, it is the "larger field of indirect and vital moral education, the development of character through all the agencies, instrumentalities and materials of school life" (p. 4) that is far more influential. This larger field of indirect education reproduces within the school the typical conditions of social life to be encountered without. "The only way to prepare for social life is to engage in social life," (Dewey, 1908, p. 15).

Moreover, this sort of moral education is possible only when the school itself becomes an "embryonic typical community" (p. 15). Indeed, for Dewey (1908), the school has no moral aim apart from participation in social life. The rules of school life must point to something larger, outside of itself, otherwise education becomes a mere "gymnastics exercise" that trains faculties that make no sense and have no moral significance just because they are disconnected from larger purposes. Absent these purposes moral education is pathological and formal. It is pathological when it is alert to wrong-doing but fails to cultivate positive service; when it stresses conformity to school routines that are arbitrary and conventional but lack inherent necessity. Moral training is formal when it emphasizes an *ad hoc* catalogue of habits that are "school duties" not "life duties." To the extent that the work of schools is disconnected from social life, then insistence upon these moral habits is "more or less unreal because the ideal to which they relate is not itself necessary" (p. 17). The moral habits of interest to Dewey concern an interest in community welfare, in perceiving what is necessary for social order and progress, and the skills necessary to execute principles of action. All school habits must be related to these "if they are to be animated by the breath of life" (p. 17).

Dewey (1908) was critical of a traditional pedagogy of exhortation, didactic instruction and drill. Such pedagogy fails to cultivate

a social spirit; it emphasizes individualistic motives, competition, comparative success, dispiriting social comparison; it encourages passive absorption; and emphasizes a preparation for life but in the remote future. It reduces moral instruction to simply teaching *about* virtues or in instilling certain attitudes about them. What is required instead is an approach to education that links school subjects to a social interest; that cultivates children's ability to discern, observe and comprehend social situations; that use methods that appeal to the "active constructive powers" of intelligence; that organizes the school along the lines of a genuine community; and selects curricular materials that gives children a consciousness of the world and what it will demand. Only if schools are prepared to take on these principles can it be said to be meet its basic ethical requirements.

Dewey's vision of moral education is sometimes called a "progressive" or "indirect" approach because it eschews traditional pedagogy that relies upon didactic instruction and direct transmission of moral content. Instead, indirect approaches emphasize the child's active construction of moral meaning through participation in democratic practices, cooperative groupings, social interaction and moral discussion (e.g., DeVries & Zan, 1994).

In contrast, the direct approach to instruction is widely associated with traditional character education (Benninga, 1991; Solomon et al., 2001). In a defense Ryan (1989) asserted that "character development is directive and sees the teacher in a more active role than does the cognitive developmental tradition" (p. 15). There is sympathy for what is called the Great Tradition that views the educational encounter as one of transmission from adults to children (Wynne & Ryan, 1997). For traditional character education morality is ready-made and good character requires submission to its preexisting norms. It is suspicious of indirect or constructivist approaches that seemingly allow adults to abdicate their role as moral teachers in favor of "consensual" democratic practices in schools. Such practices are anti-tradition because it seems to allow students to engage in "highly relativistic discussions about value laden issues" where alternative views might emerge with respect to such things as obedience, or the limits of loyalty to one's country (Wynne & Ryan, 1997, p. 35). It seems to let the kids decide what important values are, and naively assumes that children will choose well when given opportunities for self-direction. "Is it wise," writes Wynne (1991, p. 142), "to 'teach' pupils that basic moral principles and conventions generally accepted by responsible adults should be considered de novo, and possibly rejected, by each successive adolescent cohort? *Must each generation try to completely reinvent society*?" (emphasis added).

Mimesis and Transformation. The debate over direct and indirect methods of character education has a much longer history and, when properly considered, points to a middle way for practitioners. Jackson (1986) captures much of this history in his useful distinction between mimetic and transformative traditions of education. Both traditions are centuries old and describe a complex world view about the nature of teaching and learning. These traditions are at the nexus of partisan rivalry not simply because they articulate different perspectives on what constitutes proper teaching, but because they each comprise a different "form of life" (following Wittgenstein, 1968), a fact that raises the stakes considerably.

The mimetic tradition embraces a transmission model of teaching and learning. Knowledge is considered as something detachable (it can be preserved), second-hand (it first belongs to someone else before it is transmitted), reproducible (which facilitates its transmission). As such knowledge is presented to the learner, rather than discovered by the learner. It can be judged as right or wrong, correct or incorrect. The mimetic teacher is directive, expert in the substantive bodies of knowledge and in methodological competence. The student is novice, without knowledge of what teachers know, and hence the object of transmission. "In more epigrammatic terms, the slogan for this tradition might be: 'What the teacher knows, that shall the student come to know'" (Jackson, 1986, p. 119).

In contrast the transformative tradition intends a qualitative change in that which is deeply foundational in a person; in one's character, set of traits or other enduring aspects of one's psychological make-up. The goal of teachers in this tradition is to "bring about changes in their students (and possibly in themselves as well) that make them better persons, not simply more knowledgeable or more skillful, but better in the sense of being closer to what humans are capable of becoming---more virtuous, fuller participants in the evolving moral order" (Jackson, 1986, p. 127). And transformative teachers attempt to bring about these changes not through

dogmatic presentation of foundational texts, not by means of didactic instruction, but by discussion, argumentation, and demonstration. The transformative teacher, in other words, attempts to influence students by philosophical means. As Jackson (1986, p. 127) put it, “Armed only with the tools of reason the transformative teacher seeks to accomplish what can be attained in no other way.”

Oratorical and Philosophical Traditions. The distinction between direct and indirect character education can be framed historically not only by reference to (mimetic and transformative) traditions of teaching, but also by reference to the history of liberal education. According to Kimball (1986) the history of liberal education from the ancients to the present is the struggle between two distinct traditions that he termed “philosophical” and “oratorical.” Moreover, the value conflicts between these traditions has resulted in recurring cycles of educational reform as first one then the other tradition becomes ascendant.

The “philosophical” tradition is aligned historically with Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. It asserts that the pursuit of knowledge and truth is the highest good; that because truth is elusive and because there are many uncertainties one must cultivate the philosophical dispositions, be open minded, judge fairly, reason critically. In this tradition it is freedom of the intellect and diligent inquiry that is the goal and purpose of education.

The “oratorical” tradition is aligned historically with Isocrates and Cicero. It is committed to the public expression of what is known through classic texts and tradition. One becomes a virtuous citizen-orator by becoming acquainted with the wisdom evident in rhetoric and in the classics. If the philosophical tradition saw truth and goodness as something elusive and unsettled, as something not yet realized or achieved, but can be grasped only by the critical discernment of speculative reason, the oratorical tradition locates truth and goodness in the great texts and in past traditions. If the philosophical tradition conceives the search for truth as an act of discovery, it is an act of recovery for the oratorical tradition. If the philosophical tradition intends to equip individuals to face an uncertain future, the oratorical tradition intends to equip individuals with the certain and settled verities of the past.

Featherstone (1986) points out that the great strength of the philosophical tradition is its emphasis on the free exercise of reason in pursuit of the truth, but that its weakness as an educational philosophy is its silence on just what is to be taught. It urges one to seek the truth like a philosopher, but cannot say what it is with much certainty. It is strong on method, weak on content. This is where the oratorical tradition has an advantage. The educational point of the oratorical tradition is to master the content of traditional texts. In the oratorical tradition the task of education is to impart the truth, not to help students seek it (Featherstone, 1986). It is strong on content, weak on method.

It would seem, then, that the contemporary debate concerning direct and indirect methods reflects deeper and longer standing conflicts over the role of mimesis or transformation in teaching, or the relative value of preparing orators or philosophers in education. Yet it also seems clear that the modern expression of direct character education reveals a fundamental confusion about its sources, aims and traditions. For example, although direct character education intends to transform students’ character in the direction of virtue, it attempts to do so with teaching that is mimetic rather than transformative. Moreover, in spite of its frequent invocation of classical sources such as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, it is apparent that direct approaches to character education are not, in fact, the heirs of the philosophical tradition but of the oratorical tradition. Indeed, the direct approach is largely mimetic and oratorical, whereas the indirect approach is transformative and philosophical.

Of course it is not hard to see the middle way in this debate. There are occasions in teaching for both mimesis and transformation. We need both orators and philosophers. The best teachers are experts in pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1987) and are able therefore to use instructional methods appropriate for teaching specific content. The best approaches to character education flexibly balance the philosophical methods of inquiry, discussion and discernment with the oratorical respect for text and tradition; both direct and indirect approaches find a place in the curriculum (Benninga, 1991b). Lickona’s (1991a, b; 1992; 1997; Lickona & Davidson, 2004) integrated approach to character education is a good example. Although this approach has decided oratorical sympathies, and resorts to the genre of discontent to makes its case, there is also significant and welcome appreciation of the constructivist nature of learning and of the

necessity for transformative approaches to teaching. Alongside directive advocacy of certain value positions there is use of indirect strategies as well, including cooperative learning, conflict resolution, classroom democratic processes, moral discussion and reflection and the need to build a sense of moral community within the school.

Historical Lessons. We noted earlier that a "cultural declinist" reading of American history is commonly used to "make the case" for character education. And that the debate between traditionalists and progressives, between advocates of direct and indirect methods of character education, is just the contemporary manifestation of more fundamental conflicts concerning the nature of teaching (mimesis v. transformative) and of liberal education (oratorical v. philosophical) that have quite longstanding historical roots. But what of the history of character education itself? Chapman's (1977) observation summarizes a common theme. "It is curious to note," he writes, "how the concern for character seems to have been associated with time of rapid social change" (p. 65).

McClellan (1999) notes, for example, in his influential history of moral education, that the nineteenth-century ushered in a revolution in moral education that was motivated by massive social upheaval and the collapse of the old order brought about by urbanization, mobility and immigration. "Traditional sources of social order—stable hierarchical social structures, patterns of cultural and political deference, webs of extended kinships and tight-knit communities---weakened as images of control and orderly change gave way to visions of movement and opportunity" (McClellan, 1999, p. 15). The response was to urge early instruction of a common moral code, taught largely through a new genre of children's stories and by the suffusion of maxims and moral lessons throughout textbooks. Typical themes included the certainty of progress and the perfection of the United States, love of country, duty to parents, the importance of thrift, honesty, and hard-work for accumulation of property, among others.

In the early twentieth-century the demands of modernity further sundered the seamless weave of the community into largely disconnected sectors of home, employment, marketplace, church, recreation, each operating with seemingly different value systems. Schools were now required to prepare students to take up "a variety of roles across the differentiated spheres of a segmented social order" (McClellan, 1999, p. 47). Schools became complex institutions with varied purposes, only one of which was moral education.

Among character educators there was a sense that modernity presented important challenges to traditional values that could be mastered only by vigorous teaching of specific virtues and character traits, not just in school but in a variety of clubs and youth organizations that proliferated in the early twentieth century. Codes of conduct were promulgated and teachers were expected to use these codes to provide themes for instruction. Much like today these themes were exhibited in classroom posters and laws-of-the month. Citizenship and comportment grades were commonly taken as signs of character development. Moral education itself was directed largely to the problem of motivation and will rather than to reasoning. The problem was how to make moral conduct habitual rather than to teach ethical decision-making, a notion that has a familiar ring a century later.

The progressive alternative, as we have seen, rejected the emphasis on teaching particular virtues as being unsuited to help children meet the demands of a changing social order, and it rejected, too, the "direct" approaches to instruction as pedagogically ineffective. Instead it emphasized ethical sensitivity to the demands of changing society; the ability to make moral judgments; and the larger civic and political purposes of moral education as opposed to the traditional emphasis on private virtue and conduct. Hence, rather than focus on traditional texts the progressive alternative encouraged democratic decision-making, critical thinking and scientific inquiry as the methods best able to equip students to take up their obligations in modern society. These are the very terms of reference for the current debate concerning character education.

Indeed, Cunningham (2005) points to many common themes between the current popularity of character education and its predecessor movements earlier in the twentieth-century. He notes that many modern proponents of character education who ardently look back to the Great Tradition when traditional character education was allegedly pervasive, widely embraced and successfully implemented might be surprised to learn that the educational "tradition" of which they seek was not apparent to

contemporaries. Widespread anxiety about social disintegration was as common to the first decades of the twentieth-century as the latter decades. Both periods exhibited alarm at the sorry state of moral character among business leaders and politicians, as well as youth. Both periods saw evidence of cultural decline, loss of traditional values, and abandonment of foundational principles. Both periods saw the formation of character education lobbies, pressure groups and professional societies; both saw state action by legislatures to mandate character education in the schools; both saw the need for experiential or service learning; both saw the promulgation of widely divergent lists of urgently needed virtues, debates about direct and indirect methods, and the proper place of coercion and democratic practices in the schools. Moreover, the chasm between educators and researchers, between the ardent confidence of character educators in their favored curriculum and the skepticism of researchers about its efficacy, also has a long history (see also, Leming, 1997). Moreover, Cunningham (2005) argues that while the "rise" of traditional character education in the twentieth-century typically accompanied periods of great social ferment and rapid social change, when there were profound challenges to national identity and widespread anxiety about social cohesion and the unsettling forces of modernity, its "fall" is inevitable without an adequate character psychology to guide curricular development and instructional practice. "Unless psychology can provide a better model of human development," he writes, "character will continue to receive sporadic and faddish treatment and the public's common school will continue to be undermined" (Cunningham, 2005).

