SELF-DEVELOPMENT AND MORAL RECIPROCITY IN A GLOBAL AGE

BY

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Dedication

This thesis paper is dedicated to:

My lovers – for making realize that I didn't love myself.
My friends – for making me believe that I should.
My family – for reminding me that I could.
God – for always knowing that I would.

Forward

When I finally sat down to write what I hoped to be the final version of this thesis paper,

I felt compelled to tell my readers what inspired this research topic, especially after

spinning my wheels in my personal and academic life for far longer than was considered

"normal" or acceptable by my friends, family, and academic mentor. Recently, I started

reading a book that seemed to parallel my personal and academic journey and can be

summed up in the following excerpt.

> In the years after college, my sense of self catapulted from black hole to rising
>
> star to lunar eclipse on a daily basis. I moved to a new city full of several
>
> thousand other art damaged interdisciplinary bohemians juggling a handful of part
>
> time jobs...I felt like a hawk circling a mouse that kept disappearing into a hole. I
>
> was always moving, swooping, searching, but at the end of the day, I was still
>
> hungry! (Lloyd, 1963)

In the years and months leading up to this paper, I had been struggling anxiously but

diligently, like many "twenty-somethings," to construct a viable identity. As I carved out

my niche in the world of adulthood, I was trying to achieve the coveted sense of maturity and fulfillment that I have longed for subconsciously since birth. At many times on this journey, I felt jealous that this "state of grace" was something many of my peers, even those younger than me in chronological age, already possessed. At other times, I felt blessed simply in my awareness that I could achieve it, seeing that others hadn't even begun to realize they desired it.

For me, the process of identity building has evolved over 25 years, but always with a distinct teetering between entertainer and academic. At different stages of my childhood and adolescence, I was immersed in one or the other completely, but still was able to juggle both. Into adulthood, it became clear that my fear of choosing was preventing me from becoming a master of either.

In May of 2012, I had finished all of my coursework for my graduate degree in the Humanities and Sciences program at Fordham University. I was finishing up a year-long internship at wonderful non-profit and had been hinted at multiple times that there was a more than a slim possibility of being hired full time. In my mind, all I needed to do was to complete one single paper and I was on my way to a promising career in social policy. So you can imagine my shock when there were no positions available at the company. At the same time, Fordham dismantled my unique interdisciplinary program leaving me feeling abandoned in my research and having no mentor to lean on. When it felt like my world could have crumbled around me, I tried to grasp on to any part of it that I could control.

When control spiraled from my career, I tried to take it back by changing courses. Having just spent a fantastic year in New York City, I felt a cosmic pull to revisit a latent part of me. I may have been a busted up dancer, but I was confident that being in the environment of NYC and brushing up was all I needed to quickly get back in shape and control my destiny toward a road of stardom. I ceased my job search, picked up a part time gig at a restaurant and set out to be on Broadway.

After only a few short months, it was painfully clear that the part of my identity that I considered a dancer was slowly becoming a hoax. I was a server working 50 hours a week at a restaurant, spending my late evenings consumed in alcohol and partying, maybe doing a few auditions a month. At the same time, the part of my identity that I considered an academic, as a Master of Arts, was inconsistent with the fact that through no inaction but my own, this thesis paper remained incomplete. I became increasingly tormented on a daily basis by my fragmented sense of self, and ultimately an absence of self-love. Like many people do, I began searching instead for control in my relationships, and in other types of vice. Along the way, I met many people who may have loved me, until they became cognizant of my controlling neurosis (and perhaps a reflection of their own in me) – a neurosis I was only slightly aware of at the time, although my awareness grew with each failed relationship. Each time, my inability to receive love became more and more a reflection of my inability to love myself.

I went on this way for nearly a year until the loss of integrity between who I believed myself to be and who I actually am became unbearable. I felt loved by my family and friends in New York, who I was convinced "knew" the "real" me, but even they were beginning to pick up on the grand charade. Some urged me to go back to applying for a full-time job, others just encourage me to actually put myself out there and truly dance. Most frighteningly my family had begun insisting that no matter what, I seek counseling, or even medication. I couldn't afford therapy and medication was never an option in my psychology student mindset.

So, in a moment of monumental sacrifice for my dreams, I decided to trade-in my luxury apartment in Midtown for a small unit in Spanish Harlem that was half the price so I could start focusing less on making money and more on whatever I found to be truly important for my growth, whether it be school or dance. I was actually pretty excited to start cracking down on myself and setting higher expectations for my future, as I had always done before this time. But that wasn't in the cards for me. At the last minute possible, the day of lease signing and the day before move-in, my future roommate bailed out on me and I was left stranded with no place to live. Out of one part desperation, two parts hope, I decided – overnight – that I was calling in quits in NYC and moving out to Los Angeles. I had always wanted a big adventure and this was my chance to get away and make something of myself. I left with the genuine idea that I would pursue a career in dance (but what I've found out here turned out to be so much more). Within three weeks, I packed up my things, slept on couches while I saved up as much money as I could and took the road trip out west. I started my new life on January 1, 2013.

Although I didn't realize it at the time – because I convinced myself I was running toward my destiny – I was actually running away from my blaring failure to control my life in New York. Yet, I kept telling people out here in California that dance and social work was a big part of who I am. I made "friends" and began "relationships" easily because people were drawn in by my enthusiasm and vitality toward life. But it was all a mask of desperation that dissipated as soon as my control in my relationships was challenged. This charade continued until yet a few more failed relationships slapped me in the face with the reality of my self-hate.

I was beginning to feel hopeless. I never felt more like a failure then when multiple men in my life actually begged me to stop contacting them. I had no real friends in California, and no family with whom I was close enough to entrust the secrets and deep insecurities of my broken past. I was literally and figuratively alone. There were days I would send desperate emails at four in the morning begging for companionship. Thank God for my support system back home which included several people who endured panic attacks, hyperventilation and suicide threats. I often thought about downing a bottle of pills and could barely make it through a shift at work without some serious concern from my coworkers about my personal life. It was a scary time. The reality is that instead of focusing on my self-development, I had put all my cards into being a doting girlfriend, because I could control that. When it failed me, I was broken, empty, and completely isolated.

So I did the only thing I knew I loved. I plunged into learning. I picked up my dusty research, seeking some sort of clarity. At an even more interesting apex, I realized that my journey was beginning to parallel my academic pursuits in a way that was nothing short of uncanny. When I came to California, I was already beginning to have faith that everything was happening for a reason. It was all far too poetic to be happenstance. Yet I still could not find the strength to pray or to abandon the secular morals I had adopted during my time in the big apple. What I came to realize was that my spirituality was broken – and so I was broken.

Fortunately, a few kindred spirits guided me toward the light. Some advised me to seek counseling and others advised me to seek God. As I tried to focus my spirituality, I forgot how much I distrusted "God." "God" made my stepfather die and left my mother stranded with six children (including a newborn) and no life insurance. "God" made all of my friends from college turn their backs on me at the time when I needed them most. "God" destroyed my grandparents' homes leaving them stranded. "God" was not good to me. Only I was good to me – until I wasn't anymore. My loss of faith in "God" was really a loss of faith in myself. Yet saving myself wasn't working anymore.

At the same time, after several botched attempts at a thesis proposal, and on the recommendation of my mentor, I began exploring the work of Erich Fromm. I found comfort in his assertion that love is an art, and that a person could actually learn to love and to thus be loved. But it became immediately clear to me that in order to love, one must first have a reason to live – a spiritual purpose. To this end, I sought religious

counseling and psychotherapy on a weekly basis. Since that relative epiphany, I centered myself on the sole task of reintegrating my identity toward the purpose of learning how to genuinely spread my love.

But which paradigm was going to "save me" I wondered: "God" or psychology? Imagine the – forgive my language – MINDFUCK that I was experiencing. I was reading the works of world-renowned psychologists, philosophers, and religious experts on rational identity, moral character, and spiritual purpose whilst simultaneously attempting to develop these assets myself. I was constantly a doctor of my own growth. I was playing my own therapist, documenting my successes and failures along the way and bridging them with existing academic research. I was my own patient, and every relationship I built was a test case for my ability to spread love, and I was failing miserably.

At this juncture, my religious advisor recommended that I pray. She told me that if I asked God to show himself to me, he would. I thought this was a load of crap. But on that fateful morning when I woke up uncontrollably sobbing, wanting to bang my head against a glass shower door, I yelled out to "God." The voice that answered was me, but it was not just me. It was the sea of souls who I had given a part of myself to, who would lose that love if I lost myself. So I started telling myself that if I could have faith in at least one other person, then at least one other person had faith in me. And that was enough. That was when I finally grasped how "God" becomes our common faith, hope, and love.

It was only when I truly absorbed the fullness and richness of self that I found by letting "God" back into my life that this love and "goodness" really spread this onto my relationships. As soon as I realized how important self-development is to healthy relationships, I tried to repair my old flames. Unfortunately, the time was inopportune, and so I began to focus on developing new healthy relationships instead. I approached every new friendship with humility and respect – attempting to listen more and speak less, to learn more and preach less, to give more, and expect less. Low and behold, by the end of my six-month journey actually doing this "lived experience" research, I had built such strong connections with those new people around me that I was actually receiving arbitrary compliments on how much of a "light" I shared with those around me. I was finally able to give and receive love from everyone I came in contact with. My friendships were blossoming, my career began taking off, and I had droves of men coming in my direction. What was remarkable though, was that I was happy with myself before these things happened for me, and not the other way around. I wasn't acting much differently than before. I was pursuing all of the same activities and goals, but the key was that I was wearing a new heart.

Now remember now that my studies are in human development and social intervention. The more I came to realize myself that self-love is the utmost sign of developmental maturity, I acknowledged that my view of the society is no different – in that the human race must also strive for growth and maturity in identity and character. In a broad sense, society's sense of self is embedded in its institutions – which means that the solution or dissolution of the world's most pressing social problems lies in the ability to understand

these institutions accurately and to reshape them effectively. This led me down several rabbit holes exploring the nature and nurture of various institutions, of which there are obviously innumerable choices and directions for research. After grounding myself, with the help of my writing coach, I came to the realization that what I was truly exploring was not a simple research paper, but the introduction of a brand new framework for institutional analysis and development, based on my both my personal experiences with love, rationality, and productivity and the vast source of social science research on the same topics. What follows, is the rationale for that new global paradigm.