We return, then, to a central claim of this chapter which is that the conceptual grounding required for any minimally adequate character education must be found in robust models of character psychology (Cunningham, 2005; Lapsley & Power, 2005). Although ideological commitments are notoriously immune to influence, it is our view that consensual frameworks for addressing character education will be forthcoming when controversies are anchored to appropriate psychological literatures. In the next section we take note of relatively recent approaches to character psychology that provides new ways of conceptualizing the moral dimensions of personality.

New Approaches to Character Psychology

There are at least two new approaches that have emerged for conceptualizing moral character. One approach argues that a moral identity results when the self identifies with moral commitments or a moral point of view. A second approach conceptualizes character in terms of the expertise literatures of cognitive science and social cognitive approaches to personality. We briefly consider each approach in turn.

Identity, Exemplars and the Moral Self. One way to conceptualize character is in terms of moral identity. According to Blasi (1984, 1985, 1995), one has a moral identity to the extent that the self is organized around moral commitments. One has a moral identity when moral notions are central, important and essential to one's self-understanding. This yields a personality imbued with a deep, affective and motivational orientation towards morality. Blasi (1984) insists, however, that any account of the moral personality be grounded on the premise that rationality is the core of the moral life. To have a moral identity is to have good moral reasons for the identity-defining commitments that one makes.

Of course, not everyone has a self-concept that is constructed by reference to moral reasons. Some individuals organize self-related information around moral categories, others do not. Some individuals let moral notions penetrate to the core of what and who they are as persons; others have only a glancing acquaintance with moral notions but choose to define the self in other ways, by reference to other values and commitments (Walker, Pitts, Hennig & Matsuba, 1995). Even those who define the self in moral terms may do so in different ways, emphasizing different sets of moral priorities. In this way moral identity is a dimension of individual differences; it is foundational to the moral personality (Blasi, 1995). One has a moral identity when moral commitments are judged to be central, important and essential for one's self-understanding, and when one commits to live in such a way that one keeps faith with these identity-defining commitments. Indeed, not to act in accordance with one's identity is to put the integrity of the self at risk. Not to act with what is essential, important and central to one's self-understanding is to risk losing the self, a possibility that introduces a motivational property to the moral personality (Bergman, 2002; Blasi, 1999; Hardy & Carlo, in press).

Blasi (2005) recently proposed a psychological approach to moral

character that trades on these themes. According to this view moral character is best described not by reference to lower order virtues, such as honesty, generosity, humility, among numerous others, but by three sets of higher order virtues that include willpower (as self-control), integrity and moral desires.

Willpower as self-control is a toolbox of strategic and metacognitive skills that allow one to break down problems, set goals, focus attention, delay gratification, avoid distractions, and resist temptation. These virtues are necessary to deal with obstacles that we encounter invariably in the pursuit of long-range objectives. The cluster of integrity virtues connects our commitments to a sense of self and is responsible for feelings of responsibility and identity. Integrity is felt *as responsibility* when we constrain the self with intentional acts of self-control, effort, and determination in the pursuit of our moral desires; when we make the self conform to the moral law out of a felt sense of necessity and obligation; and when we hold the self accountable for the consequences of actions. Integrity is felt *as identity* when a person constructs the very meaning of the self by reference to moral categories. In this case living out one's moral commitments does not feel like a choice; living in ways that offend what is central and essential about oneself is unthinkable self-betrayal.

But the virtues of self-control and integrity do not have inherent moral significance. Both are morally neutral unless they are attached to moral desires. Both require a will that desires and tends towards the moral good. The language of moral desires is distinctive of Blasi's theoretical system, but "moral desires" is an expression he prefers to the closely related notion of moral motivation, and for three reasons. First, the expression connotes an intensity of affect that connects to traditional notions of character as that which gives direction to one's life. Second, insofar as moral desires clearly belong to a person, it is preferred over other psychological accounts that treat motivation as an impersonal regulatory system or in terms of cybernetic models of self-control. Third, the notion of desires aligns closely with Frankfurt's (1988) concept of will and his distinction between first- and second-order desires. A person certainly has (first-order) desires, but one can also reflect upon them, order them, and have desires about some of them (second-order desires). One has a will when one desires to implement and put into effective action that which is a first-order desire. Here one transforms impulses into something that is reflected upon from a greater psychological distance. The will is an intervention on oneself that turns a first-order impulse into something that can be rejected or accepted and on this foundation rests the possibility of a moral self if the distancing and appropriating is governed by a consideration of the moral good.

Blasi's approach to moral self-identity is associated with an important line of research on moral exemplars. Colby and Damon (1992) interviewed 23 individuals whose lives demonstrated exceptional moral commitment in such areas as civil rights, civil liberties, poverty and religious freedom, among others. Although the specific commitments of each exemplar was a unique adaptation to the situational challenges that each faced, one of the most important common characteristics of exemplars was the fact that moral goals were so closely aligned with personal goals. There was an identification of self with moral commitments. Moral goals were central to their self-understanding, to their sense of identity, to such a degree that moral choices were not seen as a burden but simply as a way to advance one's personal objectives. Exemplars also were characterized by a sense of certainty and clarity about what was right and wrong, of their own personal responsibility, and by a sense of optimism about how things would turn out.

A similar theme is evident in the research by Hart and his colleagues (Hart & Fegley, 1995; Hart, Yates, Fegley & Wilson, 1995; Hart, Atkins & Ford, 1998) who studied inner-city adolescents who had been nominated by community organizations for their uncommon prosocial commitment. In contrast to matched comparison adolescents, care exemplars more often included moral goals and moral traits in their self-descriptions; included ideal self representations and parental representations in their actual self descriptions; articulated a mature self-understanding whereby beliefs generated coherence among elements of the self; and perceived continuity of the self that extended from the remembered past into the projected future. Moral exemplars also have been reported to show advanced moral reasoning, more mature faith and identity development, and an affinity towards agreeableness (Matsuba & Walker, in press).

In a separate line of research Aquino and Reed (2002) designed an instrument that measures the degree to which having a moral identity is

important to one's self-conception. They assumed, following Blasi (1984, 1985), that moral identity varies in content and in the degree to which moral traits is central to one's self-understanding. They identified nine moral traits (caring, compassionate, fair, friendly, generous, helpful, hardworking, honest, kind) that individuals regard as characteristic of a moral person which then served as "salience induction stimuli" to activate a person's moral identity when rating the self-importance of these traits on their instrument. Factor analysis revealed two factors: a Symbolization factor (the degree to which the traits are reflected in one's public actions); and an Internalization factor (the degree to which traits are central to one's private self-concept).

Aquino and Reed (2002) showed that both dimensions predict the emergence of a spontaneous moral self-concept and self-reported volunteering, but that internalization showed the stronger relation to actual donating behavior and to moral reasoning. Subsequent research (Reed & Aquino, 2003) showed that individuals with a strong internalized moral identity report a stronger moral obligation to help and share resources with outgroups; to perceive the worthiness of coming to their aid; and to display a preferential option for outgroups in actual donating behavior. Hence individuals with internalized moral identity are more likely to expand the circle of moral regard to include out-group members. Moreover, moral identity is thought to mediate the relationship between deviant organizational norms and deviant behavior. If moral identity is highly salient in comparison to other identities within the self-system, then internalized moral identity is likely to inhibit the motivation to respond to deviant norms within the culture of organizations (Bennett, Aquino, Reed, & Thau, in press). The authors have employee behavior within business organizations in mind, but there is no reason to limit the identity-moderator hypothesis solely to this context.

Research on moral self-identity and on the qualities of individuals who demonstrate exceptional moral commitment is a promising avenue for character psychology, although the implications for character education are not clearly understood. One implication of Blasi's theory is that character education should encourage children and adolescents to develop the proper moral desires and master the virtues of self-control and integrity. But how is this possible? How do children develop self-control and a wholehearted commitment to moral integrity? There are intriguing clues about possible pathways to moral identity from research on the development of conscience in early childhood. For example, Kochanska and her colleagues (Kochanska, 2002; Kochanska et al., 2004; Kochanka, Aksan & Koenig, 1995) proposed a two-step model of emerging morality that begins with the quality of parent-child attachment. A secure, mutually-responsive relationship with caregivers characterized by shared, positive affect orients the child to be receptive to their influence and eager to comply with parental suggestions, standards and demands. This encourages wholehearted, willing, self-regulated and "committed" compliance on the part of the child to the norms, values and expectations of caregivers which, in turn, motivates moral internalization and the emergence of conscience. The model moves, then, from security of attachment to committed compliance to moral internalization. Moreover, the child's experience of eager, willing and committed compliance with parents' socialization agenda is presumed to influence the child's emerging internal representation of the self. "Children who have a strong history of committed compliance with the parent are likely gradually to come to view themselves as embracing the parent's values and rules. Such a moral self, in turn, comes to serve as the regulator of future moral conduct and, more generally, of early morality (Kochanska, 2002, p. 340). Indeed, children are more likely to regulate their conduct in ways that are consistent with their internal working model of the self.

This model of the emergence of conscience in early childhood suggests that the source of wholehearted commitment to moral considerations, and the cultivation of the proper moral desires characteristic of what Blasi requires of a moral personality, lies in the mutual positive affective relationship with socialization agents and the quality of the child's network of interpersonal relationships. The source of self-control, integrity and of moral desires is deeply relational. It is motivated by the sense of moral self-identity that emerges within a history of secure attachment. If true such a model underscores the importance of school bonding (Catalano, Haggerty, Oesterle, Fleming & Hawkins, 2004; Libby, 2004; Maddox & Prinz, 2003), caring school communities (Payne, Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 2003; Solomon, Watson, Battistich, Schaps & Delucchi, 1992) and attachment to teachers (Watson, 2003) as a basis for prosocial and moral development. For example, Payne et al. (2003) showed that schools that were organized and experienced as a caring community had higher

levels of student bonding to school and greater internalization of common norms and goals which, in turn, was related to less delinquency. Similarly, the Seattle Social Development Project has documented its theoretical claim that strong bonds of attachment and commitment to school and clear standards of behavior creates a press towards behavior consistent with these standards (Hawkins, Guo, Hill, Battin-Pearson & Abbott, 2001; Hawkins, Catalano, Kosterman & Hill, 1999). Evidence from the Child Development Project showed that elementary school children's sense of community leads them to adhere to the values that are most salient in the classroom (Solomon, Watson, Battistich, Schaps & Delucchi, 1996). Moreover, perceptions of moral atmosphere in high school promote prosocial and inhibit norms-transgressive behavior (Brugman, Podolskij, Heymans, Boom, Karabanova & Idobaeva, 2003; Power, Kohlberg & Higgins, 1989). These findings are quite close to Kochanska's model of early conscience development: secure attachment promotes committed compliance which leads to internalization of norms and standards. Hence there appears to be continuity in the mechanisms of socialization in both families and schools in early and middle childhood and adolescence.

The moral exemplar research holds out another goal for character education, which is to encourage the sort of prosocial commitment observed in care exemplars. This would certainly be a welcome alternative to the more typical understanding of character education as a risk-and-deficits prevention program. How do individuals come to align personal goals with moral ones, or come to identify the actual self with ideal representations? One mechanism suggested by Colby and Damon (1995) is social influence. In their view social influence plays a decisive role in transforming personal goals into important moral commitments. Social influence instigates moral development. It provides a context for reappraisal of one's current capabilities, guidance on how best to extend one's capabilities and the strategies required to pull it off. "For those who continually immerse themselves in moral concerns and in social networks absorbed by such concerns, goal transformation remains the central architect of progressive change throughout life" (Colby & Damon, 1995, p. 344). Other mechanisms include participation in voluntary organizations (Hart, Atkins & Ford, 1998; Flanagan, 2004), school attachment (Atkins, Hart & Donnely, 2004) and service learning opportunities more generally (Waterman, 1997; Youniss, McLellan, Su & Yates, 1999; Youniss, McLellan & Yates, 1997; Youniss & Yates, 1997).

These mechanisms may provide the means not just for the transformation of personal into moral goals, but it may provide also an opportunity for adolescents to experience other characteristics of moral exemplars, such as coming to see moral concerns with greater clarity, developing a greater sense of personal responsibility for the welfare of their communities, and a sense of optimism and efficacy that personal effort pays off and makes a difference. We will have more to say about community service and service learning. But if these mechanisms are critical to the formation of moral identity, then the challenge for character educators is one of how best to transform the culture of schools so that they become places where social networks are absorbed by moral concerns; where attachment to school is encouraged; where opportunities abound for broad participation in the sort of voluntary associations that predict prosocial engagement with the community.