Introduction

As Karen Armstrong (2009, July) has pointed out, "one of the great tasks of our time is to build a global society where people can live together in peace." Put in slightly more academic terms, Armstrong is speaking of moral reciprocity. Moral reciprocity is a sense of mutual responsibility for one others' well-being that results from an orientation of common humanity, rather than as a product of structural and institutional persuasion. This type of moral reciprocity can flourish regardless of religious and social pluralism, and does not rest solely on the redistributive institutions that perpetuate the modern welfare state, which is a highly mediated form of economic morality (Stone, 1996). Unfortunately, this "great task" seems often forgotten or pushed aside in a global conversation that is dominated by economics and justice – which is ironic because it is our moral division that has led to many of the world's most dire social and economic problems. When world peace does sneak into the dialogue, it is dismissed as a futile hope.

While reconciling humanity's moral pluralism is an overwhelming undertaking to say the least, the alternative consequence of a likely world war should be a sobering reminder that if we don't pursue world peace virulently, we will ultimately destroy ourselves in the name of economic rights and social justice. In 2013, our radically pluralistic world – a swelling hodge-podge agglomeration of culture, meta-cultures and worldviews – begs the question: is there a promising route to moral integration that could lead to world peace *and* social justice?

This also raises some corollary moral questions such as: Who is responsible for the promotion of human betterment, "scientific hard-hats, or do-gooders?" (Zigler, 1998, p. 535) "Are people a creative resource rather than a burden [whose] power of innovation [to] counter scarcity will creatively produce enough to sustain the world?" (Dolgoff & Feldstein, 2003, p. 345) And "why, in the face of ever-mounting data and the capacity to transmit it cheaply and easily, do we continue to make unquestionably poor decisions about health and well-being?" (Aber et al., 2007, p. 43)

As we begin to explore these questions in the context of globalization, it is revealed that a fear of scarcity has changed the risks involved in making moral decisions. As Dolgoff and Feldstein (2003) note, there are two schools of thought about rapid globalization and population growth: that "present levels of production and consumption of resources cannot be sustained" (p. 343) or conversely that "social problems and resource disparities persist because of political and distribution problems" (p. 344). That resources in society are considered limited is a fundamental assumption of the social work profession (IFSW, 2012) but perhaps this a flawed assumption. The question is one of scarcity versus allocation, and the answer lies in "whether the growth in population ultimately brings with it an increase in useful knowledge and measurable capacity to manage the increasingly complex exchange of resources in a way that is sustainable at least and promotive at best" (Dolgoff & Feldstein, 2003, p. 345) or the development of human capital.

In either scenario, it is clear that the development of resources is key to the maintenance

of civil society. That development should be a goal of all institutions is not a novel idea.

About fifteen years ago it gained traction in the United Nations. At that time, the General

Assembly adopted the Millennium Declaration. Two years later, they released the

Millennium Development Goals: outcomes-driven objectives for minimizing the impact

of widespread and urgent social-welfare concerns. The Millennium goals include

reducing deep and persistent poverty, racial and gender inequities, and child mortality

while increasing maternal health, universal public education, environmental protection,

resource sustainability, and global partnership (Millennium Summit, 2000, September 6-

8).

In the face of declining economies and international wars, nations have been forced to

analyze whether current institutions are equipped to effectively meet market demands and

solve complex problems of distribution that have hindered progress toward these

Millennium Development Goals. Many regimes are rigorously exploring "development"

as the production, distribution, and sustainability of natural and manmade resources; far

fewer, or at least less vociferous and powerful, are those talking about developing the

human assets that lead to productivity and innovative sustainability in the first place. As

Morse (2010, p. 2) has eloquently highlighted, "in economics, we assume as adults that

everyone comes into the market somehow ready to make contracts, ready to defend their

property rights, ready to respect others' property rights…[but really] it is not automatic

that a person starts from infancy and becomes a functioning adult." This sentiment is

echoed by Dolgoff and Feldstein (2003, p. 352) who add that "on a personal level, there

are psychological implications of living in a pluralistic society…[which] require the

ability to live with differences…[and] one result of not fully comprehending the thinking

of people with whom one works or lives near is anxiety." So a focus on human

development is essential to sustain a positive and adaptive civil society, and it is crucial

to identify which aspects of human development are most essential for both individual

capital-building and for public policies and institutions that foster moral reciprocity.

Scattered within the reigning narratives of economic development and justice there is a

scholarly undercurrent pulling human development to the forefront of the global rhetoric.

Progressive scholars like Safarty (Human Rights and the Global Economy, November 9,

2011) note that one step toward the Millennium goals is to modify the international trade

and investment environment, including the amendment of treaties, to encourage

international investment in sustainable industry and human development. Similarly,

Reddy prompts us to ask, "how would the WTO function differently if development

instead of world trade was the goal?" Reddy says support for this objective is virtually

unanimous (Human Rights and the Global Economy, November 9, 2011). De Schutter

also remarks "it is one thing to build bridges between regimes but it is another to reshape

these relationships to uphold objectives such as human development" (Human Rights and

the Global Economy, November 9, 2011). Finally Dolgoff & Feldstein (2003) share the

hope that the opportunity is ripe to move beyond mere innovation in the production and

consumption of resources: as engineers, social scientists, and policy makers meet at the

same table, the development of human capital is emerging as one of the most promising

routes to reach the Millennium Goals.

Progress along this route requires reconciliation between two competing narratives: social development and economic development. Because resource scarcity is a legitimate concern, the integration of these narratives is critical for holistic human development and social justice to be realized. If these narratives are not integrated, neither will thrive; or the economic will win out, and "increasing productivity in itself does not mean greater emphasis on social welfare concerns" (Dolgoff & Feldstein, 2003, p. 349). A good first step toward this integration would be proving that moral development and reciprocity are crucial competitive advantages in a world of moral pluralism.

Methodology

The research foundation for this paper stems from an interdisciplinary course of study in the social sciences. Most of today's research on moral development has been relegated to the academic disciplines of philosophy and psychology; this paper is a call to understand moral development as an urgent topic for all the social sciences and various fields of the humanities. One promising approach to this interdisciplinary paradigm is rooted in public policy and the field of Applied Developmental Science.

> Applied Developmental Science (ADS) may act as an instrument for the
> promotion of civil society by (1) ADS-oriented scholars conducting research that
> engages public policy; and (2) such scholars working to promote in their
> institutions a sustained commitment to engaging their communities in
> collaborative actions that merge research and service in support of civil
> society…If such ADS scholarship and the institutions within such work is
> conducted are to contribute to the enhancement and future maintenance of civil

society, they must aid policymakers to develop principles or strategies – policies –

that enable all families to produce children capable of, and committed to,

contributing to self and society in a positive and integrated way. In other words, in

the superordinate sense of enabling civil society to be maintained and perpetuated,

all families with children have the responsibility of socializing the next generation

in ways that allow children to become productive and committed members of

society. Any society, then, needs to… enable such contributions to be made by the

diverse families that exist within it… For a society whose maintenance and

advancement rests upon integrative contributions by all sectors and institutions…

[it is imperative] to maintain and perpetuate such actions [in which] social

functioning that supports civil society [is] transformed into public policy. (Lerner,

Fisher, &Weinberg, 2000, p. 15)

ADS scholarship is an exemplar of this futuristic direction of social research and was a

catalyst for this thesis. However, at the core, *all* of the humanities and sciences are

interested in studying and changing human behavior such that both well-being and

productivity are actualized and even maximized.

What is problematic from a policy perspective is the sporadic communication

among researchers, service providers, and government officials who make

decisions about the allocation of limited resources to health, education, and

human service systems that interact separately with the same children and

families. Thus the…implementation of significantly more effective policies and

programs will require a fundamental culture shift in the relations among research,

policy and practice…What we need is a single integrated knowledge base of shared theories of change that can be applied across a wide range of policy and service sectors [which would] offer greater promise for productive collaboration than the simple call to improve communication among agencies and individuals who are guided by diverse practices and disconnected historical precedents (Shonkoff, 2012 p. 16).

In this way, ADS must also meet with other disciplines doing similar work. For example, ADS scholars can partner with macro- and micro-focused social workers to ensure that policy change is accompanied by a change in macro-level (global and national) cultural narratives *and* micro-level (local and individual) strategies for social welfare that complement rather than conflict with one another.

Social work is about people being able to realize their full human potential and hence it is concerned with constructions of universal ideals of humanity…The important task of social workers is to deconstruct our inadequate ideas of humanity (i.e. western, patriarchal, individualistic) and replace them with a 'reflective universal morality'…[yet] in doing so, we need to be wary of both the sterile universalism of positivism, denying the validity of local contextual knowledge, and the equally sterile relativism of postmodernism, denying the importance of universal themes of humanity. (Ife, 2001, p. 9)

Because this paper is focused on moral development, it is a meta-analytic review of moral development from philosophy and psychology, and brings this review into the

realm of social work. It examines how our ecology affects our moral motivations and how our moral motivations affect our ecology. When institutional development is paralleled with individual development using ADS, it becomes immediately clear that "morally neutral economic development" is a chimera: any analysis of social exchange, including economic analysis, is inherently a moral analysis. The domain of the moral is always the domain of the social or collective for it is the domain of shared culture and language from which all morality emerges.

As this research expands, it hopes to incorporate other disciplines – especially sociology, economics, and neuroscience – that can bring distinctly different and helpful perspectives into the conversation.

Theory Proposal

Morality and Developmental Justice

If the basic premise of the global free market is that individuals enter into social (moral) contracts as highly autonomous agents, able to engage productively and predictably with others such that nobody's freedom is explicitly or implicitly oppressed in the contract-making process, then social institutions that perpetuate moral dependency will stifle economic productivity, making resources seem more scarce, or at least less accessible. When resources are scarce, moral (and economic) reciprocity tends to become the exception rather than the norm, making social justice nearly impossible.

One of the ways we have historically juggled the task of allocating scarce resources is by creating technology that enables people to interact with one another and their environments in ways that were once unimaginable (Dolgoff & Feldstein, 2003). However, a problem arises. Communication and information technologies "can store and transmit vast amounts of knowledge and make this available, via the Internet, as never before, [which] subtly but significantly transforms what we consider knowledge, equating it to that which can be stored in a computer or transmitted digitally" (Ife, 2001, p. 8). One byproduct of this understanding of "knowledge" in the global age is that it has altered both the individual processes and the collective paradigms by which people seek and process information relevant to their moral development and decision-making.

Anecdotally, individual moral development has been as much if not more negatively affected by globalization and the technological revolution than the distribution of natural resources needed for physical development or the financial/industrial capital needed for economic development.