Social Cognitive Models Cantor (1990) has written about the "having" and "doing" approaches to the study of personality. The "having" approach views personality as the sum of traits that one has. Personality is a matter of trait possession. In contrast, the social cognitive approach emphasizes the "doing" side of personality. It draws attention to what a person does in particular situations, and "what people do encompass not just motor acts, but what they do cognitively and affectively, including the constructs they generate, the projects they plan and pursue, and the self-regulatory effort they attempt in light of long term goals" (Mischel, 1990, p. 117). The personal constructs generated in concrete situations include schemas, scripts, prototypes, and other cognitive frameworks. These social cognitive units influence social perception but also serve to create and sustain patterns of individual differences. If schemas are readily primed and easily activated ("chronically accessible"), for example, then they direct our attention selectively to certain features of our experience at the expense of others. This selective framing disposes one to choose compatible or schema-relevant life tasks, goals or settings that are congruent with one's social perceptions. Repeated selection of schema-congruent tasks, goals and settings serves over time to canalize and sustain dispositional tendencies and to result in highly practiced behavioral routines that provide "a ready, sometimes automatically available plan of action in such life contexts" (Cantor, 1990, p. 738). According to Cantor (1990) this makes

one a “virtual expert” in highly-practiced regions of social experience demarcated by chronically accessible schemas, and allows schemas to function as the cognitive carriers of dispositions.

Lapsley and Narvaez (2004; Narvaez & Lapsley, 2005) have appealed to chronicity and expertise to account for moral character. They argued that a moral personality can be understood in terms of the accessibility of moral schemas for social information-processing. A moral person, a person who has a moral character or identity, is one for whom moral constructs are chronically accessible, where construct accessibility is a dimension of individual differences that emerges because of each person’s unique social developmental history (Bargh, Lombardi & Higgins, 1988). Indeed, “certain categories or constructs are primed so frequently by some individuals that they may endure within the individuals in a state of potential activation, ready to be primed by minimal cues in the situation” (Mischel, 1990, p. 119). These chronically accessible categories provide a dispositional preference or readiness to discern the moral dimensions of experience, as well as underwrite a discriminative facility in selecting situationally-appropriate behavior. Moreover, available constructs can be made accessible by situational priming as well as by chronicity, which combine in an additive fashion to influence social perception (Bargh, Bond, Lombardi & Tota, 1986). This supports the social cognitive view that dispositional coherence is to be found at the intersection of person (chronicity) and context (situational priming).

A social cognitive approach to moral character has a number of benefits. It provides an explanation for moral identity. For Blasi, one has a moral identity when moral notions are central, essential and important to one’s self-understanding. We would add that moral notions that are central, essential and important to self-understanding would also be chronically accessible for appraising the social landscape. The social cognitive approach also accounts for at least one characteristic of moral exemplars. As Colby and Damon (1992) have shown individuals who display extraordinary moral commitment rarely report engaging in an extensive decision-making process. Rather, they “just knew” what was required of them, automatically as it were, without recourse to elaborate and effortful cognitive exertion. This is also experienced by exemplars as a kind of moral clarity or as a felt conviction that one’s judgments are appropriate, justified and true. Yet this is precisely the outcome of preconscious activation of chronically accessible constructs that it induces strong feelings of certainty or conviction with respect to one’s social judgments (Bargh, 1989; Narvaez & Lapsley, 2005). Moreover, the automaticity of schema activation contributes to the tacit, implicit qualities often associated with Aristotelian and traditional understanding of the “habits” of moral character. To put it differently, the moral habits of virtue theory are social cognitive schemas whose chronic accessibility favors automatic activation.

One challenge for a social cognitive theory of moral character is to specify the developmental sources of moral chronicity. Indeed, most social cognitive approaches to personality are silent on the developmental trajectory that makes adult forms of social information processing possible. One speculation is that moral personality development is built on the foundation of generalized event representations, behavioral scripts and episodic memory that characterize early sociopersonality development (Kochanska & Thompson, 1997; Lapsley & Narvaez, 2004; Thompson, 1998). Event representations have been called the “basic building blocks of cognitive development” (Nelson & Gruendel, 1981, p. 131), and it is our contention that they are the foundation as well of emergent moral character. They are working models of how social routines unfold and of what one can expect of social experience. These prototypic knowledge structures are progressively elaborated in the early dialogues with caregivers who help children review, structure and consolidate memories in script-like fashion (Fivush, Kuebli & Chubb, 1992).

But the key characterological turn of significance for moral psychology is how these early social-cognitive units are transformed from episodic into autobiographical memory. Autobiographical memory is also a social construction elaborated by means of dialogue within a web of interlocution. Parental interrogatives (“What happened when you pushed your sister?” “Why did she cry?”, “What should you do next?”) help children organize events into personally relevant autobiographical memories which provide, as part of the self-narrative, action-guiding scripts (”I share with her” and “I say I’m sorry”) that become frequently practiced, over-learned, routine, habitual and automatic. These interrogatorives might also include moral character attributions so that the ideal or ought self becomes part of the child’s autobiographical narrative. In this way parents help children identify morally relevant features of their experience and

encourage the formation of social cognitive schemas that are chronically accessible (Lapsley & Narvaez, 2004). Moreover, as Kochanska's (2002) model suggests, there is every reason to suppose this developmental process is affected both by variations in the quality of the parent-child relationship and its goodness-of-fit. One implication of this account, and of Kochanska's research on the emergence of conscience, is that character education is not something that takes place initially in schools as a formal curriculum, but rather is embedded within the fabric of family life and early socialization experiences. In the next section we take up school- and community-based programs that are of significance to character education.

II. Approaches to Character Education

In this section we review promising or prominent school- and community-based approaches to character education. The range of programs that are claimed for character education is quite diverse and there are very many of them. Our intention here is not to review the full range of specific programs but rather to identify general categories of programs that make some claim for character education. Some of the programs that we review might also be considered examples of one or more of the Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education (Lickona, Schaps & Lewis, 2003) adopted by the Character Education Partnership (CEP). We begin our review by a consideration of these principles given their prominence among character educators.

The Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education

The Character Education Partnership is a coalition of organizations and individuals dedicated to helping schools develop moral and character education programs. Many school districts embrace approaches to character education that are guided by principles developed by the CEP. The first principle asserts that good character is built on the foundation of core ethical values, such as caring, honesty, fairness, responsibility and respect. Sometimes core values (alternatively, traits, virtues) are selected by school districts after broad consultation with the community. More often the core values are those endorsed by national advocacy organizations, such as the six "pillars" of character (trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, citizenship) articulated by the Aspen Declaration and the Character Counts movement. What is critical is that the values selected for character education be universally valid, promote the common good, affirm human dignity, contribute to the welfare of the individual, deal with issues of right and wrong, facilitate democratic practices.

Accordingly, programs should teach core values holistically with cognitive, affective and behavioral components (Principle 2), and in a way that engages school personnel in an intentional, proactive and comprehensive way (Principle 3). It is particularly important to create caring school communities (Principle 4) and to provide students with opportunities to engage in moral action, such as service learning and community service (Principle 5). Effective character education does not neglect rigorous, challenging academic curriculum (Principle 6). It fosters intrinsic motivation to do the right thing by building a climate of trust and respect; by encouraging a sense of autonomy; and by building shared norms through dialogue, class meetings and democratic decision-making (Principle 7). Moreover, the core values that animate student life should engage the school staff as well (Principle 8). Furthermore for character education to take root it must result in shared educational leadership that makes provision for long-term support of the initiative (Principle 9); it must engage families and community stakeholders (Principle 10); and be committed to on-going assessment and evaluation (Principle 11).

This remarkable set of principles provides a useful guidepost for the design and implementation of intentional, programmatic and comprehensive character education. It insists that ethical considerations be the transparent rationale for programmatic activities and, on this basis (e.g., Principle 3), would not support efforts to broaden the definition of character education to include all manner of prevention and intervention programs absent an explicit, intentional concern for moral development. It endorses a set of well-attested pedagogical strategies that are considered educational best practice, including cooperative learning, democratic classrooms, and constructivist approaches to teaching and learning. It endorses practices that cultivate autonomy, intrinsic motivation and community engagement (Beland, 2003). Indeed, the CEP *Principles* look more like the blueprint for progressive education, and would seem to settle the historical debate concerning direct and indirect approaches to character education in favor of

the latter paradigm.

Yet the *Principles* are not without its discontents. Principle 1 insists on core values that are foundational, objectively true, universally valid, immanent to human dignity, crucial to democratic practice, yet its elision over familiar anxieties about the source and selection of favored values gives one pause. This insistence that character education first be grounded on objectively valid core values is, in our view, a misleading and unnecessary distraction. It is misleading because it assumes that practices are derived from principles rather than the other way around (see e.g., Carr, 1991). It is distraction because it forces educators to defend a transparent and intentional approach to the moral formation of children on grounds other than on its immanence-and-inevitability.

Moreover, the first principle smuggles a premise into character education, e.g., core values are objectively true, foundational and universally valid, that is itself a deeply contentious matter for epistemology and ethics, and attempts to settle an argument about ethical relativism that it is ill-equipped to address except by dogmatic assertion. The necessity, inevitability and desirability of character education does not hinge on the outcome of this argument. Indeed, to suggest that it does is to repeat the mistake on the educational front that the cognitive developmental tradition commits on the psychological front. Just as Kohlberg attempted to use stage theory to provide the psychological resources to defeat ethical relativism, so too does the first principle of character education attempt to take up arms against the bogey of relativism on the educational front.

Although the *Principles* call for comprehensive infusion of ethical concerns throughout the curriculum and in all facets of school life, and although the *Eleven Principles Sourcebook* (Beland, 2003) encourages a variety of pedagogical strategies that are compatible with best instructional practice, we observe that not much of contemporary character education gets past the first principle, or else reduces character education to simply teaching *about* values and the *meaning* of trait words. The broad school reform and commitment to best practice required by the remaining principles is too often neglected in favor of fussing over the meaning of words denoting core values (leaving aside the problem of how one "fills-in" the meaning of these words). The hard work of character education is not *learning about* core value words but rather *learning to* engage the range of developmental and educational experiences countenanced by the remaining principles.

Although there is value in a first principle that requires educators to make explicit the moral implications of school practices, it would be far better, in our view, if CEP's first principle articulated a commitment to a distinctly virtue-centered approach to education that gave primacy to aretaic concerns about agents and flourishing rather than Kantian concerns about universality and objectivity. What is required as a first principle is not a disguised stance on the epistemological status of "values" ---that certain of them are foundational, universal and objectively valid--- but rather a statement that makes explicit the ethical commitments immanent to educational practices endorsed in the remaining principles. The goal of character education, in other words, is less about enlisting children in the battle against ethical relativism, and more about equipping them with the moral dispositions and skills required for effective citizenship in a liberal democracy.

A Conceptual Framework We think there is a better way to "make the case" for character education that has little to do with taking a stance on the question of ethical foundations. The conceptual framework for character education is adequately anticipated by a commitment to a developmental systems orientation. A developmental systems approach to character education draws attention to embedded and overlapping systems of influence that exist at multiple levels; to the fact that dispositional coherence is a joint product of personal and contextual factors that are in dynamic interaction across the lifecourse. As Masten (2003, p. 172) put it, "Dynamic multisystem models of human learning, development and psychopathology are transforming science, practice and policies concerned with the health, success and wellbeing of children and the adult citizens of society they will become." A credible character education must resemble dynamic multisystems models of development and be located within contemporary theoretical and empirical frameworks of developmental science if it is going to understand adequately the mechanisms of change, plasticity, prevention, resilience and the very conditions and possibilities of what it means to flourish---to live well the life that is good for one to live.

Moreover, a developmental systems perspective already

underwrites more specific approaches to youth development. For example, Lerner and his colleagues (Lerner, Dowling & Anderson,2003; Lerner, Fisher & Weinberg, 2000) make the case for "thriving" as basis for understanding the role of adaptive person-context relations in human development. "An integrated moral and civic identity," they write, "and a commitment to society beyond the limits of one's own existence enables thriving youth to be agents both in their own healthy development and in the positive enhancement of other people and of society (Lerner et al., 2003, p. 172). Indeed thriving and character education point toward the same end, as do other notions derived from developmental contextualism, such as developmental assets, resilience and positive youth development. Moreover, developmental contextualism provides not only a basis for understanding the dispositional qualities of personality ("character"), but it also provides a vision of what it means to flourish (e.g., thriving and positive development). These developmental considerations already carry the conceptual load for understanding constructs that are crucial to broad conceptualizations of character education, and would hence serve much better as a first principle of character education than the CEP's current emphasis on foundational core values.

Educating for Character. Lickona (2004, 1997, 1991a,b) has developed an integrative approach to character education that is largely congruent with CEP principles. Along with a commitment to core values he also advocates a variety of strategies that are broadly compatible with instructional best practice for elementary (Lickona, 1992) and high schools (Lickona & Davidson, 2004). A distinction is drawn between two aspects of character: performance character and moral character. Performance character is oriented towards mastery of tasks and includes such qualities as diligence, perseverance, a positive attitude, a commitment to hard work. Performance character is what is required in order to develop talents, skills and competencies. Moral character, in turn, is a relational orientation that is concerned with qualities of integrity, caring, justice, respect and cooperation. It is an ethical compass that guides the pursuit and expression of performance character. If performance character makes it possible to live a productive life, moral character is required to live an ethical life (Lickona & Davidson, 2004). Effective education should aim to develop both aspects of character.

Lickona & Davidson (2004) recently articulated seven principles of schools that effectively address elements of moral and performance character. These schools (1) make the development of character the cornerstone of the schools mission and identity; (2) cultivate an ethical learning community that includes staff, students and parents who share responsibility for advancing the school's character education mission; (3) encourage the professional staff to form a professional ethical learning community to foster collaboration and mutual support in advancing the ethical dimensions of teaching and student development; (4) align all school practices, including curriculum, discipline and extracurricular activities, with the goals of performance excellence and moral excellence; (5) use evaluation data to monitor progress in development o strengths of character and to guide decision-making with respect to educational practices; (6) integrate ethical material into the curriculum while encouraging life-long learning and a career orientation; (7) treat classroom and school-wide discipline as opportunities to support the ethical learning community by emphasizing the importance of caring, accountability, shared ownership of rules and a commitment to restitution.

One salutary feature of this framework is that it urges schools to understand their educative mission in terms of a moral framework. A second salutary feature is that many of its instructional strategies are informed by the research literatures of developmental and educational psychology. It promotes for example, instructional practices that encourage mastery motivation, metacognitive instruction, cooperative learning. It sanctions constructivist strategies that embrace the active participation of students in learning. It advocates strategies (e.g., dilemma discussion, just community) more commonly associated with development moral education. Indeed, many of the suggested practices that attempt to link home and school, influence school culture, involve community stakeholders, or capitalize on the unique developmental needs of students, could be underwritten by a developmental systems orientation.

Caring School Communities

The fourth of the CEP's Principles of Effective Character Education states that "Effective character education creates a caring school community.' There is a strong consensus that effective character education must include efforts to promote "communities of caring" within classrooms

and schools (Battistich, Solomon, Watson & Schaps, 1997; Berkowitz & Bier, 2005). A school climate that encourages social and emotional bonding and promotes positive interpersonal experiences is one that provides the minimum necessary grounding for the formation of character (Schaps, Battistich & Solomon, 1997). Indeed, as Berkowitz (2002, p. 58-59) put it, "Relationships are critical to character education, so character education must focus on the quality of relationships at school."

Research has shown, for example, that the quality of early teacher-student relationships can have a strong influence on academic and social outcomes that persist through eighth-grade (Hamre & Pianta, 2001). Moreover, in schools where there is a strong perception of communal organization there is less student misconduct (Bryk & Driscoll, 1988) and lower rates of drug use and delinquency (Battistich & Hom, 1999). Student attachment or bonding to school also improves school motivation (Goodenow, 1993) and counterindicates delinquency (Welsh, Greene & Jenkins, 1991) and victimization of teachers and students (Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 1995). In a study of a nationally representative sample of 254 high schools Payne et al (2003) found a connection between communal organization and student bonding to school. Schools characterized by communal organization, that is, by mutually supportive relationships among teachers, administrators and students, a commitment to common goals and norms, and a sense of collaboration, tend to have students who report an attachment to school (an emotional bond to teachers or school and a sense of belonging), a belief in the legitimacy of rules and norms, and a high value placed on school work. Moreover, bonding to school was related, in turn, to lower levels of student misconduct and victimization. Payne et al (2003, p. 773) suggested that by "improving the relationships among school members, the collaboration and participation of these members and the agreement on common goals and norms, schools could increase students' attachment to school, commitment to education and belief in school rules and norms," and thereby reduce misconduct, delinquency and victimization.

The work of two research teams, the Social Development Research Group at the University of Washington, and the Child Development Project of the Developmental Studies Center, has provided particularly impressive evidence on the role of school bonding and caring school communities for a range of outcomes of interest to character educators.

Social Development Research Group. This group launched the Seattle Social Development Project (SSDP) in 1981 in 8 Seattle public elementary schools. The project initially provided an intervention to first-grade pupils, but the program expanded by 1985 to include all 5th-grade students in 18 elementary schools, with additional intervention components that targeted parents and teachers as well. The longitudinal assessments of participants continued throughout adolescence and subsequently every three years after graduation until age 27. The SSDP was guided by a social development model that assumes that behavior is learned within social environments. One becomes socialized within the norms of a social group to the extent that (1) one perceives opportunities for involvement, (2) becomes actually involved, (3) has the skill for involvement and interaction, and (4) perceives that it is rewarding to do so. When socialization goes well a social bond of attachment and commitment is formed. This social bond, in turn, orients the child to the norms and expectations of the group to which one is attached and to the values endorsed by the group. "It is hypothesized that the behavior of the individual would be prosocial or antisocial depending on the predominant behaviors, norms and values held by those individuals and institutions to which/whom the individual bonded" (Catalano, Haggerty et al., 2004, p. 251).

The SSDP included interventions that targeted three primary socialization agents of school-age children: teachers, parents and peers. Teachers were given training in proactive classroom management, interactive teaching to motivate learners, and cooperative learning. The intervention for children targeted social and emotional skill development, including interpersonal cognitive problem-solving skills and refusal skills. Parental training targeted behavior management, how to give academic support and skills to reduce risks for drug use.

Research showed that training teachers to use targeted teaching practices was successful in promoting both school bonding and academic achievement (Abbott, O'Donnell, Hawkins, Hill, Kosterman & Catalano, 1998). Moreover, the SSDP demonstrated long-term positive effects on numerous adolescent health-risk behaviors (e.g., violent delinquency, heavy drinking, sexual intercourse, having multiple sex partners, pregnancy and school misconduct) and on school bonding (Hawkins et al., 1999, 2001).

For example, school bonding at 12th-grade, and increases in school bonding between 7th- to 12th-grade, was negatively correlated with use of alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana and other drug use at 12th-grade. Students bonded to school at 5th and 6th-grade were less likely to become minor or major offenders in middle school. Students with lower sense of school attachment and commitment were twice as likely to join gangs as were students with a stronger sense of school bonding. Moreover school bonding also had positive academic outcomes. For example, an increase in school bonding between 7th- and 12th-grade was associated with higher GPA and lower student misconduct at 12th-grade. Students with greater bonding to school at 8th-grade were less likely to drop out of school by 10th-grade (see Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak & Hawkins, 2004, for a review).

Hence the intensive, multi-component interventions of the SSDP had clear effects on school bonding and on a range of outcomes of traditional interest to character educators, including substance use, delinquency, gang membership, violence, academic problems and sexual activity. But is this character education? It depends on whether character education is defined by treatment or by outcomes. The SSPD has generated empirical outcomes that are claimed for character education broadly defined, although the SSPD "treatment" is guided by the theoretical considerations of the social development model and not of virtue, morality or character. Still, if character education is to be considered a treatment or intervention in its own right then it must possess the characteristics of successful interventions like the SSDP. It must be guided by explicit theory. It must be comprehensive. It must involve multiple components, be initiated early in development and sustained over time.

Developmental Studies Center The Developmental Studies Center (DSC) has been particularly influential in documenting the crucial role that children's sense of community plays in promoting a wide-range of outcomes commonly associated with character education, including altruistic, cooperative and helping behavior, concern for others, prosocial conflict resolution, and trust in and respect for teachers (Solomon, Watson, Delucchi, Schaps & Battistich, 1988; Watson, Battistich & Solomon, 1998). The research agenda of the DSC assumed that children have basic needs for belonging, autonomy and competence and that their engagement with school depends upon whether these needs are adequately met (Battistich, Solomon, Watson & Schaps, 1997). It was assumed further that "when children's needs are met through membership in a school community, they are likely to become affectively bonded with and committed to the school, and therefore inclined to identify with and behave in accordance with its expressed goals and values" (Schaps, Battistich & Solomon, 1997, p. 127

In 1982 the DSC initiated the Child Development Project (CDP) in three program schools in suburban San Francisco to examine these core assumptions. It was first implemented by teachers in kindergarten, with one grade level added each year until 1989. Program evaluation followed the cohort annually from kindergarten to sixth grade, with a two-year follow-up assessment when the program cohort was in eighth grade. The evaluation also included students and teachers from three demographically similar comparison schools.

The programmatic focus of the CDP was designed to enhance prosocial development by creating the condition for a caring school community (Battistich et al., 1997). A sense of community was encouraged through activities such as collaborating on common academic goals; providing and receiving help from others; discussion and reflection upon the experiences of self and others as it relates to prosocial values such as fairness, social responsibility and justice; practicing social competencies; and exercising autonomy by participating in decisions about classroom life and taking responsibility for it. Moreover the CDP encouraged an approach to classroom management that emphasized induction and developmental discipline (Watson, 2003).

Hence the CDP provided numerous opportunities for children to collaborate with others in the pursuit of common goals, to give and receive help, to discuss and reflect upon prosocial values, to develop and practice prosocial skills, to exercise autonomy through democratic classroom structures. Research studies of CDP implementations indicate that in comparison to control schools, students make positive gains in targeted areas. Using classroom observations, individual interviews and student questionnaires, program students exhibited more prosocial behavior in the classroom (Solomon, et al. 1988), more democratic values and interpersonal understanding (Solomon, Watson, Schaps, Battistich, & Solomon, 1990), social problem-solving and conflict resolution skills (Battistich, Solomon, Watson, Solomon, & Schaps, 1989). Students in CDP schools were more

likely to view their classrooms as communities which led them to adhere to whatever norms and values were salient in the classroom. For example, in classrooms that emphasized teacher control and student compliance, student reasoning about prosocial dilemmas was oriented toward heteronomy and reward-and-punishment. In contrast, in classrooms that emphasized student participation, autonomy, democratic decision-making and interpersonal concerns, student prosocial reasoning emphasized autonomy and other-oriented moral reasoning (Solomon et al 1992; 1996). When program and control students entered the same intermediate school, former program students were rated higher by teachers at 8th-grade in conflict resolution skills, self-esteem, assertion and popularity (Solomon et al., 2002).

The most important variable positively influenced by participation in CDP programs is students' sense of community which is promoted through structures of the classroom and school (Solomon et al, 1997). For example, teachers who hold class meetings, use cooperative learning strategies, and discuss prosocial values are more likely to foster a sense of community in students. Schools that provide cross-age buddies, homework that links school and family, and school-wide projects also promote a sense of community. Student sense of community is positively related to self-reported concern for others, conflict resolution skills, altruistic behavior, intrinsic prosocial motivation, trust in and respect for teachers, enjoyment of helping others learn as well as observations of positive interpersonal behavior and academic engagement (Battistich, Solomon, Watson, & Schaps, 1996; Watson, Battistich, & Solomon, in press;).

Other Approaches Other approaches have focused similarly on building a sense of community within classrooms and schools. For example, the *Don't Laugh at Me* curriculum attempts to sensitize children to the painful effects of peer ridicule, ostracism and bullying and to help them transform their classroom and school into "ridicule-free zones" characterized by a climate of respect. A recent efficacy study using a within-school quasi-experimental methodology showed that program participants (4th-and 5th-graders) reported significant gains in psychological sense of school membership, increases in quality of relational experiences and in the desire to stop dissing and ridicule, and declines in bullying, compared to youngsters in the control group (Mucherah, Lapsley, Miels & Horton, in press).

Similarly, the Resolving Conflicts Creatively Program (RCCP) attempts to build peaceable schools and classrooms through an emphasis on conflict resolution and positive communication skills (Lantieri & Patti, 1996). The curriculum cultivates a selected set of skills that target conflict resolution, cooperation, caring, appreciating diversity and countering bias, responsible decision making, and appropriate expression of feelings. The curriculum emphasizes the importance of adults coaching these skills as students practice them across a variety of contexts. Students learn to give "I" messages about their feelings, listen actively to others, mediate peer conflict, and become interculturally competent. An evaluation of RCCP performed by the National Center for Children in Poverty at Columbia University (1999) showed that students from grades two through sixth who were involved in an average of 25 lessons per year had a significantly slower growth rate in self-reported hostile attributions, aggressive fantasies and problem-solving strategies than students who received fewer lessons. High-exposure students also showed greater improvement on academic achievement scores in the two-year study.

Service Learning and Community Service

As we have seen classroom practices that include democratic cooperation, problem-solving and decision-making encourage the cultivation of skills and dispositions that are crucial for citizenship, and are hence an important component of character education. The fifth of the CEP's principles for effective character education urges schools to provide students with opportunities for moral action. In some sense democratic classrooms include important moral lessons concerning fair play, civility, civic friendship, cooperation. Children learn how to sustain moral conversation in the context of joint decision-making. They develop a "deliberative competence" (Guttman, 1987) in solving problems, resolving conflict, establishing shared norms, balancing perspectives, and other skills crucial for effective citizenship (Power et al., 1989). But the effort to cultivate democratic dispositions and a sense of community within classrooms is being joined by efforts to connect students to the larger community through service learning and community service.