The technological revolution has enabled cognitive "knowledge" of self and other to spread exponentially through increased digital connectedness, yet there has also been a sense of emotional isolation and disconnectedness from responsibility to self and others. This has been a grave change in emotional knowledge and regulation, resulting from a typical to over-reliance on digital communication. Interpersonal technology has created an environment in which individuals and institutions experience polar opposite extremes of explicit versus implicit knowledge about oneself and other persons. Grand ideological

narratives such as the fight for human rights are spread rapidly between people on opposite sides of the globe. These ideological narratives make up one kind of primarily cognitive, technical "knowledge" that is absorbed through digital news. This type of knowledge can contribute to mass conceptions about what we need and should expect from others and is often times not vetted from a reliable source. At the same time, "personal" knowledge and emotional responses to highly subjective and often private endeavors are absorbed through social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. This type of "knowledge" reflects ideas about how we view our worth and the worth of others. As these two forms of knowledge begin to blend, quantitative digital cues such as a "Facebook like," are quickly the new measure of our social worth, and to the degree that internet popularity yields business innovation, of our economic potential. This blending can lead to a distorted perception of our own talents, interests, civic engagement, and economic potential and lead to deep insecurity about our inability to fulfill the expectations set on us by these grand ideological narratives, while at the same time increasing the demands upon us to be responsible and connected at all times. In this way, "while everybody tries to be as close as possible to the rest, everybody remains utterly alone, pervaded by a deep sense of insecurity, anxiety, and guilt" (Fromm, 1956, p. 80) that at best may hamper or impede full human potential and moral reciprocity and at worst may result in mental, physical, and emotional health problems that are an economic drain to society and a serious predictor of risk behaviors that are destructive for personal well-being.

In other words, the global information-technology revolution has led simultaneously to a growth in the empirical science of justice and a decline in the socio-emotional assets that facilitate moral reciprocity and lead to the daily practice of justice. As the internet has become part of our moment-to-moment experiences, through laptops, tablets, gaming systems, television, and most especially smartphones, we have forgotten that "spirituality, story-telling…music, art, theatre, poetry, dance, love, laughter, games, and the experience of nature can be profound conveyors of knowledge" (Ife, 2001, p.8). In many ways,

> …while we teach knowledge, we are losing that teaching which is the most
> important one for human development: the teaching which can only be given by
> the simple presence of a mature, loving person…If we should not succeed in
> keeping alive a vision of mature life, than indeed we are confronted with the
> probability that our whole culture will break down. This tradition is not primarily
> based on the transmission of certain kinds of knowledge, but of certain kinds of
> human traits. If the coming generations will not see these traits anymore, a five-
> thousand-year-old culture will break down, even if its knowledge is transmitted
> and further developed. (Fromm, 1956, p. 108)

This bifurcation in the transmittal of "knowledge" can lead and has often led to a new way of "educating" young children where "the refractionating of the young child seen in the current emphasis on cognitive and literacy development is to the neglect of social-emotional development" (Aber et. al, 2007, p. 24).

If large numbers of individuals lack physical or cognitive moral developmental assets, then the free market will suffer, as those participants will be a liability to collective economic development. In this situation world peace and justice will seem hopeless, as health and education become less and less accessible, affordable, efficient, and effective. Socio-emotional assets such as moral reciprocity are equally if not more important to the functioning of the free market as traditionally recognized economic assets like a stable currency, transportation infrastructure, and corporate culture among others and those socio-emotional resources can also be developed.

Partly because of the new understanding of knowledge and partly because of the lack of integration between academic disciplines like economics and psychology, socio-emotional resources are not being developed well, or even recognized as economic assets. Instead there is a growing degree of _developmental injustice_ – a growing disparity in the cognitive, and especially emotional, resources that individuals must possess in order to participate in the free market as morally responsible agents.

Although the proximate consequences of globalization are not inherently optimistic for peace and justice, it does not mean that the effort is hopeless. A promising avenue to the restoration of optimism for peace and justice in humanity is the restoration of optimism in the individual person. Human behaviors motivated by a sense of moral futility will be resistant to change, while behavior motivated by moral optimism will be amiable to change. Therefore, a focus on the development of an integrated moral self will enrich optimism in the inherent dignity, worth, and productivity of oneself. This optimism will

catalyze a similar hope in the integrity and promise of the market. Optimism leads to innovation and moral reciprocity, ensuring that resources are valued, created, and sustained, maximizing economic productivity and facilitating social justice. ADS scholarship is a powerful vehicle to disseminate this concurrent developmental model.

Autonomy and Attachment

While the global age may reinforce anxiety through certain information technology, Fromm (1956) is clear that that emotional insecurity stems primarily from unhealthy relationships with parental and other primary figures in childhood and are forms of symbiotic attachment – just the opposite of the moral developmental autonomy needed to thrive in the free market. Describing moral development in terms of attachment is profoundly helpful because it recognizes that what happens in the brain during childhood hardwires moral reciprocity and other socio-emotional knowledge that translates into adult behaviors. It is this process of social development that is inherently dynamic and transactional between resources *within* the individual and characteristics of the environment (Waters & Srouffe, 1983). This behavioral development is primarily dependent on executive functioning and self-regulation that are crucial to positive outcomes in both childhood and adulthood (Center on the Developing Child, 2011).

A brief review of attachment theory suggests that an infant is learning affect-regulation through "mirror neurons" that fire during interactions with the primary caregiver. These implicit sources of self-relevant information become hardwired into the limbic structures, which are unconscious so that "early experiences are built into our bodies for better or for

worse" (Shonkoff, 2012, p. 3). As new information challenges the safety of the old brain, there becomes a split between the conscious (cerebral cortex) and unconscious motivations (Schwartz, IAEDP Conference, December 7, 2013). New psychotherapies are testing ways to get deep into the limbic structures and promote "regeneration" to re-integrate the limbic and cerebral structures.

We already know that having a secure attachment leads to positive and productive outcomes in school achievement, earning potential, and other measures of subjective well-being, while the long-term effects of disorganized attachment are negative outcomes and even dissociative disorders (Schwartz, IAEDP Conference, December 7, 2013). There is some political resistance to attachment work because it seems to imply that we are blaming mothers. Nonetheless, attachment disorders account for 70% of variance in cognitive and emotional disorders– incredibly robust for psychological predictability (Schwartz, IAEDP Conference, December 7, 2013).

The reality is that disorganized attachment and its concomitant impoverishment of moral development are costly to both families and society. They cause a huge tax burden in and of themselves, as are the social interventions and redistributive policies designed to address them. Consider this:

> Economists just assume that people show up dressed and ready to play in the free market, and in fact there's a whole lot of work that goes on to make that possible. What you really need is to be attached to your mother…if you get a kid with attachment disorder, it is very expensive to take care of a child like that, so it

often comes to the point where the family can't do it themselves. And who steps

in? Well, the criminal justice system often steps in…the more profound and deep

truth about the reality of the family is that the family is creating relationships and

the ability to be in relationships. Delivering [social services and welfare

programs] is a part of how that's happening. When the state gets involved, we

have disrupted the relationships—a profound anti-social act. If you look at many

of our social programs, they have the actual desire to disrupt the relationships.

(Morse, 2010, p. 3)

For this reason, ADS scholars are pushing for financial investment and interventions for

vulnerable children and families and it seems obvious that this push should continue to

focus on attachment work and family support programs (Aber et al., 2007) as a promising

route to productivity.

Ultimately, "when we invest in children and families, the next generation will pay that

back through a lifetime of productivity and responsible citizenship" (Center on the

Developing Child, 2007). In the 21st century, child development research is focusing on

how multi-cultural, multi-disciplinary and multi-generational strategies for family

support can both increase human capital and contribute to well-being and justice in their

own right. However,

    …to sell [taxpayers] on supporting the children's cause requires a perspective

    that…(a) our knowledge about child development [can] advance the nation's

    human capital and ensure the ongoing viability of its democratic institutions and

    (b) our knowledge [can] contribute to nurturing, protecting, and ensuring the

health and well-being of all young children as an important objective in its own right. The first agenda speaks to society's economic, political, and social interests…linking the care and protection of the young to the nation's future productivity. The second agenda speaks to society's moral and ethical values focusing attention on the quality of life. (Aber et. al. 2007, p. 24)

Because of the political and moral pluralism in this global age, coupled with the desire for instant gratification and concrete returns on investment in children and families, the science of child development – while very convincing in many respects – is not an easy sell for political and social movements that expect to enjoy the fruits of their advocacy within their lifetimes. Perhaps it is beyond the realm of perception for adults who experience economic injustice on a daily basis to imagine exactly how a targeted and large-scale investment in child development policies might bolster future generations of healthy, productive, civically-oriented children and ensure an economic revival. In this sense, ADS must breach the political realm and ensure the mass dissemination and advocacy of public policy that is developmentally informed. Simultaneously, ADS must not be limited to child development. Developmental science across the lifespan is equally relevant to well-being and productivity research and is a parallel route to peace and justice.

Love as a Developmental Phenomenon

In adults, the integration of a disorganized or dissociative attachment that has developed from a conflict of explicit and implicit knowledge requires overcoming the "child-like"

narcissistic ego (Fromm, 1956; Tolle, 2005) to achieve self-transcendence (Conn, 1998) and lead to moral reciprocity. The logic of moral development as self-transcendence begins by recognizing that an egotistical "self-love" is traditionally described as narcissistic and selfish; this is well documented in theology, philosophy, and psychology (Abercrombie, n.d.; Brown & Bosson, 2001; Campbell, Rudich, Sedikides, 2002; Clark, 1995; Conn, 1998; Fromm, 1939, 1956; Robins, Tracey, & Shaver, 1991; Tolle, 2005; Wayland, n.d.). In more recent history the concept of self-love has been given a positive spin and are primarily described by the construct of self-esteem (Campbell, Rudich, Sedikides, 2002), In light of the dichotomy of knowledge discussed earlier, there is an interesting conclusion to be drawn about this distinction:

> …[when] explicit and implicit knowledge are derived from separate sources, discrepancies can ensue when different messages concerning the individual's self worth are communicated…individuals may develop two sets of knowledge structures that essentially contradict each other… [so] if pre-verbal experiences with the caregiver are an important predictor of a person's implicit self-esteem [or] narcissism, then relations should exist among narcissism, implicit self-esteem, and adult attachment styles. (Brown & Bosson, 2001)

Coupled with Fromm (1956), Brown and Bosson (2001) demonstrate that an integrated self-love is actually a critical component of healthy relationships of all types, and thus is the elemental substance of a society that values moral reciprocity. Although Fromm does not discuss self-esteem per se, it is clear from his interpretation of self-love that self-

esteem does not entirely capture the dynamic aspects of self-love (e.g., self-understanding, self-regulation, self-betrayal, self-compassion).