According to Tolman (2003, p. 6), "Service learning is rooted in the notion that acts of 'doing good' for others—anything from cleaning up

neighborhoods, to teaching younger students, to spending time with elderly community members—are the basis for significant learning experiences, for community development and for social change." Service learning is distinguished from community service by the degree to which it links service activities to clearly defined learning objectives and to an academic curriculum (Pritchard, 2002). Both kinds of activities are now a ubiquitous and pervasive feature of American education. A national survey conducted by the National Center for Educational Statistics estimates that 64% of all public schools, including 87% of public high schools, had students participating in community service activities. About a third organized service learning as part of their curriculum, which is typically justified by the desire to strengthen relationships among students, the school and community (Skinner & Chapman, 1999).

The desire to strengthen connections among home, school and community is supported by ecological perspectives on human development. There are adaptational advantages for children whose developmental ecology is characterized by a richly connected mesosytem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Indeed, Warter and Grossman (2002) appeal to developmental contextualism to provide a justification for the specific case of service learning and its implementation. Yates and Youniss (1996a; Youniss & Yates, 1997) argue similarly for a developmental perspective on service learning that is strongly influenced by Erikson's conceptualization of identity. According to this view, service learning opportunities provide an important context for helping adolescents sort out identity issues. For Erikson identity work requires psychosocial reciprocity between the characteristics, identifications and ideals of the young person and the affirmation of the community that give these choices significance and meaning. Identity is deeply characteristic of persons, to be sure, but like dispositional coherence of any kind, it plays out in dynamic interaction with community, culture and context. In this way is identity compatible with the person-context interactionism that is characteristic of a developmental systems approach.

Research has documented outcomes that are of interest to character education. Service learning experiences, and participation in voluntary organizations, increase one's sense of social agency, responsibility for the moral and political dimensions of society, and general moral-political awareness (Youniss, McLellan & Yates, 1997). Indeed, youth who participate in service experiences often report significant transformation in personal values and orientations, an increased civic-mindedness and sense of social responsibility, along with enhanced learning and better grades (Pratt, Hunsberger, Pancer & Alisat, (2003; Scales, Blyth, Berkas & Kielsmeier, 2000; Pancer & Pratt, 1999; Markus, Howard & King, 1993). They report higher levels of trust and more positive views of others in their communities (Hilles & Kahle, 1985). Similar findings were reported in national evaluations of two Federally-funded national service learning initiatives (*Serve America* and *Learn and Serve*). Melchior and Bailis (2002) report, for example, positive effects of service learning on the civic attitudes of adolescents. In addition there was a reduction in absenteeism for program participants and a lower incidence of teenage pregnancy. High school participants showed more school engagement, better math and science achievement, and a lower incidence of course failure. Middle school participants did more homework, got better grades in social studies, and got into serious legal and disciplinary problems less often.

Moreover, service learning and community service may be critical to political socialization and the process of forming a moral-civic identity (Yates & Youniss, 1999; Flanagan, 2004). In one study Yates and Youniss (1996b) examined the reflective narratives of Black parochial high school juniors who worked at a soup kitchen for the homeless as part of a service learning commitment. Over the course of a year the researchers noticed that these youth came to invest their service with greater meaning and at a higher level of transcendence. Initially participants tended to view the homeless in terms of stereotypes; then, at a higher level of transcendence, started to think about the consequences of homelessness for one's own life, or to compare one's lot to theirs; and finally to reflect on homelessness from the perspective of social justice or in terms of appropriate political action. Over the course of a year, then, serving the homeless in a soup kitchen motivated reflective judgments about weighty matters of justice, responsibility and political engagement.

In addition to promoting moral-civic identity there is evidence that participation in service activities and voluntary organizations also increases civic participation in later adulthood (Youniss et al., 1997). Indeed, Flanagan (2004) argued that membership in community-based organizations, along with extracurricular activities at school, provides a

“sense of place” wherein youth “develop an affection for the polity” (p. 725). “Affection for the polity,” she writes, “and engagement in community affairs are logical extensions of the sense of connection youth develop from involvement in community based-organizations” (Flanagan, 2004, p. 725).

Service learning and community service, then, are significant components of a school’s commitment to character education. It is justified on the grounds that service significantly transforms moral-civic identity and predicts civic engagement in later adulthood (Youniss &Yates, 1999), both of which are foundational goals of character education. Of course, much depends on how service learning is implemented. It is generally agreed that successful service learning programs include opportunities for significant student reflection as part of the experience. Matching students to projects consistent with their interests, holding them accountable for outcomes but giving them autonomy in selecting goals, are also important program elements (Stukas, Clary & Snyder, 1999; Warter & Grossman, 2002). There is evidence that service learning is particularly effective at high school than in middle school, and that positive outcomes are most likely to be evident in areas directly related to the service learning experience (Melchior & Bailis, 2002).

Positive Youth Development

We noted earlier that a developmental systems approach (Lerner et al., 2003) might well serve as a conceptual framework for character education, as opposed to the current epistemological preoccupation with core values. A developmental systems orientation is foundational to the positive youth development perspective that has emerged as a counter to a risks-and-deficits model of adolescent development. Although adolescents certainly do face risks and obstacles there is an emerging consensus that effort to ameliorate risk exposure, overcome deficits or prevent problems is not sufficient to prepare young people adequately for the competencies that will be required of them for successful adaptation to adulthood. The mantra of positive youth development is problem-free is not fully prepared. Children and adolescents must be equipped with the strengths that will allow them to thrive, be resilient, take initiative and contribute productively to society (Larson, 2000). This will require programmatic effort to help children develop what Lerner (2001, 2002) calls the “5C’s of positive youth development”---competence, confidence, character, caring and compassion, and connection to the institutions of civil society.

The work of the Search Institute on the developmental assets is one instantiation of this general approach (Scales & Leffert, 1999; Benson, Scales, Leffert, & Roehlkepartain, 1999). Developmental assets are those features of a developmental system that promote positive outcomes. Forty assets have been identified on the basis of research, 20 of which are external and contextual, 20 of which are internal and personal. The external assets are grouped into four categories: support (assets 1-6), empowerment (assets 7-10), boundaries and expectations (assets 11-16) and constructive use of time (assets 17-20). These refer to the positive developmental experiences that result from the network of relationships that youth have with adults in family, school and community. The internal assets are grouped similarly into four categories: commitment to learning (assets 21 to 25); positive values (assets 26-31); social competencies (assets 32-36); and positive identity (assets 37-40). These refer to endogenous skills, dispositions and interests that emerge over the course of education and development.

In many ways the developmental assets approach already constitutes a richly articulated conceptual framework for character education that has little need for epistemological wrangling over foundational core values. Virtually all of the internal assets are familiar targets of character education, such as the positive values assets (caring, equality and social justice, integrity, honesty, responsibility), social competency assets (decision-making, interpersonal competence, cultural competence, resistance skills, conflict resolution,) and identity assets (personal power, self-esteem, sense of purpose, positive view). The external assets are similarly crucial for any comprehensive approach to character education insofar as it targets sources of mesosytem support for positive development (e.g., family support, caring schools and neighborhoods, parental involvement in schooling), ways to empower youth (perceptions of communal support, service learning), the importance of setting appropriate boundaries and expectations (including adult role models, positive peer influence and high expectations) and constructive use of time (including creative activities, youth programs, participation in a religious community, and time spent at home away from peer influence).

Moreover, all of the CEP principles for effective character education, save the first principle, are well in evidence among the 40 developmental assets. Principle 10 is of particular interest. It states that "Effective character education engages families and community members as partners in the character-building effort." The Search Institute has argued similarly that the success of positive youth development depends upon community resolve to construct the building blocks ("assets") of its developmental infrastructure. However, communities vary in the assets that are available to support positive youth development (Benson, Scales, Leffert, & Roehlkepartain, 1999).

One study assessed the perceived availability of assets in a 1996-1997 survey of over 99,000 youth in grades 6-12 from 213 cities and towns across America (Benson, Leffert, Scales & Blyth, 1998). In this sample 62% of adolescents experience at most half of the developmental assets associated with positive youth development. The mean number of assets for the aggregate sample was 18,and the least and most affluent communities in the sample differed by only three assets (in favor of the more affluent community), indicating that students typically experience less than half of the developmental assets and that even wealthy communities have work to do on building their developmental infrastructure. Notably from the perspective of positive youth development and character education, three of the least experienced assets are a caring school, youth being treated as a resource, and community valuing youth (Scales, 1999).

Benson et al. (1998) reported dramatic differences in the percentage of youth with low (0-10) and high (31-40) assets who engage in risk behavior: low asset youth are more likely than high asset youth to use alcohol (53% vs. 3%); to smoke tobacco (45% vs. 1%); to use illicit drugs at least 3 or more times in the last year (45% vs. 1%); to have had sexual intercourse at least 3 or more times (42% vs. 1%); to report frequent depression or to have made a suicide attempt (40% vs. 4%); to report at least 3 incidents of antisocial behavior (52% vs. 1%); to engage in at least 3 acts of violence (61% vs. 6%); to report school problems (43% vs. 2%); to drink and drive (42% vs. 4%) and gamble (34% vs. 6%). The conclusion is inescapable: youth who report fewer developmental assets tend to engage in more risk behavior. Youth who report more assets engage in fewer risk behaviors (see also, Oman et al., 2004). Moreover, youth who are more vulnerable, that is, who carrying more deficits and risk factors (e.g., physical abuse, experiencing violence, unsupervised time) profit the most from assets (Scales, 1999).

Benson et al. (1988) also report a strong connection between asset levels and thriving factors. High asset youth are more likely than low asset youth to report getting mostly A's in school (53% vs.7%); to place a high value on cultural diversity (87% vs. 34%); to help friends or neighbors at least 1 hour a week (96% vs. 69%); to be a leader in a group or organization in the last year (87% vs. 48%); to resist doing dangerous things (43% vs. 6%); to delay gratification by saving money rather than spending it right away (72% vs. 27%); and to overcome adversity and not give up when things get tough (86% vs. 57). Although not as dramatic in every instance as in the comparison of risk behavior, these data indicate that youth who report the fewest assets also report fewer thriving factors; and, conversely, that youth who report more developmental assets also report more thriving indicators.

These data underscore the importance of Principle 10 for effective character education. It requires a fundamental mobilization of the community. There must be an intentional commitment to become an asset-building community, to construct the developmental infrastructure to support the positive development of all youth. The Search Institute suggests some core principles of asset building communities. There must be broad *collaboration* among all of the socializing systems within a community. The community initiative must be *comprehensive*; it should seek to promote all 40 assets and not just a sub-set. It should promote the *civic engagement* not just of traditional leaders but all of the residents within the boundaries of a community. It should involve *youth as partners* with adults.

Many adolescents participate in largely community-based youth programs that are guided by a positive youth development orientation. Roth and Brooks-Gunn (2003) surveyed 71 youth serving organizations in order to determine the characteristics of programs designed to promote healthy adolescent development. Consistent with the youth development philosophy, 77% of the programs said that their primary goal was to build competencies; 54% also indicated prevention goals. However, prevention goals were strongly in evidence when asked specifically about whether the

program was designed as prevention against high risk behaviors, such as substance abuse (76%), school dropout (63%), violence (73%) and gang activity (59%). Interestingly, not one of the youth development programs apparently viewed their competency-building and prevention work in terms of moral or character development.

Another perspective is what adolescents themselves report learning in organized youth activities. In one study (Hanson, Larson & Dworkin, 2003) 450 adolescents in a medium size ethnically diverse school responded to the Youth Experiences Survey (YES), which asks respondents to report their experiences in several domains (identity, initiative, basic emotional, cognitive and physical skills, teamwork and social skills, interpersonal relatedness, connections with adults, and negative experiences). Learning in these contexts were compared against "hanging out with friends" and with academic classes. The results showed that organized youth activities were a better context for learning initiative skills (e.g., goal setting, problem-solving, effort, time management) exploring identity and reflection, and learning to manage anger, anxiety and stress, than hanging out with friends or taking required classes. Moreover, adolescents reported learning about teamwork, social and leadership skills in organized youth activities. Interesting learning differences emerged among program activities. For example, the development of identity, prosocial norms and ties to the community were said to be learned in faith-based, community service and vocational activities, but participation in sports was associated with mostly gains in personal development (e.g., self-knowledge, physical skills, and emotional regulation) but not teamwork, social skills, prosocial norms or positive peer interactions. Perhaps the competitive nature of sports works against the development of skills required for interpersonal competence (see Shields & Bredemeier, 2005).

Two recent reviews have attempted to gauge the effectiveness of youth development programs. Roth, Brooks-Gunn, Murray and Foster (1998) examined 15 program evaluations that met criteria for methodological rigor. Six programs largely met the goals of the positive youth development framework by focusing on competency and asset building. Six programs were designed as preventions against specific problem behaviors, albeit by strengthening competencies and assets. Three programs were preventions designed to teach skills for avoiding risk behaviors (e.g., assertiveness training, peer resistance, planning for the future) and were the least representative of the ideal youth development program. In general all 15 programs showed evidence of effectiveness, although a number of general themes emerged. For example, programs that are more comprehensive and sustained tend to result in better outcomes. Program effectiveness was also linked to the continuity of caring adult-youth relationships, and the extent and quality of youth engagement with program activities.