In order to fully understand this premise, it is important to let go of the common misunderstanding of an egotistical self-love, that "being loveable is essentially a mixture between being popular and having sex appeal" (Fromm, 1956, p. 2). This has been perpetuated in the social media age as Internet popularity has become increasingly correlated to economic potential. First we need to reorient to the notion that "love is not primarily a relationship to a specific person; it is an attitude, an orientation of character which determines the relatedness of the person to the world as a whole, not toward one object of love" (Fromm, 1956, p. 43).

In a way, even the narcissistic ego is a crucial developmental asset, because it empowers individuals to display a coherent rationality that is adaptive for a young brain developing new information structures (Brown & Bosson, 2001). Rationality leads individuals to pursue goals that are advantageous for the self and survival. This rational development and self-serving, survival orientation is a subjective pursuit of the "good life." This may include "experiencing more positive feelings than negative feelings…identifying and using talents and strengths on an ongoing basis, having close interpersonal relationships, being engaged in work and leisure activities, contributing to a social community, perceiving meaning and purpose to life, and being healthy and feeling safe" (Peterson & Park, 2009, p. 3). In short, rational self-love is crucial for individual survival.

Nonetheless, as individuals grow, this rational self-love in individuals may then develop into sense of moral reciprocity, or love for others (Campbell, Foster, & Finkell, 2002). Moral reciprocity leads individuals to be responsible not just for oneself but for one another, and to pursue common goals that are advantageous for the thriving of humanity. This moral development and others-serving, humanitarian orientation is subjective pursuit of a communal "good life." This may include a desire to "[reconcile] estranged social groups [for] the healing of our endangered common habitat, the Earth" (Massingle, 2007, p. 167). In short, this rationally moral love for others is crucial for humanity to thrive.

An integrated self-concept that marries rationality and morality is especially critical to conversations about productivity because all decision-making depends on self-relevant information, whether that information is explicit, implicit, or absent. It is precisely this measure of self-love that in turn will be converted into human capital and economic productivity because love is the essence of the "mature, productive character" (Fromm 1956, p. 77). Therefore, if one is lacking this integration, they will often display a more developmentally immature, idle character. This dissociation can occur if one is highly "rational" with an unfaltering concern for their own well-being but lacking in a moral orientation, or if one has such a "moral" orientation that it is to the detriment of the self—performing grand humanitarian acts or practicing daily good deeds but with little regard for their own growth and needs.

What we are seeing here is that on the individual level, a conflict arises between serving the self and serving the other. It represents the quintessential moral dilemma of the separation of the ego (Fromm, 1956, Keller, 2008) and implies that if development requires *overcoming* the ego, then a sense of moral reciprocity cannot be assumed.

If ego integration is a developmental phenomenon, then there may also be a correlation between the addictions that result from dissociative disorders and those that result from disorganized adult attachment (Schwartz, IAEDP Conference, December 7, 2013) In both cases, there is an ego dissociation that leads to what Fromm labels as a "symbiotic co-dependence" where parts of the ego are fulfilled by something outside the self. Self-love that transcends the dissociated ego provides a way for individuals to integrate their implicit and explicit self-concept (Brown & Bosson, 2001) to achieve intra-psychic intimacy (Schwartz, IAEDP Conference, December 7, 2013) that is not only instrumental (attending to one's physical needs) but is also affective (attending to one's emotional needs). In this way, one can thrive psychologically when they have transcended their rational self regardless of their environmental contexts. This is a highly adaptive mode of survival.

In this way, there exists a very fine line between the development of love as co-dependence versus interdependence, where the former implies attachment and expectation and latter implies autonomy and reciprocity. This distinction is critical because "formation of [moral] character requires true personal freedom in each person, so

that we can take fuller responsibility for our choices and what we have made of ourselves as persons up to now and for our future" (Cosgrave, 2006, p. 135).

Without both explicit *and implicit* autonomy, individuals and groups can get caught in an unhealthy power struggle – either by being instrumentally dependent on the economic virtue of others *or* by being emotionally dependent on the economic power over others– both of which minimize the potential for reciprocity and exacerbate the likelihood of a selfish cognition. Moral reciprocity thus occurs when deep rational autonomy produces deep moral connectedness – the psychological integration between the rational and the moral selves translates to the psychological connectedness between the self and the other as rational power and moral virtue become one and the same (Fromm, 1956).

In terms of socio-economic opportunity and comparative differentiation, there may be an appearance of moral reciprocity that is actually a co-dependent, albeit synergistic, relationship between power and oppression that begins in the individual's dissociation and is reflected in society's political and economic relationships. The prime candidates for dissociation are persons "whose emotional needs [are] not met…[but] who later develop high explicit self-esteem based on positive [direct] assessments of that person's abilities" (Brown & Bosson, 2001, p. 211). This is exactly the type of bifurcation in self-concept that has occurred with the technological revolution and the rise of social media.

Therefore, the resolution of moral fracture between large groups of individuals begins with the resolution of the moral fracture within the self – the dichotomy between the self

as an object (rational) and the self as a subject (moral) (Conn, 1995). Perhaps it is the reconciliation of these intrinsic dissociations through self-love that can also marry instead of divorce our physical need for self-survival that results in competition and our emotional need for human thriving that results in cooperation. This inherent tension between self and other plays out at every institutional level and could benefit from a focused public policy agenda that is based on research around attachment and love.

Essentially, thriving requires self-transcendence of the ego and an integrated morality – which includes self-love, love for others, and love of mankind (Fromm, 1956). This orientation can be considered within individuals, between individuals, between groups, and between nations.

Some scholars have already linked this conceptualization of thriving to the notions of liberty and the advancement of the common good, suggesting that thriving "is a developmental concept that denotes a healthy change process linking a youth with an adulthood status enabling society to be populated by healthy individuals oriented to integratively serve self and civil society" (Lerner, Brentano, Dowling, & Anderson, 2002, p. 22).

Although an orientation toward love and moral reciprocity may occur organically without the help of clinical psychology or public policy, it is not guaranteed to develop. One of the first national interventions designed by ADS scholars to serve the purpose of child development (although not particularly moral development) was that national institution

of Head Start in which researchers and practitioners collaborated. Head Start provides high quality and affordable child-care to ensure healthy outcomes for children in the formative years (Aber et al., 2007). The ADS movement has gained traction in the non-profit world as well. Psychologists with the Search Institute have identified a set of 40 developmental assets for youth to thrive (Benson & Scales, 2005). Similarly, The Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) has bridged knowledge, policy interventions, and field practice to develop a framework known as YouthThrive based on "protective and promotive" factors that mitigate risk and promote healthy development for all children and youth so that they become optimistic, hopeful, resilient and successful adults (Youth Resilience, n.d.). They have also developed multi-generational strategies for implementing these interventions with vulnerable populations such as foster youth, pregnant and parenting youth, and the homeless. These examples are just a few of the many similar programs and interventions designed to address both human and economic development concurrently through a policy and programmatic lens in addition to clinically. That there is growing support for this type of work contributes to the acceptance that developmental assets are just as important as economic assets, especially as they lead to moral autonomy and interdependence instead of symbiotic co-dependence (Fromm, 1956).

Along these lines, while developmental trauma and economic trauma can be mutually exclusive challenges to individual thriving, ADS work is moving toward integrated interventions. This makes sense because large-scale social consequences of economic and developmental injustice appear to be highly co-morbid (e.g., poverty, abuse/neglect,

health disparities, criminal justice involvement, infant mortality, maternal health) and these outcomes are directly related to the necessity of a national social welfare system in America and a more global social justice paradigm like the International Bill of Human Rights.

Developmental justice is actualized when the greatest possible number of individuals has established true developmental autonomy – such that they can simultaneously love self and other, and thus serve both self and other in the global free market. It requires that individuals have sufficient knowledge of their own intrapersonal self-concept as a foundation upon which to make interpersonal social contracts with compassion toward the motivations and needs the other.

It follows that "if one examines the relationship between nations, as well as between individuals, one comes to the conclusion that objectivity is the exception and a greater or lesser degree of narcissistic distortion is the rule" (Fromm, 1956, p. 111). In other words, nations and regimes, and institutions can be considered "narcissistic" and developmentally immature in much the same way as an individual.

 So not only should we not assume that our institutions promote moral development but we should look critically at how they may hinder it. Coupled together, conceptualizing social justice as both economic *and* developmental justice will ultimately lead to a more holistic approach to social welfare policy and social work practice.

For an individual to develop an integrated morality ultimately rests on the type and quality of information that individual uses to make decisions about psychological and physical resources. For example, the field of Strategic Frame Analysis" finds "that people reason out of deeply held moral values, more than on the basis of self-interest of 'pocket-book' appeals. These values are big ideas like freedom, justice, community, success, prevention, responsibility…higher level frames "map their values and reasoning to lower level frames (like child care or earned income tax credit) but not the reverse" (Aber et al., 2007, p. 55). Although an analysis of information processing is beyond the scope of this paper, it points to the notion that both personal interaction and global paradigms have a crucial impact on moral development and moral reciprocity, and that the spirit of the law maps our intrinsic ideology about the letter of the law.

In today's global age, surviving and thriving in adulthood are unnecessarily pitted against one another through these higher-level frames, situated between grand capitalistic narratives of personal responsibility and the individual rights paradigm for social justice. This societal dichotomy between personal responsibility and social justice mirrors the dissociation between rational autonomy and moral dependence that I have found in psychology and philosophy.

So the task if first to change the higher level framing through a new paradigm, and then, to create specific policies, practices, and tools that promote the development of autonomy and self-love. This will also require that government takes responsibility to "identify which hold out the most optimism for the nation...in planning, human resource

development, allocation, funding supports, and so on" (Dolgoff & Feldstein, 2003, p. 349) because "economic and social policies such as housing, transportation, defense, and redistribution look radically different if viewed from the perspective of a developmentalist who evaluates policies in terms of their capacity to support human growth and change over the life course" (Aber et al., 2007, p. 4).

Therefore, in this paper I will show that the very principles of operation in today's global age are correlated with prevailing ideas economic development and about human moral development, and that these current ideas are flawed.

Analysis

As I have proposed, the dichotomy between the rational and the moral has only been amplified in the global age of pluralism and has perpetuated affective dissociation between rights-seeking individuals and groups. If the modern idea to resolve moral pluralism is to create a framework of moral development that can encompass both a religious and secular morality, then a brief history of religious and secular morality is in order.

The Rise of Moral Pluralism

One of the historical events most relevant to the concept of spiritual competence was the Protestant Reformation. The Reformation was one of the major turning points in Western history from which post-modern conceptions of subjective moral development have sprung.

Before the Reformation, the prescriptions of the Catholic faith – as absolute truth – were taken from the authority of kings and popes. Martin Luther introduced a new framework for normative moral development, one that centered on building a personal relationship with God. One earthshaking idea of the Reformation was the idea that each individual engages in a reasoning process with "God" (in this case the Scriptures) and comes to understand spirituality himself. The Reformation thus removed the prescriptive nature of Church, insisting instead that man discover "God," by becoming fully convinced about God in his own mind. Once this paradigm was in place, there was evidence all throughout the scriptures that man had a *responsibility* to be his own final arbiter of truth and to respect others' who disagreed. However, this new normative ideal of individual moral development was still founded on the Western, Roman Catholic accounts of the Bible as the sole descriptive narrative of creationism. While the principal historical consequence of the Reformation was theological (the fracture of the Church into new and multiple Christian "denominations" e.g., Lutheran, Calvinist) the Protestant Reformation also paved the way for the rise of the "individual," and for non-religious social, political, and economic changes and movements.

Responsibility as "God"

If we think about the notion of "God" as a universal, moral construct rather than a biblical, creationist construct, the social movements that developed from the Protestant Reformation created a bifurcation in this notion of "God" – one was a God of the

Christian faith and the second was a God of secular truth. The first refraction, The Great

Awakening (1720s) followed a Christian theological path and

> rested on doctrine of faith, repentance, and above all, regeneration, or being born
>
> again – a concrete ascertainable conversion experience, one however which laid
>
> increasing emphasis on *human* responsibility rather than the work of God
>
> alone…which strengthened individual piety and encouraged a spirit of religious
>
> independence…by stressing the potential salvation of all human beings –Christ
>
> died not for the elect alone, but for all people, its adherents claimed – the Great
>
> Awakening, a mass movement, fostered humane attitudes and popularized
>
> philanthropy at all levels of society…[it] minimized the importance of rank and
>
> called for the participation of the individual in his [or her] own salvation
>
> (Trattner, 1999, p. 36).

This notion of "God" was one in which the individual is responsible for respecting

himself by taking responsibility for developing his own inherent capacities. It was by

having faith in his own experiences that led him to treat others with respect. This notion

of "God" in terms of morality paved the way for the concept of personal responsibility.

Nearly simultaneously, the Enlightenment was a separate refractory movement that

followed a secular path and

> resulted mainly from the growth of science…established the notion of a
>
> mechanical, harmonious, law-governed universe that could be understood by
>
> human beings through the use of their reason…[and] argued that all people

possess reason and therefore are, or can be, equal; that there is no need for

supernatural revelation, for men and women, through the use of their reason, can

comprehend the universe; and that since they were not evil but good (or had the

capacity for being good) and could test social institutions by virtue of their reason

and reform them according to its lights, they can attain salvation here on earth.

(Trattner, 1999, p. 38)

This notion of "God" (although the Christian terminology was shed) was one in which

the individual is empowered to take responsibility for others by respecting the

development of their inherent capacities. It was by seeking truth in the experiences of

others that led him to treat himself with respect. This notion of "God" in terms of

rationality also paved the way for the modern concept of personal responsibility.

In addition to the concept of personal responsibility, the egalitarianism and the

minimization of rank was an important aspect upon which the Awakening and the

Enlightenment converged. Ironically, although the Great Awakening led to a

conversation about the *moral* fabric of society – which we often equate with serving

others – its philosophical foundation is that in recognizing the capacities of the other, one

is empowered to take responsibility for the capacities of the self and thus act in ways that

are *rational* for the betterment of the self. Equally ironic, although the Enlightenment led

to a conversation about the *rational* fabric of individuals – which we often equate with

serving the self – its philosophical foundation is that in recognizing the capacities of the

self, one is responsible to empower the capacities of the other and thus act in ways that are *moral* – for the betterment of the others.

Most importantly, each social movement concluded with the discovery that serving oneself (rationality) and serving one another (morality) are innately intertwined. This mobilized a spirit of autonomy and personal responsibility. In this way, what developed from the Reformation was that the only true "right" that leads to justice is the right to autonomous development**.**

Although this concept was adaptive in many ways, the inherent problem was that with the passage of time, each of these movements transformed into agendas of their own righteousness. The original premise of the Reformation – the integration of rationality and morality – faded and the social narrative began to take the shape of what Keller (2008) might consider a "warfare" between faith and truth, or between religion and science. This is likely attributable to skepticism in regards to various creation accounts. In the theological camp, revelation is supposed to be enough to have faith in "God" while the secular camp abandoned a supernatural God completely and assumed that reason and science alone is sufficient to give us truth.

Looking back, it is important to note that social conditions and paradigms perpetuate our concept of "God" but that ultimately "God" is the gift of autonomous choice. Even the Christian notion of "grace" is a description of one's autonomous choice to believe in God. The social conditions that existed after the Reformation were precisely what led to a

fragmented refraction of God being morality on one hand (the Awakening and the religious revival) and rationality on the other (the Enlightenment and the secular revolution), when ultimately, they both led to the idea of autonomy.

From Responsibility to Rights

At the same time, in colonial America, a structural shift in civil society occurred. Social and economic arrangements derived from a medieval feudal economy like that of its European motherland – in which the poor had a sense of civil protection and economic security– to a capitalistic-democratic society. This was one of the most profound structural upheavals in civil society for both social and economic justice: the goal of the new social arrangement (modern day capitalism) was to create a subservient workforce rather than to assist the needy. This morphed the traditional premise of responsibility to one another into what could be seen as an expectation from one another. The result was that "needs" that hindered autonomous development and self-sufficiency became largely understood as a personal rather than a collective economic matter. For example, poverty was only understood in the economic sense to the degree that it was necessary for the state to address the by-products of poverty (e.g. crime, violence) in order to stabilize community life and maintain social order and control.

So, there was a certain "faith in the government's capacity and need to arrange the affairs of mankind…the interests of the state – especially the desire to build up a strong, self-sufficient economy were dominant" (Trattner, 1999, p. 10). This new social theory and organization challenged both the medieval and the religious approach to poverty. Poverty

and economic hardship began to take conflicting meanings: The old narrative claimed

that economic need was primarily a public problem that indicated a flaw in the social

fabric of society of which an individual was victim and to whom the other individuals

and the government (or the local nobility) had a responsibility. After the Great

Awakening and The Enlightenment, the new paradigm was one of personal responsibility

for self and others and moral. But in the face of capitalism, personal responsibility

became solely a self-serving concept and that paradigm became that economic need was

a personal problem that reflected a flaw in the individual, who was responsible to address

and overcome it.

The old policies emphasized the *duty* of giving and equally important, the *right* of those

in need to receive (p. 2). In these traditions, "evidence of need overrode all

else…[because] it was assumed that need arose as a result of misfortune for which

society, in an act of justice, not of charity or mercy, had to assume responsibility"

(Trattner, 1999, p. 4). At the same time, the new narrative of personal responsibility de-

emphasized need and promoted self-sufficiency. Overall, there was a grave discrepancy

between the traditional religious narratives and the new reformed narratives of the time.

The poor in America were therefore categorized as the dependent and the able bodied, the

deserved and undeserved, the worthy and unworthy. In response, conflicting forms of

welfare legislation ensued in America that put government officials in charge of

determining which among the needy people "deserved" such assistance and thus had a

legal right to it because they were deemed worthy (e.g. children, the impotent) versus the

undeserving or "lazy" (the able-bodied). This conflict of philosophies was mirrored right in the language of the Constitution which both asserted of spirit of general welfare *and* a spirit of personal responsibility for one's own welfare.

It was only when an individual experienced a developmental injustice (a physical, cognitive, or emotional dependence that hindered autonomy) that they should become classified as a dependent. In the place of personal responsibility, a dependent individual becomes in need of social welfare rights. Therefore, the rights based on need were not "natural rights" but rather were conferred through social contract. In this way, individuals receiving benefits from others in a non-reciprocal way may feel shame because they are experiencing a compromised sense of developmental autonomy and are unable to give back to their community and society. This sense of compromised autonomy can be biological, psychological, or emotional. The rights of these dependent individuals are socially conferred *at the expense of, not in addition to* the natural fundamental right to autonomous development. This shame can develop into collective resentment by a group of individuals, and this is called a grievance (Tolle, 2005) and grievances are the basis for many social groups demanding social welfare benefits as a result of structural and institutional oppression that has facilitated a culture of social, if not economic dependency.

As the instances in which people were experiencing a compromised autonomy increased, largely because of the oppression of minority groups, so did the need for compulsory taxation, as well as the idea that those in need of economic assistance are a burden of

public charge. Citizens felt an obligation to help those members of their community that were unable to care for themselves while at the same time they were driven by their desire to spread their ideas about "the virtues of hard work and the sin of idleness" and to "avoid an unduly heavy burden of taxes" (Trattner, 1999, p. 22) which left little empathy for able-bodied persons that could work, regardless of the structural oppression that prevented them from working. Because resistance to taxation provided a premise for the American Revolution, this concept of "no taxation without representation" has therefore carried throughout global history, with America as the world's leading example. To this day:

> …pressures exist in a society that reinforce the need to continuously re-examine the structure and scope of the social welfare state: unemployment, aging populations, child and family outcomes, and global economic competition among others. All of the solutions that may emerge from this re-evaluation still must function as budget decisions in a political climate where there is a widespread aversion to tax increases. (Shonkoff, 2012)

Although the United States of America has led the world in major civil developments, the major problem with this shift in social welfare was that it required the government to make critical judgments about human development and rested the distribution of goods and services necessary for this development upon this arbitrary judgment of the government as to whether a "need" exists for governmental intrusion on autonomy.

Of very important note, "because insanity and dependency were intimately related – it often disrupted family relationships and undermined the means of support – and because specific therapies were lacking – mental disease was viewed primarily as an economic and social rather than as a medical problem…[and] the mentally ill were regarded simply as other needy people unable to care for themselves" (Trattner, 1999, p. 25). Therefore, this laid the foundation for a very blurry distinction in the type of "need" that is considered deserving of the right to social welfare. Under this assumption, physical, mental, and emotional illnesses are secular concepts that are akin to a religious notion of sin. Both sin and illness reflect trauma to the holistic development of the person. In this way, the healthy individuals assume the responsibility cost burdens of the routinely "ill" and the "sinners" because their productive orientation allows them to do so. However, when the burden of "sinners" and/or the ill exceeds the capacity of its healthy counterparts to fulfill their needs, society is experiencing developmental injustice.