Catalano, Berglund et al. (2004) identified 25 programs that addressed one or more positive youth development constructs (e.g., bonding, resilience, socio-emotional, cognitive, behavioral or moral competence, self-efficacy, self-determination, spirituality, identity, belief in the future, recognition for positive behavior, prosocial norms and prosocial involvement) in multiple socialization domains (or many constructs in a single domain), using children from the general or at-risk population (but not in treatment). These studies also met strong methodological criteria. The analysis of program characteristics showed that effective programs addressed a minimum of five positive youth development constructs. Competence, self-efficacy and prosocial norms were addressed in all 25 programs; opportunities for prosocial involvement, recognition for positive behavior, and bonding were noted in over 75% of programs; and positive identity, self-determination, belief in the future, resiliency and spirituality were noted in half of the programs. Effective programs also measured both positive and problem outcomes; had a structured curriculum and frequent youth contact for at least nine months; and took steps to insure fidelity of implementation.

Social-Emotional Learning

We noted earlier that a developmental systems orientation that focused on positive youth development would constitute a powerful conceptual framework for character education. A similar claim can be made for social-emotional learning (SEL). The Collaborative to Advance Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has developed a unifying framework to promote the development of important competencies that both enhance strengths and prevents problem behavior (Graczyk, Matjasko, Weissberg, Greenberg, Elias & Zins, 2000; Payton, Wardlaw, Graczyk, Bloodworth, Tompsett & Weissberg, 2000; Weissberg & Greenberg, 1998).

Its focus on competence and prevention place it well within the positive youth development framework (Catalano, Hawkins, Berglund, Pollard & Arthur, 2002), although it's longstanding concern with school-based implementation makes it particularly attractive for character education (CASEL, 2003; Elias, Zins, Graczyk & Weissberg, 2003; Elias, Zins, Weissberg, Greenberg, Haynes, Kessler, Scwab-Stone & Shriver, 1997). Indeed, CASEL insists that effective programming for SEL competencies have an instructional component with well-designed and organized lesson plans that are sequenced in a coherent curriculum that is programmatic over consecutive grades (Payton et al., 2000), as well as broad parent and community involvement in planning, implementation and evaluation (Weissberg & O'Brien, 2004).

The key SEL competencies identified by CASEL include self-other awareness (awareness and management of feeling, realistic self-assessment of abilities, perspective taking), self-management (self-regulation of emotions, setting goals, persevering in the face of obstacles), responsible decision-making (identifying problems, discerning social norms, accurate and critical appraisal of information, evaluation solutions, taking responsibility for decisions) and relationship skills (cooperation, expressive communication, negotiation, refusal, help seeking and conflict resolution skills). All of these competencies are familiar targets of character education.

A substantial research base links these competencies to effective and adaptive functioning and to prevention of risk behavior. For example, evidence cited earlier for the Child Development Project and the Seattle Social Development Project are claimed as support for school-based social-emotional learning objectives (Greenberg, Weissberg, et al.,2003; Weissberg & O'Brien, 2004). Similarly a substantial literature shows that programs that address SEL competencies are effective in preventing problem behaviors (Durlak & Wells, 1997; Wilson, Gottfredson & Najaka, 2001), drug use (Tobler, Roona, Ochshorn, Marshall, Streke & Stackpole, 2000) and violence (Greenberg, Kusche, Cook & Auamma, 1995; Greenberg & Kusche, 1998). SEL is also a strong predictor of academic outcomes (Elias et al., 2003). One study showed, for example, that the best predictor of eighth-grade academic achievement was not third-grade academic achievement but rather indices of social competence (Caprara, Barbanelli, Pastorelli, Bandura & Zimbardo, 2000).

One crucial issue that CASEL has taken on concerns program implementation and sustainability. As Elias et al. (2003, p. 308) put it, "Even widely acclaimed evidence-based approaches to classroom organization and instruction that integrate both academics and SEL are dependent for their success on the delivery systems into which they are embedded." We will review various implementation issues in a later section.

Character Education in Higher Education and the Professions

Higher Education. Character education does not end with high school. Indeed, a developmental systems perspective on moral character would lead us to expect opportunities for dynamic change across the lifecourse. Although there has been comparatively less programmatic emphasis or research on character development in post-secondary institutions, there are notable recent efforts to explore the contributions of the collegiate experience to the moral formation of undergraduates (e.g., Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont & Stephens, 2003; Mentkowski & Associates, 2000). One survey, for example, identified an honor roll of 134 colleges and universities to serve as exemplars of character-building institutions (Schwartz & Templeton, 1997; Sweeney, 1997)). These institutions emphasized students' moral reasoning skills, community-building experiences, and spiritual growth, while advocating for a drug-free environment. They also conducted critical assessments of their character building assets and programs.

The emphasis on moral reasoning skills is premised on the expectation that the critical engagement and inquiry that is ideally characteristic of post-secondary education will stimulate moral deliberation to higher stages of complexity. Indeed, one of the best documented changes that result from the collegiate experience is a significant increase in the quality and complexity of moral reasoning (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). College environments that encourage questioning, inquiry, and openness to evidence and argument foster the largest gains in moral reasoning (e.g., Rest & Narvaez, 1991; Rogers, 2002), although this relationship is attenuated in collegiate environments that are narrowly careerist and where critical inquiry is not valued (McNeel, 1994).

There are indeed differences among colleges and universities in the degree to which they make moral and civic education a central institutional commitment. Colby et al. (2003) noted that moral and civic development is not a high priority for most American universities and colleges. "We have been struck again and again," they write, "by the very many lost opportunities for moral and civic growth in curricular and extracurricular programs on most campuses" (p. 277). In their study of 12 universities that do make moral and civic growth an institutional commitment Colby et al. (2003) identify (1) the important dimensions of moral and civic maturity that should be addressed, (2) the sites where these dimensions can be exploited, and (3) the thematic perspectives that a fully rounded commitment to moral and civic education should embrace.

With respect to the dimensions of moral and civic maturity Colby et al. (2003) nominated three categories, *understanding* (e.g., key ethical and civic concepts, knowledge of democratic principles, expertise in one's field), *motivation* (e.g., hope and compassion, desire to be an engaged citizen, sense of political efficacy, sense of civic responsibility as a part of self-understanding) and *skills* (e.g., communication skills, ability to collaborate, forge consensus, compromise). These dimensions are exploited in the curriculum, in extracurricular activities and in the general campus culture. The curriculum, for example, presents numerous opportunities to cultivate moral and civic maturity. Moral and civic understanding, motivation and skills can mutually enhance academic learning (e.g., Markus et al., 1993). A wide range of pedagogical strategies, including service learning, project-based learning, field placements, site-base practicum experiences, collaborative work, among others, encourages student engagement with the broader community and has significance for moral learning (Brandenberger, 2005). Moral and civic issues can be framed in core courses and in the coursework of one's major, and be the target of faculty development.

Finally, a comprehensive and intentional commitment to moral and civic growth by universities and colleges takes on three themes: community connections, moral and civic virtue, and social justice ("systemic social responsibility"). According to Colby et al. (2003, p. 284), "moral and civic education is incomplete if it does not somehow take account of all these themes." Feeling a connection to a community cultivates a sense of allegiance and duty, where the benefits and burdens of cooperation, and of citizenship, can be experienced and practiced. Postsecondary institutions are also places where the virtues proper to democratic citizenship can be cultivated. Although these dispositions have been variously conceived, there is a strong consensus that a deliberative character (Guttman, 1987) is minimally required, a character that is able to carry on the public conversation in a way that is tolerant, respectful, generous. Nash (1997) has noted, too, that democratic dispositions are essentially "conversational virtues" that take on moral significance because they are necessary for living well in a democracy. The democratic citizen must engage in public discourse with toleration, fairness and respect for different perspectives and for the canons of civility. Civic engagement in a democratic society requires a disposition to listen with generosity, to compromise, to argue on the basis of factual evidence, to abide by outcomes, to affirm the validity of a democratic process even if it results in outcomes that are contrary to one's own preferences (Knight Higher Education Collaborative, 2000). Moreover, the democratic citizen must have hope and confidence in the value of deliberation, and be able to engage in adversarial discussion in a way that does not compromise civic friendship, mutual respect and sense of common purpose. Hence an important moral responsibility of higher education is to cultivate "dialogic competence in public moral language" (Strike, 1996, p. 889), and to provide occasions, in the context of scholarly engagement and intellectual inquiry, where these virtues are on frequent display and avidly practiced.

The third theme encourages curricular and extracurricular activities that allow undergraduates to take on "systemic social responsibility"---to be active in the democratic process, to take a stand, to take an interest in social policy, to view the life of the community through the lens of social justice and one's own responsibility as an engaged citizen. Postsecondary institutions will vary in how they address these three themes, but what is crucial is that colleges and universities make moral and civic maturity an explicit, intentional and comprehensive part of their educational mission.

Professional Education "Professional practice," according to Bebeau (2002, p. 271)," is predominantly a moral enterprise." Indeed, ethical development is a concern for schools across the professional

landscape, including, business, law, medicine, dentistry, nursing, and education. An increasing number of professional schools have taken up ethics education with increasing frequency.

Rest & Narvaez (1994) point out specific methods that promote moral reasoning development in professional educational programs. First, following Dewey's advocacy of immediate experience and active problem solving, one of the most effective methods is deliberative psychological education, reading academic theory, providing direct experience, and reflection that integrates theory with the direct experience (Sprinthall, 1994). The individual's conceptual frameworks developed from these integrated experiences are not only more sophisticated but resilient. Studies have documented that the most popular and successful methods of instruction for moral reasoning development involves student discussion about dilemmas and cases in the field (e.g., Hartwell, 1995). Moral dilemma discussion is particularly effective when students are coached to develop the skills necessary for expert moral problem solving such as role taking and logical analysis for determining valid and invalid arguments (Penn, 1990; McNeel, 1994). However, even less experiential courses such as film-based courses and writing-intensive courses can have positive effects (e.g., Self, et al., 1993; Bebeau, 1994).

The most integrative programs have moved beyond a sole focus on moral reasoning to include other aspects of moral functioning, such as those described by the Four Component Model (Rest, 1983). For example, programs at the University of Minnesota in nursing and in dentistry assist students in developing ethical sensitivity, ethical motivation and ethical implementation as well as ethical judgment. Recently Bebeau (2002) has addressed the importance of developing a professional moral identity. She suggests that "the conceptual frameworks of professional identity are not part of an initial self-understanding, and must be revisited frequently during professional education" (Bebeau, 2002, p. 286). The study of professional exemplars is a useful method for providing concrete models for professional ethical identity formation. Such studies offer glimpses to novices of what a virtuous professional looks like, how she conducts herself in typical and non-typical situations, and provide role models for initiates.

III. A Case Study: Integrative Ethical Education

Integrative Ethical Education (IEE) is a conceptual framework that attempts to incorporate insights of developmental theory and psychological science into character education (Narvaez, 2005a; Narvaez, Endicott & Bock, 2003). It is integrative in several senses. It attempts to understand character and its development in terms of cognitive science literatures on expertise and the novice-to-expert mechanisms of best practice instruction. It attempts to keep faith with classical sources by linking Greek notions of *eudaimonia* (human flourishing), *arête* (excellence), *phronesis* (practical wisdom) and *techne* (expertise) with developmental and cognitive science. It is compatible with positive youth development in its claim that the goal of integrative ethical education is the development of important competencies that contribute to productive adaptation to the demands of adulthood, but that these competencies are understood as clusters of skills that one may learn or practice to varying degrees of expertise. It assumes that the best context for expertise development is a caring relationship with teacher-mentors wherein skills are learned by means of coached practice and "guided autonomy." In delineating the elemental skills of good character, IEE addresses *character* education by integrating the findings from developmental psychology, prevention science, and positive psychology. In proposing the best approach to instruction, IEE addresses character *education* by integrating contemporary findings from research in learning and cognition. In the next section we outline some of the key features of IEE. IEE is predicated on the importance of caring classroom environments, but we will focus on just three components of the model: character as expertise development, the cultivation of character as the cultivation of expertise, and the importance of self-regulation for developing and maintaining virtuous character.

Character as Expertise Development.

Human learning is increasingly conceptualized as a matter of novices developing greater expertise in domains of study (Ericsson & Smith, 1991; Sternberg, 1998a). A domain expert differs from a novice by having a large, rich, organized network of concepts or schemas that include declarative, procedural and conditional knowledge. Unlike novices, experts know what knowledge to access, which procedures to apply, how to apply

them and when. Expertise refers not to mere technical competence but to the multi-track capacities and sensibilities of an exemplar, the refined, deep understanding built from lived experience that is evident in practice and action (Spiecker, 1999; Hursthouse, 2003).