Developmental justice, then, as opposed to social justice, is a state in which all individuals are equipped with the physical, cognitive, *and emotional* tools to experience the highest form of psychological development in relation to their natural capacities (physical, cognitive, and emotional autonomy).

Ironically, the classic notion of dependence as the qualifying factor for the right to welfare is the fear of modern day welfare. For example, physical dependence is arguably the easiest type of dependence to classify as a "deserved" need in society. Even still, a class of individuals with cognitive deficiencies qualified as dependents of need is a lot

easier to identify than that of emotional dependence. Nonetheless, the emotional dependence of individuals qualifies as a striking category of dependents that is pervading modern day society. In this way, we must remember that

> the needs of people and the positive and negative effects of social welfare programs...are not made within a vacuum. On the contrary, they take place within the context of a national society at a particular time and state of development. Social welfare is in fact the collective supply of resources, a sharing of the burden or the risk. Two questions have to be asked: (1) What needs should be supplied by the collective action of the society and which left to the individual effort? (2) What can the society afford? (Dolgoff & Feldstein, 2003, p. 128)

The conceptualization of developmental justice provides a solution to the problem of need. It appears that although developmental injustices can be the result of individual difference or societal flaws, the only way to overcome this injustice is by maximizing personal development. That being said, paradigms and institutions can set the contexts that make healthy development both a priority and a reality in civil society.

Moral Pluralism in the 21st Century

If we take developmental justice as a desirable outcome for individuals and society, and we know that paradigms matter for adaptive moral development, we must look with a critical eye toward social milieus that are focused on moral development and observe how they may fracture or heal our sense of spiritual competence. The Reformation showed that when taken as an individual developmental journey rather than a tool for

world domination, spirituality is a meta-objective tool for moral development. It is efficacious in the sense that it integrates a rational responsibility for the self and others. However, history has amply proven that as our global society becomes increasingly pluralistic, it is nearly impossible to legislate a religion and that trying to do so leads us regrettably away from the peace and justice we desire.

So what we have come to instead is a framework that – like its religious predecessors – creates a meta-objective morality, or an attempt to adjudicate increasingly polarized moral narratives. One of the primary reasons "rights talk" has been efficacious is that it accepts morality as an inescapable factor in social development.

Unlike the Protestant Reformation, however, the human rights regime, if I may call it that, has faced an unprecedented challenge as the moral fabric of society has shifted from relative homogony to relative plurality, brought about largely the 19th and 20th century Western society. This paradigm captures one consensus of "minimal justice," which is the point of overlap between different concepts of morality (Reddy, Human Rights and the Global Economy, November 9, 2011). However, the ambiguity of the contemporary language of rights has led to challenges of the legitimacy of human rights discourse on philosophical grounds. When the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on December 10, 1948, they effectively trademarked the phrase "human rights" and made an already complex dialogue exceptionally more so. Unfortunately, to view human rights as a social contract or as a natural law can have remarkably different implications for a human rights framework such as the International Bill of Rights. The

primary question that has come from this philosophical inconsistency is whether rights language is prescriptive or normative.

The drafters of the UDHR were clearly attuned to this dilemma, as there is no reference to divinity or religion in the text. Although critics still cite the drafters' mutual Western and Christian orientation, such an absence suggests "it was clear from the outset that [an] international bill of rights would have to employ a language that was eminently practical rather than theoretical—a language that avoided all metaphysical and religious formulations" (Hughes, 2011, p. 2). Instead, the term used to capture a similar concept is "inherent dignity," which echoes the position of philosopher Michael Bauer, namely that human rights are inescapably relational but that human beings are capable of having such rights because two or more individuals treat others as equals in the relevant respect of possessing human dignity and nature. In this sense, the grounding in intrinsic dignity set forth by the UDHR "by itself, and without contextualization, was performatively just what the Declaration required: a founding explanatory principle that was both universal and pluralistic" free from a particular metaphysical framework and simultaneously embodying an intrinsically heuristic character (Hughes, 2011, p. 7).

To relativist philosophers, human rights language is normative. More specifically, the rights spelled out in the International Bill of Rights are simply ideals masked as legal, authoritative rules intended to guide nations toward social justice. The primary criticism of this "social contract" standpoint is relatively straightforward: "something socially conferred can, on principle, be socially rescinded" (Hughes, 2011, p. 3). In other words,

when human rights are merely conveyed as a unifying framework of justice– conceived by man to be respected by man– then a very real risk exists that the conception of such rights can change over time or across cultures, or even be eliminated altogether, thus weakening the otherwise inescapable obligation to facilitate the enjoyment of basic human rights. For example, ongoing discourse about the legitimacy of human rights resonates entirely differently among Western nations, indigenous groups, and religious groups, just to name a few.

To naturalists, human rights are prescriptive. For theists, this prescription is rooted in an absolute transcendental human nature that is bestowed upon man by a higher power such as God. The primary criticism of this is straightforward: to imagine human rights as conferred by a God is to deploy a common and objective moral vocabulary, which as Spragens (2006) points out, is problematic in our religiously pluralistic world. However, even human rights that are derived from the school of Natural Law philosophy, which does not bother with creator questions are still prescriptive in nature because they are based on what humans are and are thus incontrovertible.

Any justification for human rights on the continuum from radical relativism to absolute truth is equally a contestable meta-conception of the human good (Spragens, 2006). We cannot agree on human rights because we cannot agree on what is morally good. We cannot agree on what is morally good because we cannot agree on where morality comes from. Such is the "intellectual chaos, which pervades the international human rights field" (Von Bernstorff, 2006, p. 915). Even so, dismissing the crucial distinction between

normative and prescriptive immediately weakens the efficacy of any paradigm attempting

to legislate moral development, which leads to a critical analysis of how well the current

paradigm of the human rights regime has actually promoted peace and justice.

Here, we start with a sympathetic critique of the modern unifying paradigm of public

policy for global social welfare: the International Bill of Rights.

From Rights to Responsibility

Since its passage in 1948, the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights

(UDHR) has served as the governing document for most of this "rights talk," especially

in the sphere of international relations and law. It was also the foundation for later

conventions of a similar nature at the UN. What has emerged from the UN General

Assembly is a more comprehensive array of human rights contained within several

documents that, taken together, comprise the International Bill of Human Rights. The

UDHR, the first of these documents, is non-binding, but countries that have ratified any

of its covenants or protocols are bound to them in the same way as an international treaty

because they are meant to serve as implementation mechanisms.

> The International Bill of Human Rights consists of the Universal Declaration of
>
> Human Rights (UDHR), the International Convention on Civil and Political
>
> Rights (ICCPR) and the International Convention on Economic, Social and
>
> Cultural Rights (ICESCR). International human rights law lays down obligations
>
> that States are bound to respect. By becoming parties to international treaties,
>
> States assume obligations and duties under international law to respect, to protect,

and to fulfill human rights. The obligation to respect means that States must refrain from interfering with or curtailing the enjoyment of human rights. The obligation to protect requires States to protect individuals and groups against human rights abuses. The obligation to fulfill means that States must take positive action to facilitate the enjoyment of basic human rights. Through ratification of international human rights treaties, governments put into place domestic measures and legislation compatible with their treaty obligations and duties. The domestic legal system, therefore, provides the principal legal protection of human rights guaranteed under international law. Where domestic legal proceedings fail to address human rights abuses, mechanisms and procedures for individual and group complaints are available at the regional and international levels to help ensure that international human rights standards are indeed respected, implemented, and enforced at the local level (http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/history.shtml).

Justice as "God"

Normative Justice

Nations, some more than others, are struggling with how to creatively meet the demands required by the human rights regime within the constraints of their respective governments, economic systems, and resources (both natural and fiscal). There seems to be a sense of normative social responsibility emerging on the political stage – meaning that individuals and institutions are raising important questions about how we *ought* to be acting toward one another as human beings – but practical limitations and economic

considerations have left even the world's superpowers struggling to find viable solutions

to ensure universal enjoyment of basic human rights. This is especially true for the duty

to fulfill positive rights, which is invoked in several sections of the International Bill of

Rights. Positive rights refer to a person's absolute guarantee of or entitlement to some

opportunity, good, or service: as opposed to negative rights, which protect an individual

against a violation of rights. *Positive human rights* are those thought to be essential to

fulfilling human dignity (e.g. the right to work, the right to water, the right to healthcare,

the right to sufficient wages) while *negative human rights* protect an individual against an

infringement upon his/her dignity (e.g. the right to live, the right to be free from torture).

Inherently, positive rights impose an obligation upon some often-unspecified party to

fulfill such a right. The obscure nature of this obligation and the perpetual search for its

responsible party are a great concern in fulfilling positive rights. The presence of positive

rights in the International Bill of Rights poses major administrative and fiscal challenges

and illuminates the first practical flaw of the human rights framework; that human rights

as defined in terms of a positive obligation are not indivisible, because there are instances

in which they come in conflict with one another in application. Most notably, the right to

property conflicts with nearly every other positive right.

Because fulfilling positive rights typically requires the redistribution of resources (e.g.

property, money, time), we cannot convincingly claim that all countries can enforce all

human rights universally and indivisibly, when many positive rights impose obligations

on individuals or states that are extremely costly, whether nationally or extraterritorially.

To imagine the costs of human rights fulfillment only in an abstract way is to overlook

the rights that agents may violate to levy them, in the extent to which the general

population is responsible for paying for more or better rights. The burden of

redistribution often falls on those individuals or nations best equipped to absorb the costs,

regardless of whether their hand is neutral, guilty, or innocent in the circumstance or

injustice that generated the need in the first place.

It should be noted that other scholars have proposed alternative schemas for calculating

the responsibility that flows from having benefitted from injustice (Barry, Human Rights

and the Global Economy, November 9, 2011). Proponents of a capacity model typically

support the heavy involvement of developed countries in fulfilling human rights

nationally and internationally. However, this somewhat arbitrary method of assigning

fiscal and social responsibility to fulfill positive rights is a multi-faceted beast. If we

conceive positive human rights as "social provisions afforded by advanced capitalist

nations with the ability to redistribute money within a market and invest in issues of

social welfare," it becomes clear that the capacity model's prescriptive language of

human rights is not easily applied to the complex web of national and global economic

policy (Lang, Human Rights and the Global Economy, November 9, 2011). For example,

there are valid and difficult questions regarding what constitutes a private versus a public

good or service, and the availability of goods and services are dependent on natural and

market conditions; they can be costly to acquire, produce, and/or transport. Ironically, it

is in this process of maximizing cost efficiency that many human rights violations occur

such as the use of slavery or other forms of cheap and disposable labor. Additionally,

because governments, as public enterprises, are responsible for fulfilling positive human

rights, their leaders and people must be amenable to creating regulatory and redistributive economic, social, and cultural policies. This phenomenon operates on two parallel planes: between wealthy and poor nations, and between wealthy and poor people within nations.