In The Republic Plato describes virtue as a type of *techne*, or "know-how" that is characteristic of experts (e.g., painters, writers, politicians) in specific domains. Similarly, the virtuous person has ethical know-how, that is, ethical skills honed to a high degree of expertise. Ethical expertise refers not only to behaviors, sensibilities, and orientations but also to feelings, motives and drives. Ethical expertise is not just what a person does but that which the person likes to do (Urmson, 1988). It is a complex of characteristics skills and competencies that enable ethical behavior and sustain one in pursuing the life that is good for one to live.

Rest (1983; Narvaez & Rest, 1995) identified four psychologically distinct processes that must occur to enable ethical behavior: ethical sensitivity, ethical judgment, ethical motivation/focus, and ethical action. The four-process model provides a holistic understanding of the ethical exemplar, one who is able to demonstrate keen perception and perspective taking, skilled reasoning, ethical focus, and skills for completing moral action (Bebeau, Rest & Narvaez, 1999; Narvaez, 2005a; Narvaez, Endicott, Bock, & Lies, 2004). Each process is represented by a set of skills as listed in Table 1 (Narvaez, Endicott, & Bock, 2003; Narvaez, Bock, Endicott, & Lies, 2005). For example, experts in the skills of Ethical Sensitivity are able to more quickly and accurately "read" the moral implications of a situation and determine a suitable response. They are better at generating usable solutions due to a greater understanding of the consequences of possible actions. Experts in Ethical Judgment are more skilled in solving complex problems, seeing the syntactic structure of a problem quickly and bringing with them many schemas for reasoning about possible courses of action. Their information processing abilities are both complex and efficient. Experts in the skills of Ethical Focus are able to sustain moral priorities in light of the commitments of a moral self-identity. Experts in the skills of Ethical Action engage the self-regulation that is necessary to get the ethical job done.

Pedagogy for Cultivating Character Expertise.

The IEE model emphasizes two critical features of successful pedagogy. First, it must be constructivist. Second, it must attend simultaneously to cultivating expertise on two fronts: conscious explicit understandings, and intuitive, implicit understanding. IEE adopts the cognitive-mediational view that learning depends upon the cognitive activity of students; that learning occurs when incoming information is actively transformed in light of prior knowledge; and that teachers facilitate learning by engaging students in active cognitive processing about content and facilitating self-monitoring understanding (Anderson, 1989). It assumes that learners are active constructors of meaning, competencies and skills, and that individuals build conceptual frameworks--declarative, procedural, and conditional-- in the process of learning to get along with others. And when these skills are practiced extensively in multiple contexts they take on the qualities of tacit, implicit knowledge and the automaticity characteristic of the "unconscious" mind (Hassin, Uleman & Bargh, 2005; Hogarth, 2001).

A model of instruction that captures these pedagogical goals is coached apprenticeship. A coached apprenticeship model involves using both direct and indirect instruction, mimesis and transformation, a focus on both content and process, tuning both the deliberate conscious mind and the inutitive mind. In an apprenticeship, the guide provides examples and models of skilled behavior and provides theoretical explanation for why things are done one way and not another. At the same time, the apprentice is immersed in well-structured environments that cultivate appropriate intuitions (Hogarth, 2001).

Teaching for ethical expertise requires coached apprenticeship and extensive practice in multiple contexts. IEE offers instructional guidelines for helping children move along a continuum from novice to expert in each ethical content domain that is studied. In order to do this, children must experience an expert-in-training pedagogy for each skill that they learn. Teachers can set up instruction to help students develop appropriate knowledge by designing lessons according to the following four levels (based on Marshall, 1999). At Level 1 ("Immersion in examples and opportunities") teachers draw student attention to the "big picture" in a subject area and help the students learn to recognize basic patterns. At Level 2 ("Attention to facts and skills") teachers focus student attention on

the details and prototypical examples in the domain in order to build more elaborate concepts. At Level 3 (“Practice procedures”) the teacher provides opportunities for the student to try out many skills and ideas in a domain to build a procedural understanding of how skills are related and best deployed to solve domain-relevant problems. Finally at Level 4 (“Integrate knowledge and procedures”) students gradually integrate and apply systematically knowledge across many contexts and situations.

Self Regulation for Sustainability

The role of self-regulation in character development is of longstanding interest. Aristotle emphasized that virtues are developed with extended practice, effort, and guidance from parents, teachers and mentors until the child is able to self-maintain virtue (Urmson, 1988). Recent research demonstrates that the most successful learners are those that self-monitor their success and alter strategies when necessary. Thus, self regulation requires sophisticated metacognition. According to a social-cognitive view, self-regulation is a cyclical, ever-changing interaction among personal, behavioral and environmental factors, involving three phases: forethought, performance or volitional control, and self-reflection (Zimmerman, 2000).

IEE infuses self-regulation on two levels, the teacher level and the student level. First, in order for school reforms to be sustainable, educators must take on a self-regulatory orientation for the implementation of character education. This means taking a systematic intentional approach to building a caring ethical school community, facilitating the development of instructional and ethical skills in all members of the school community, including teachers, administrators, and other staff, as members of a comprehensive learning community.

In order for students to develop and maintain ethical skills, they must increase their metacognitive understanding, self-monitoring skills, and self-regulation for ethical and academic development. Individuals can be coached to domain-specific self-efficacy and self-regulation (Zimmerman, Bonner, & Kovach, 2002). In the IEE model, teachers continuously draw student attention to the moral issues immanent in classroom life and learning (Narvaez, 2005b). Students are provided guidance and tools to answer one of the central questions of their lives: “Who should I be?” As McKinnon (1999) points out, individuals must ‘do the work necessary for constructing a character’ (p. 42). The IEE model helps students develop the skills for ethical behavior but require their active participation in making the decisions that are crucial and relevant for the construction of their own characters. To develop ethical know-how, one must be self-directive; one must take seriously the charge of continually building one’s character. Ethical know-how must be trained holistically, as a type of expertise, at first coached, then increasingly self-directed.

An Implementation of IEE: The Community Voices and Character Education Project

The *Community Voices and Character Education Project* (*CVCE*) was an early prototype of the Integrative Ethical Education conceptual framework. CVCE was a federally-funded project implemented in the state of Minnesota, USA, from 1998-2002[1]. It was a collaborative effort among the Minnesota Department of Education (called at the time the Department of Children, Families, and Learning), the University of Minnesota, and educators across the state. The focus of the CVCE project was to develop and provide a research-based, framework for character education at the middle school level with teacher-friendly guidelines for how to incorporate ethical development into standards-driven instruction. Classroom activity guidebooks were created along with other supportive materials, including teacher-designed lesson plans.

Reflecting both an empowerment model and the historical and legislative emphasis in Minnesota on local control of curricular decisions, the CVCE project used a “common morality” (Beauchamp & Childress, 1994) approach of presenting research-based principles (top down) to a local team who adapted them for the local context (bottom up), formulating a unique intervention. The top-down recommendations included fostering a caring climate conducive to character growth, using a novice-to-expert approach to ethical skill instruction, developing self-regulatory skills in students as they practice ethical skills, and including parents and community members in cultivating character in students. School teams and their leaders were guided in designing a local vision for character education with specific action steps for how to incorporate ethical skill instruction with links to the community. As Elias et al. (2003) pointed out, all program

implementations are limited because they must be adapted to local circumstances. "Too often it is assumed," they write, "that evidence-based programs can be 'plugged-in' and then work effectively" (p. 310). Each team developed a unique approach to cultivating character, using school-wide projects, advisory/homeroom lessons, and/or infusion into academic instruction into some or all subjects. Some teams incorporated existing character interventions (e.g., Lions Quest) into their CVCE intervention. Indeed, the IEE framework provides a comprehensive approach within which existing character education programs can be integrated, extended and strengthened.

Evaluation of CVCE In the final year evaluation only five of eight experimental schools and one control school provided completed pretest-posttest data. The evaluation had several components that correspond to the emphasis of the project (for a more detailed discussion, see Anderson, et al., 2003; Narvaez et al., 2005).

The primary focus of the project was to design a conceptual framework for character education at the middle school level along with activity books to guide teams of teachers in incorporating character skill development into regular instruction. Both participating and non-participating teachers from partner schools thought the framework was valuable. The majority of respondents reported "easy" or "so-so" for the ease of use of the activity books.

We also evaluated the quality of the implementation. Implementation varied across sites in terms of depth and breadth. Differences in local implementation design, leadership, stability of the leadership and of the core team, as well as demands on teachers, led to differences in depth and quality of implementation and how many students were influenced. In only two of the five schools was there full implementation of the model. In these schools, all teachers were involved in teaching ethical skills during advisory/homeroom, in their academic instruction and in school-wide projects. In these two schools, significant effects were found in student pre-post tests. The other schools addressed a wide number of skills in a limited manner by only a subset of teachers. Other approaches have required the full participation of the school for implementation (e.g., the Child Development Project) so that the student experience is consistent across teachers. As a pilot program emphasizing local control, CVCE did not.

The substantive evaluation addressed effects on students and school climate. Four student measures of climate were used: staff tolerance, student tolerance, student self-report of climate perceptions and attachment to school, and student perception of peer ethical behavior. One or more general measures of each of the four ethical processes were also used. For Ethical Sensitivity, we used the Child Development Project's Concern for Others Scale. For Ethical Judgment we used a global moral judgment scale. For Ethical Focus we used measures of citizenship, community bonding and ethical identity. For Ethical Action we used a measure of moral assertiveness and prosocial responsibility.

Student survey responses were compared with a matched control group (n=125) from another school not involved in the project. Across schools the findings with the ethical development scales were mixed. Most scales indicated non-significant improvements in comparison with the control group with one exception. Program students reported more sensitivity to intolerance than did control students. The two schools that implemented fully emphasized Ethical Sensitivity. In comparison to the control group, program students in these schools reported significant gains on ethical sensitivity. Moreover, in these two schools positive gain scores were obtained for most of the other ethical skill measures but these were not significantly different from the control group.

There were three challenges to finding significant differences in pre-post student assessments. First, leadership changes at three schools undermined the test administration in one way or another so that only five sets of usable pre-post data were extant. Second, given the amount of time required for successful interventions to demonstrate an effect, it was deemed a challenge to find significant pre-post differences within one year's time. Third, one of the strengths of the program – local control and local distinctiveness—meant that cross-site comparisons were not possible, insofar as each sites' implementation was not strictly comparable with other sites. Hence for a particular implementation the numbers tested were small.

These features of CVCE are relevant also to the question of replicability. Replicability typically refers to successful implementation in

more than one school. This definition assumes that what is being implemented is identical across sites. This is contrary to the approach taken in the CVCE project. Instead, the emphasis was on local control and local adaptation of the conceptual framework. Replicability did not refer to identical implementation but instead to the replicability of the process and the general features of the model. Based on the lesson plans teachers created in virtually every subject area, CVCE evaluators determined that teachers were able to integrate character skills development into standards-driven academic instruction. Based on the teacher-created lesson plans and the local team and local leader reports, educators were generally able to implement the model with minimal supervision.

The key features of the model were largely followed by most schools. Most teams viewed character as a set of ethical skills derived from four processes. According to the lesson plans teachers devised, most sites did use a novice-to-expert approach to teach character skills. Most sites at least attempted to involve the community in planning and implementation in one way or another, although outcomes were mixed. It is not clear how empowered the students felt as the university human subjects committee did not give permission to interview student participants.

Lessons Learned. The IEE model provides a conceptual framework for character cultivation that guides educators in how to think about what character entails and how to nurture it in students. The implementation of IEE in the CVCE project was locally controlled, providing maximum flexibility and allowing for adaptations that met local needs and issues (and which are unforeseeable by a curriculum writer). However, the fact that CVCE did not provide a script for teachers made it necessary for teachers to put in time to modify their lessons to incorporate ethical skill development. With minimal training, teacher teams were able to construct multiple units and lessons. Lessons that a teacher modified herself were lessons that she would use again and again. This is an advantage. Nevertheless, sometimes modifying lessons can be a daunting first step in character education, especially for inexperienced teachers. Consequently, a year-long scripted curriculum for homeroom/advisory purposes is currently under development that will familiarize the teacher with the conceptual framework and scaffold understanding of how to apply the model to classroom activities. Maximum flexibility and local control also made it difficult to measure replicable program effects. A scripted approach will make possible a cleaner estimation of replicable program effects.

IV. Issues of Implementation

Our examination of the IEE case study revealed a number of interesting challenges to successful implementation of a character education intervention. In this section we summarize some of the enduring implementation issues that have emerged in the various character education literatures and from our own experience.

One enduring problem concerns the fidelity of implementation (Laud & Berkowitz, 1999). In the CVCE project the quality of implementation was related to disparate outcomes. Schools with a broader (across more classrooms and by more teachers) and deeper (more frequent and focused) implementation were more successful, a finding corroborated by other character development programs (see Solomon et al., 2002). This underscores a point made by Elias et al. (2003) that interventions are rarely delivered as planned, even in trials marked by stringent methodological rigor. And even if the program is implemented and delivered as planned, there are few assurances that it would be received by students as intended. As Elias et al (2003, p. 309-310) put it, "if children are inattentive, a classroom is chaotic, or the material is not at the right developmental level, "delivery' by instructors may not strongly predict children's skill acquisition and use." Thus in addition to implementation fidelity, one must also attend to factors that limit students' exposure to the intervention (Berkowitz & Bier, 2004).

In their analysis of implementation and sustainability of social-emotional interventions Elias et al. (2003) note a number of additional obstacles that are highly relevant to character education. For example, one obstacle to implementation fidelity is turnover in teachers and program staff. Other issues concern the characteristics of adults who are charged with implementing the intended innovations. Not all roles are equally satisfying, level of commitment varies, tacit knowledge is not communicated to new staff. As the authors put it, "it is not the same thing to create, to deliver, to administer and to continue" an innovative program (p. 314). Working out role differences and supporting new staff is crucial

to sustainable programming. Indeed, "success seems to accompany a spirit of continuous improvement and reinvention without excessive divergence from what exists" (Elias et al, 2003 p. 314). In addition, although virtually every approach to character education calls for extensive and active collaboration with family and community, the difficulties in forming, effectively utilizing and sustaining these partnerships are often underestimated.

Elias et al (2003) note a number of additional factors associated with successful and sustainable program implementation. Such programs (1) have a program coordinator, preferably with appropriate preparation, or a committee, to oversee implementation; (2) involve committed individuals who have a sense of ownership of the program; (3) have continuous formal and informal training; (4) have varied and engaging instructional materials that map onto goals of the school or district; (5) have buy-in of key educational leaders and the consistent support of critical constituencies. Elias et al. (2003) also suggest that a pragmatic, theoretically-informed perspective is essential. "Local ecologies," they write, "will not support an infinite variety of possibilities. What has a chance to work is what fits. (p. 314)." What is required, in other words, is a goodness-of-fit between program planning, its objectives and goals, and its flexible implementation "in the spirit of continuous improvement."

The reference to the local ecology of schools and to obstacles and opportunities that is endemic to complex organizations draws attention to the culture of schools as an arena for character education. The cultivation of a professional learning community within a school is critical to sustainable school reform efforts (Fullan, 1999, 2000). For example, schools that were successful in raising student achievement and improving school climate had staffs that developed a professional learning community, addressed student work through assessment and changed their practice to improve results (Newmann & Wehlage, 1995; Pankake & Moller, 2003). Professional learning communities (PLC) have particular characteristics. They take the time to develop a shared vision and mutually-held values that focus on student learning and foster norms for improving practice. Leadership is democratic, shared among teachers and administrators. The entire staff seeks and shares knowledge, skills and strategies to improve practice. The school structure supports an environment that is collaborative, trusting, positive and caring. Peers open their classrooms to the feedback and suggestions of others in order to improve student achievement and promote individual and community growth. We believe that these same practices are critical not only to sustain a commitment to academic achievement but to moral learning as well, and it is welcome to see a commitment to learning communities in a prominent report on high school character education (Lickona & Davidson, 2004).

We suggested that if character education is to be considered an instance of primary prevention then it should possess the features of any well-designed intervention. It should be comprehensive, have multiple components, address multiple assets at different levels of the ecological setting, and be implemented in the early grades and sustained over time. It is now a truism to remark that one-trial or short-term intervention programs have little lasting impact. Moreover, insofar as dispositional coherence is located at the interaction of persons and context, there is little hope for enduring character education that does not attend also to the climate and culture of classrooms and schools. Effective character education requires a pervasive commitment to change the culture of schools as much as changing the behavior of children.

Payton et al. (2000) note a number of specific features of quality social emotional learning programs. These programs (1) articulate a conceptual framework that guides the selection of program and learning objectives; (2) provide professional development instruction to teachers to enable their effective implementation across the regular academic curriculum, (3) including well-organized and user-friendly lesson plans with clear objectives and learning activities and assessment tools. Moreover they note that successful programs take steps to improve school-wide cooperation, and school-family and school-community partnerships.

There is a significant literature on the school characteristics that promote academic achievement. Schools with high achievement are orderly and safe; they are respectful and provide students with moral and personal support while expecting them to achieve (Sebring & Bryk, 1996). Achieving schools have a strong sense of community and high academic press (strong norms and high expectations for achievement; Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993). Interestingly, the characteristics that foster achievement overlap with characteristics that nurture prosocial development. Schools

that foster prosocial development have caring climates that nurture a feeling of belonging and competence in students (Watson, Battistich & Solomon, in press). There are not two sets of instructional best practice, one for academic achievement and one for character. Both objectives work out of the same playbook. In this sense effective character education is, indeed, good education.

This suggests, of course, that effective character education ultimately comes down to what teachers do in their classrooms. It is not clear the extent to which moral and character education is taught explicitly in teacher preparation programs. It is well-known that teachers who have more expertise in both content and pedagogical content knowledge conduct their classes more effectively than do novice teachers (Berliner, 1994; Sternberg & Horvath, 1995; Shulman, 1987). However, if explicit instructional focus on moral content knowledge and pedagogy is limited or absent during preservice teacher training, then one cannot be optimistic that efforts to expand character education will be met with the requisite levels of teacher expertise.

On the other hand Carr (1991) argued that if teachers fail in their implementation of moral education it is not because they lack knowledge of curriculum theory or lack pedagogical skills. Indeed, he argues that we do our student teachers in education programs "no great favours by proceeding as though education and learning to teach are matters only of the mastery of certain pedagogical skills, knacks or strategies apt for the successful transmission of value-neutral knowledge or information" (p. 11). Rather, teachers fail because the value questions immanent to teaching are not systematically addressed in their professional formation. Instead, there is instead "something approaching a conspiracy of silence among teacher educators on this topic" (p. 10). Carr contends that when teacher education programs do not require "sensible reflection upon the moral character of human life and experience, the nature of values and the ethical aspects of the educationalist's role" then the resulting intellectual vacuum leaves teachers vulnerable to faddism; it leaves them ill-prepared to make transparent the immanence-and-inevitability of fundamental value questions that attend education, teaching and learning. Sensible reflection might also point to how preservice teachers are taught to frame the moral significance of daily classroom life. A recent study showed, for example, that teacher discourse which draws student attention to the moral significance of classroom activities has positive effects on character, classroom climate and academic motivation (Mullen, Turner & Narvaez, 2005). For example, when teachers framed classroom events in terms of the needs of the community, helping others, classroom identity, and peer solidarity, students responded with greater commitment to citizenship, ethical knowledge, moral self-regulation and moral locus of control.

V. Open Questions and Future Directions

We have argued that character education requires a defensible psychological understanding of dispositional coherence and of development; and a defensible approach to education that conforms to what is known about effective teaching and learning. We proposed a developmental systems perspective as a conceptual framework for character education, and reviewed several categories of youth development and prevention programs that show promise as school-based or community-based interventions.

It is an enduring question, however, whether these programs are rightfully considered instances of character education. We made a distinction between character education as a treatment, and character education as an outcome. As our review makes clear, there is very little that is distinctive about traditional character education that warrants it be considered an educational "treatment" in its own right. Indeed, when advocates point to character education programs that "work," it to programs motivated by an entirely different theoretical agenda than one of morality, virtue or character. It is to programs associated with positive youth development or social-emotional learning. Developmental science, including developmental psychopathology and the science of prevention already provide powerful frameworks for understanding risk, resilience, adaptation and thriving that has little need for the language of character. On the other hand, if character is considered not a treatment but a set of outcomes then, of course, there is nothing untoward about claiming the findings of developmental interventions as its own. In this case, interventions that are motivated by developmental science, by perspectives on youth development and SEL (for example,) provide outcomes that are relevant to a certain understanding of character, and give insights about how to prepare youth for the travail and opportunities of adulthood.

Yet we do not want to give up on the idea that character education can be a distinctive educational intervention. Although the literatures on youth development and social-emotional learning provide an attractive vision of adaptation, thriving and positive adjustment, and although it is tempting for character educators to want to claim these literatures as their own, we think that this vision of successful adulthood is incomplete without a specification of the moral dimensions of selfhood, identity and community. The metaphors of thriving and flourishing and positive development point mostly toward the notion of what it means to live well. But living well is only half of the challenge. We must not only live well, but live well *the life that is good for one to live.* Discerning the life that is good for one to live is a moral question; it has profound moral dimensions that are not exhausted by avoiding risks and acquiring social-affective competencies.

Certainly the life that is good for one to live requires avoidance of significant risk behavior, and so character education embraces the science of prevention as a prophylaxis against risks-and-deficits. Certainly the life that is good for one to live requires the cultivation of competencies that prepares one for the challenges of adulthood, and so character education embraces positive youth development in its several forms, along with its slogan: problem free is not fully prepared. Yet fully-prepared is not morally complete. In our view character education should aim minimally for full-preparation of young people for adulthood, but should not be content with full-preparation for living well; but aim, too, for helping students cope with the ethical dimensions of the *good* life lived well.

The challenge for character education, then, is how to maintain a distinctive voice in educational innovations, psychosocial interventions and youth programming. An approach to positive youth development that is also an instance of character education would be marked, in our view, by an explicit conceptual framework that embraces a developmental systems orientation while articulating a moral vision of what it means to flourish. This moral vision is ideally a virtue ethic that articulates a positive conception of moral agency as a deeply relational and communitarian achievement that expresses the nature of our self-identity through our lived moral desires.

Another challenge is to exploit the resources of psychological science in framing a defensible notion of moral agency, self-identity and dispositional coherence. We have made a number of suggestions along the way for a "psychologized" approach to moral character. In our view social cognitive theories of personality and the cognitive science literatures on expertise provide useful frameworks for understanding the moral dimensions of personality, although other literatures may be exploited with profit as well. We reiterate our conviction that an adequate character education will require robust models of character psychology, and the latter will be characterized by deep integration with multiple psychological frameworks.

Moreover, a developmental systems orientation broadens our perspective on character and of character education. There is a tendency, for example, to regard character education as something that takes place in schools as a formal curriculum. Yet, as we have seen the foundations of emergent morality and of conscience are evident quite early in childhood, and the developmental dynamic and pattern of socialization in early family life is most assuredly a kind of character education that will be of interest to researchers for some time to come. What's more, a developmental systems perspective bids us to examine the possibilities of dynamic change in character psychology throughout the lifecourse as well. Perhaps a lifecourse perspective on character will require additional constructs, such as wisdom (Staudinger & Pasupathi, 2003; Sternberg, 1998b), purpose (Damon, Menon & Bronk, 2003), personal goals (Emmons, 2002), spirituality and self-transcendence (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), ecological citizenship (Clayton & Opotow, 2003 and character strengths (Peterson & Seligman, 2004) to capture adequately the complexity of phase-relevant dispositional coherence and human flourishing.

End Notes

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Table. Integrative Ethical Education Processes and Skills

Process 1: Ethical Sensitivity
ES-1: Understand Emotional Expression (e.g., identify and express emotions, manage anger)
ES-2: Take the Perspectives of Others (e.g., take a cultural perspective)
ES-3: Connecting to Others (e.g., relate to others, show care, be a friend)
ES-4: Responding to diversity (e.g., perceive diversity, become multicultural)
ES-5: Controlling Social Bias (e.g., diagnose bias, overcome bias, nurture tolerance)
ES-6: Interpreting Situations (e.g., perceive morality, respond creatively)
ES 7: Communicate Well (e.g., speaking and listening, monitor communication)
Process 2: Ethical Judgment
EJ-1: Understanding Ethical Problems (e.g., gather information, categorize problems)
EJ-2: Using Codes and Identifying Judgment Criteria (e.g., discern code application)
EJ-3: Reasoning Generally (e.g., use sound reasoning, make scientific method intuitive)
EJ-4: Reasoning Ethically (e.g., judge perspectives, reason about standards and ideals)
EJ 5: Understand Consequences (e.g., choose environments, predict consequences)
EJ-6: Reflect on the Process and Outcome (e.g., reason about means/ends, re-design the process)
EJ 7: Coping (e.g., apply positive reasoning, develop resilience)
Process 3: Ethical Focus
EM-1: Respecting Others (e.g., be civil and courteous, be non-violent, show reverence)
EM-2: Cultivate Conscience (e.g., self command, manage influence and power, be honorable)
EM-3: Act Responsibly (e.g., meet obligations, be a good steward, be a good citizen)
EM-4: Be a Community Member (e.g., cooperate, share resources, cultivate wisdom)
EM-5: Finding Meaning in Life (e.g., center yourself, cultivate commitment, cultivate wonder)
EM-6: Valuing Traditions and Institutions (e.g., understand social structures)
EM-7: Developing Ethical Identity and Integrity (e.g., build identity, reach for your potential)
Process 4: Ethical Action
EA-1: Resolving Conflicts and Problems (e.g., negotiate, make amends)
EA 2: Assert Respectfully (e.g., attend to human needs, build assertiveness skills)
EA-3: Take Initiative as a Leader (e.g., take initiative for and with others, mentor others)
EA 4: Planning to Implement (e.g., think strategically, determine resource use)
EA-5: Cultivate Courage (e.g., manage fear, change, uncertainty; stand up under pressure)
EA-6: Persevering (e.g., be steadfast, overcome obstacles, build competence)
EA-7: Work Hard (e.g., set reachable goals, manage time, take charge of your life)