In wealthy nations such as the United States, in which capital and resources are relatively abundant, redistributive policies are generally a point of contention among individuals and class strata, because in a capitalistic system, the accumulation of property is a fundamental right. Capitalistic democracies and many global enterprises are shaped to reflect this right to property, namely in allowing citizens and corporations to resist government regulation and tax increases, which are a society's primary means of protection and redistribution (Nickel, 2008).

Because competition drives the free market, economic, social, and cultural inequality is magnified in vulnerable populations, creating income inequality and racial and gender disparities. To reverse these effects, advocates often call upon the human rights discourse. However, the scope of fulfillment necessary to lift the most vulnerable populations to a point of rights "enjoyment" is poorly defined. Therefore, governments are left to answer critical questions such as where to draw the fine line between "right to property" and taxable excess, and to define what constitutes minimal or adequate justice in dignity, freedom, protection, and welfare (Nickel, 2008). Put another way, the implementation of basic human rights quickly meets a value blockade– how much do governments need to spend until a positive right has been adequately fulfilled, both

individually and on a population level? The answer appears to be an asymptotic curve

that never quite reaches "a positive right adequately fulfilled" while expenditure

increases virtually infinitely. This brings the cost burden of human rights squarely into

budget conversations – the centerfold of the political battlefield, and results in a political

impasse on issues of social welfare. Therefore, social welfare policies grounded in

redistribution that extend basic human rights to the most vulnerable populations– e.g.

TANF, SNAP, or Social Security– which can enjoy near-unanimous support at their

inception (when any dollar spent is infinitely greater than zero dollars spent, and hopes

for efficacy are untarnished), are extremely difficult to grow to the point of completely

"adequately fulfilling" the positive rights they were created to fulfill. Rather, a minimally

regulated economy has the potential to do the best job of maximizing cost efficiency of

the delivery of the goods and services that can best fulfill positive rights, if and only if the

players come to the free market prepared to defend their right to autonomy and

development, rather than relinquish it.

As we have seen in the United States, even policies that affect the human rights of the

majority of the population have been met with staunch opposition because such a policy

simultaneously fulfills and violates fundamental rights. Imposing costs on individuals or

nations solely on the basis of capacity also resonates poorly on an affective dimension.

Redistribution in the form of regulation and tax increases are not only seen as violations

of the right to property but are perceived as a loss of power; the former generating

bitterness toward a welfare state and the latter contributing to misconceptions of the poor

and disenfranchised.

Internationally, the concern is that resources are scarce and are unevenly distributed geographically and between nation-states. While we may posit any number of reasons why and how resources are limited, and how we may or may not, should or should not, regulate or redistribute natural and manmade resources in the global free market, the reality today is that resources are at least limitedly accessible to specific nations and regions. Like vulnerable populations within a nation, poor nations face systemic barriers to enjoying basic human rights. Unstable government and regime changes are not conducive to creating uniform rights policy. Underdeveloped infrastructures magnify the challenges of production and transportation, and high levels of debt minimize the fiscal solvency required to begin resolving these challenges without the assistance of wealthier nations. In addition, many of these nations are breeding grounds for mass exploitation and marginalization both by their own government and by wealthier nations or multinational/transnational corporations.

Cultural differences also play a role in human rights debates. For example, the call to action for gender equality, and for child and maternal health, are ill received by many nations who see the rights of women and children as Western ideas imposed upon their local culture.

Additionally, states must consider how to maintain the domestic economic solvency necessary to perpetuate a system of rights implementation. Ironically, in the United States the primary goal of maintaining economic solvency is often the justification for a free

market versus a more state-regulated economy, because the idea of fulfilling rights must

be subservient to the needs of an economy equipped to fulfill these rights. Trying to fit

the language of competing rights into a global capitalistic narrative produces a "lack of

coherence in UN standard-setting [which is] one of the root causes of the implementation

blockade" (Von Bernstorff, 2008, p. 914).

So the limits set by scarce resources, and by the conflicting rights of individuals and

nations to accumulate resources vs. the social, economic, and cultural rights of

individuals and groups, have profoundly shaped the outcomes of the Human Rights

regime. As a result, personal, local, and national preferences greatly influence which

rights become prioritized and enforced (Reichert, 2003). These major challenges leave

too much wiggle room for nations to default on their obligations to fulfill positive rights,

continuously citing the failure of strategic attempts to fulfill all human rights for all

people or the inability to do so within the limits set by their own constitutions and

national budgets. As I have discussed, in a complex economic infrastructure, to guarantee

all human rights universally and indivisibly is impossible, but to ignore the violation of

some rights in order to fulfill others leaves nations in a political impasse.

A focus on individual rights also shifts the conversation of social justice away from the

underlying causes of inequality. Instead, the narrative becomes one of how to fulfill the

claims of particular individuals or claims-making groups, systematically prioritizing the

needs of those who are most vociferous and ultimately not addressing the root causes *or*

reaching the most marginalized persons. To respond to the claims of the exceptionally

vulnerable in a cost-effective way, governments may provide low-quality services

distributed only by those sub-populations that are best able to advocate for themselves,

creating a system that is ultimately reproducing inequitable distribution (Nickel, 2008).

The focus should really be on how to acquire, develop, and distribute sustainable

resources (such as human capital) and how to re-structure institutions that proliferate the

disparities of access to the good or service that is limited. Manjari Mahajan (Human

Rights and the Global Economy, November 9, 2011), who studies this phenomenon vis à

vis the "Access to Medicine Movement," says that we have moved away from a focus on

the well-being of a people at large. Instead, she argues, we have turned the focus to an

individual's entitlements, and that this shift in the practices, policies, and

conceptualization of outcomes for different systems has crystallized new inequalities and

a changed image of citizenship and the responsibilities of the state. Similarly, Sakiko

Fukuda-Parr, who studies the right to development, argues that "it has become all about

poverty reduction, instead of development" (Human Rights and the Global Economy,

November 9, 2011). Both examples point to the tendency of the regime to raise human

rights questions concerned with strict interpretation and implementation rather than with

questions of pragmatic distribution in the broader society.

International lawyers and researchers grappling with these contradictions are exploring

alternative interpretations of the human rights discourse in an attempt to extrapolate

extra-territorial and sustainability obligations by asking, for example: if the obligation to

fulfill economic and social rights is not limited to the transfer of resources, what else

might it entail? Although these questions are insightful, they still assume the human

rights framework as the status quo and the language of their thinking, perpetuating the

somewhat disturbing question, "in 10 years' time will the literature again draw its

ritualistic conclusion that all that has not yet led to any significant improvements in living

conditions of the most vulnerable?" (Von Bernstroff, 2008, p. 923)

Prescriptive Justice

While human rights language in any or all of its forms may be symbolically consistent

with the virtues of social justice, its underlying philosophical nuances cripple its utility as

a prescriptive mechanism of change. For international human rights protection to be

guaranteed, it requires proper legal institutionalization. Unfortunately, over time it has

become more and more clear that the International Bill of Rights cannot truly be enforced

as law, even among the nations that are signatories to it. Therefore a clear dichotomy

exists between the normative (political) and prescriptive (legal) force of the International

Bill of Rights, where the former has thrived and the latter has suffered.

Although we do not immediately perceive these normative and prescriptive agendas as

problematic, their tendency to come in conflict with one another has contributed to the

disconnect between economic liberalization and the enjoyment of human rights. We have

seen that in advancing certain socio-economic and cultural objectives put forth by the

human rights regime including but not limited to gender equality, eradicating poverty,

maternal and child health, and environmental sustainability, there is a "central

ambivalence of the turn to rights... serv[ing] as an emancipatory vehicle to express

fundamental experiences of injustice...[but also acting] as a form of political

manipulation to disguise a lack of commitment to implement them" (Von Bernstorff, 2008, p. 909). The blurry boundary between the binding, but non-enforceable, character of the International Bill of Rights may strengthen the symbolic force of the documents but also limit the legal force, and "without the rule of law and a proper legal institutionalization of the rights discourse, the solemn universal Declaration could constitute a counterproductive move for the human rights cause... it could become a smokescreen for further violations" (Von Bernstorff, 2008, p. 909).

The challenges of implementation are fraught with frustration, a sense of futility compounded by lack of accountability, even in instances of legal contract. Questions about whether the International Bill of Rights has acquired the status of customary international law, and when it might do so, are still not entirely answered. We know that the absence of an international enforcement mechanism makes the documents vulnerable to sovereignty-induced limits, as reflected by the United States' special reservations, which modified the ICCPR as it was ratified. In one respect, "the combination of [asserting the] fundamental character of the rights proclaimed in the Declaration, and the open denial of any legal obligation to respect them, …raises, in a most acute form, a cardinal issue of international morality... with the adoption of the Declaration, states did not commit themselves to an effective recognition of the rights" (Von Bernstorff, 2008, p. 908).

But if signatories are to be held legally accountable for failure to comply with the UDHR, what might be feasible and just repercussions? Who will levy them? How might these

repercussions affect governments and individuals, and will those repercussions advance

or detract from the goals of the Declaration? The point of the UDHR is to "provide basic

guidelines for all individuals and nations in how they interact with each other... to

establish a code of conduct, much like a code of ethics for professional organizations"

(Reichert, 2003, p. 71). However, in order for the United Nations and the Human Rights

Watch (the committee that responds to allegations of HR violations) to ensure the fidelity

of human rights, they cannot enforce any consequences that directly punish individual

citizens or hinder a government's ability to honor *any* of the human rights within the

Declaration.

We know that "the declaration refers to various 'rights' of individuals and groups but

does not specify who must fulfill those rights…[and] without allocating responsibility,

the declaration can only remain a statement of intent with no power of enforcement"

(Reichert, 2003, p. 84). But even for the covenants, which are considered legally binding,

"without judicial controls the symbolic dimension of rights claims can easily be

exploited" (Von Bernstorff, 2008, p. 921). These conditions make it acceptable for

nations to maintain the status quo, which in many cases include gross violations of

human rights as they are described in the UDHR. This cultivates and perpetuates the type

of capitalist competition which requires strategic exploitation and oppression of the

masses so that political and economic actors "operate by a game-like code, wherein

participants, expecting one another to bluff, feint and maneuver to gain the most

profitable advantage" by narrowly or entirely escaping human rights standards (Hinze,

2009, p. 166).

Without a concrete method of oversight and regulation, these types of contracts hold little water because the degrees of agency and accountability required of individual human rights mandates are simply not suitably adapted to the impersonal and competitive features of complex market relations (Hinze, 2009). Many countries that have ratified the International Bill of Rights or any specific covenants include caveats that exclude them from having to enforce certain parts of it if they conflict with national doctrine or culture. Permitting these types of exceptions defeats the tenets of universality and indivisibility that the declaration purports to entail, and yet in the absence of some type of global citizenship, signatory nations feel compelled to maintain the fidelity of their national constitutions. These exceptions also allow nations to ignore the impact of policy and economic dynamics on their most vulnerable families and communities, and serve as a loophole for rights violations against extraterritorial citizens, to whom nations have no binding obligation, even upon ratification.

Most of the rights spelled out in the UDHR were derived from this right to autonomy and were manifestations of specific ways in which signatories were to respect and protect autonomy. However, there are several articles such as Article 23 (2) the right to equal pay, Article 25 (1) the right to an adequate standard of living and Article 26 (1) the right to education, to name a few that are *positive* rights that need to be fulfilled. In these instances, the human rights framework is intended to meet goals beyond freedom, such as social peace and economic justice. As this paper has proven, these development goals are not rights at all but are rather normative values – albeit uncontroversial ones.

Nonetheless, making these normative values prescriptive invalidates the legitimacy of the human rights paradigm on the whole. This problem was only exacerbated when the UDHR became incorporated into the International Bill of Rights and the scope of human rights work expanded to include not only civil and political rights but also economic, social, cultural, and solidarity rights. The same philosophical and practical quandary expanded and the momentum to facilitate a global social development agenda was ultimately met with unrest by nations unable to truly meet the demands of these documents or unwilling to become signatories at all.

The universality and indivisibility of conflicting human rights is an issue that is very much still on the table and fragmentation among influential UN member states is not likely to dissipate (Von Bernstorff, 2008). Despite new convention projects within the UN and the concentration surrounding more issue-related standards, when it comes to meeting the twin goals of world peace and social welfare, the existing institutional set-up of UN human rights protection seems to have reached its limits.

Why? Because an individual-rights approach resonates with an affective urgency to fulfill material needs, which prompts the cycle of mass production and exploitation and stifles innovation for long-term holistic solutions that integrate production and sustainability in exchange for short-term band-aid approaches that fulfill a few arbitrarily prioritized human rights. The unfortunate byproduct of the human rights regime is the fundamental opposition of economic and social priorities. So, the existing levers of change in either regime will only ever produce results that are solely economic *or* social in nature,

respectively. At the very least, such policies anecdotally feel this way, thus leaving politicians, lawmakers, constituents, and other stakeholders to understand progress as one agenda at the expense of another. In attempting to address the limitations and the anecdotal lack of measurable progress, the human rights regime only asks questions of consistency in implementation, which assumes the status quo human rights framework as a given.

Findings

Integrating Moral Paradigms

To create public policy and to sustain other formal and informal institutions that serve their constituents and mobilize around a moral development of love, there are several steps that need to be taken. First, because both rationality and morality are subjectively constructivist (Moshman, 1995) society begs for an objective framework within which political agents interested in civility can ensure that pluralistic notions of "the good life" are played out in ways that are harmonious with one another and the environment, hence the "objective" alternatives of "God" and "human rights." But as both have led us farther away from justice, it seems we need a meta-objective reconciliation of the two. One of the most hopeless challenges to implementing a paradigm of meta-objective moral development into public policy is the seemingly impossible task of "seeking the best balance between the extremes of dogmatism" (Spragens, 2006, p. 212), especially as the "extremes of dogmatism" that have lead to moral pluralism have been exponentially multiplied, and unduly amplified by the technological revolution (e.g. the internet, smartphones, social media). As Fromm (1956) discusses, the place of religion and

science in society are important factors because the influence of sociopolitical constraints (institutions) can effect the development of love, which leads organically to moral reciprocity.

God vs. Good

Historically, there have been two competing ideas about the type of moral paradigm that allows global society to function effectively to meet the goals of world peace and social justice. The first is one in which an absolute truth dictates how we *must* behave toward one another which results in a prescriptive morality. This has been primarily manifested in the form of religion. The second involves a relative truth that allows us each to discover how we *should* treat one another which results in a normative morality and has been primarily manifest in the form of secularism. This meta-objective moral tension can be described as follows:

> In a theological sense, whenever we as finite creatures are so bold to make moral judgments, we verge upon the blasphemy or self-idolatry of taking upon ourselves a role that belongs to God and God alone…[yet] in a secular sense, as finite and self-interested creatures, our moral perceptions are skewed and unreliable. We know our needs and situation in ways that we cannot know others' needs and situations, and we privilege our own. (Spragens, 2006, p. 93)

Whether a society is homogenous or pluralistic is important because the distance between its moral codes will dictate the ability to regulate peace within a society. Obviously, the more pluralistic a society is, the greater the difficulty there will be in regulating moral

behavior. However, jumping to the contestation of act-centered prescriptions either within or between moral codes assumes that each individual brings to the table a developmentally mature moral identity that motivates their moral character. But what if the individuals in society do not know what they believe? Then telling them what to believe or how to act, whether in a religious or secular sense is a way of imposing on their autonomy and is not a form of cooperation, but rather coercion (Spragens, 2006).

In homogenous civilizations, the imperatives of meta-moral judgment barely exist. Individuals already agree on a single conception of the good based on common cultural mores and, ultimately, their conception of God. A universally accepted moral code also yields prescriptions of how the individual should act toward his fellow man. The only tensions that arise involve conflicting interpretations of particular descriptive and prescriptive elements of the code of conduct.

On the other hand, pluralistic societies face the unavoidable task of managing their competing contestations of morality, yielding the necessity of a "God-less" schema of meta-moral judgment upon which to relieve these inherent moral tensions. This has led to conceptions of social organization and welfare that are based on social contract and rights. In this schema, individuals with different moral codes come to a consensus about peaceful living by finding the overlap between their different codes of moral conduct. This consensus places prescriptive obligations and restrictive prohibitions on how individuals are allowed to treat one another so that they don't impede one another's established rights. However, when individuals in a pluralistic society are unable to come

to such a consensus, there can be a resurgence of subgroup identification because "the human psyche demands a sense of community" (Dolgoff & Feldstein, 2003, p. 352). In this case, conflict between subgroups can rise and public policy can become a balancing act between the protection of individual autonomy and of justice for different subgroups.

While this balancing act is glaringly evident in the United States, it is also a more global dilemma. As such, the United Nations' International Bill of Rights attempts to address global social injustices within a human rights framework, which attempts to reunify humanity from its subgroups. The human rights regime posits that civic, economic, and cultural injustices are violations of an individual's innate rights; this suggests that the solutions will stem from the special obligation nations have to protect such inherent individual rights. Yet the realization of global social justice and world peace within this human rights framework has proved to be anything but seamless. Right now, it is still a fact that the world we live in, with its existing institutions, fails to satisfy the requirements of basic human rights for many individuals. Promisingly, the United Nations' adoption of the Millennium Development Goals in 2002 reflects a concerted effort to keep peaceful development at the forefront of the global conversation. However, I argue that addressing these goals within the legal straightjacket of rights language moves us in the exact opposite direction of solving the problems of moral fracture that led to the social fractures and economic injustices in the first place because it fosters a sense of co-dependence on an institutional scale.

An analysis of the UDHR reveals that conflicts between positive human rights amplify rather than temper the tensions of moral pluralism, and as a result create needless impasses (Montecel, personal communication, 2011) to social justice and world peace. In this way, the human rights regime has actually contributed to the developmental injustice that they are trying to combat. Since "the basic tenets and programs of any social welfare system reflect the values of the society in which the system functions" (Trattner, 1999, p. 1) in a sense, the human rights framework acts like a global advertisement for the type of moral development we value. Unfortunately, it sends the message that what we value are human relationships based on attachment and co-dependence rather than autonomy and interdependence. Additionally,

> …the complexity of modern society becomes focused on the issue of whether social welfare will expand. The decision is not simply one of social justice or morality but is part of an economic scene in which taxation grows and is resented...At the same time that tax policy alters the nature of social services because of the demands of various parts of the population for fiscal relief, another trend affects social welfare. The entire premise of progressive, liberal thought has become suspect and questions of a serious nature are being asked about the limits of 'doing good.' The two-edged nature of social welfare has been recognized, that is, how does a greater emphasis on market exchange (exchanges between buyers and sellers that depend on their relative powers) affect social welfare? This focus on individuals and family responsibility defines the social good as the sum of individual desires and detracts from ideas of communal and societal

responsibility. Efficiency is the overriding goal of social policy and results in

market-based social policies." (Dolgoff & Feldstein, 2003, p. 129)

The idea of taxation for the purposes of redistribution and social justice for various

cultural subgroups leads individuals attached to one or more of these subgroups to

employ a method of decision-making that is based on the rational ego necessary for

survival rather than the spiritual connectedness that is required for moral integration to

thrive. This lack of spiritual competence makes the implementation of social welfare and

the actualization of social justice in a pluralistic society nearly impossible.

Nearly sixty years after the inception of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

against the backdrop of economic globalization, global poverty, and rising income

inequality, we must come to grips with the fact that "rights-talk" raises all the right

issues, but cannot resolve any of them, and is beginning to actually undermine global

progress towards a just and peaceful society.

From a social psychology perspective, if the goal is to change people's moral character

(treatment of one another) in order to realize the utopian goals of world peace *and* social

justice, then the change narrative must instill a sense of hope. If it is moral pluralism in

addition to issues of sustainability that hinder the distribution of human, economic, and

social capital, than an equally important focus of this research is to overcome the

pluralistic dogma and find a meta-objective global paradigm that bridges subjective

rational and moral narratives that exhibit themselves as competing but in fact are getting at very similar normative goals of human development. One resolution might be a

>…postmodernism approach [that] tends to reject objective modes of inquiry… [and] challenges the methodological assumptions associated with rigorous, modern social science inquiry and [instead] require new standards for evaluating knowledge….[this approach is] likely to be subjective in nature, including for example, flexibility, sensitivity…beauty, strength, or force…often, the key standard for evaluating knowledge is moral judgment, including the negation of oppression, exploitation, and domination....one may reach moral and aesthetic evaluations of knowledge through 'reflection'…reflection' and 'reflexivity' variously refer to introspection and other forms of self-examination…[that are] introspective, intersubjective, and anti-objectivist,' a form of individualized understanding. (American Anthropologist, v. 106, p. 4)

At the same time, "the *science* aspect of applied developmental science stresses the need to utilize a range of research methods to collect reliable and objective information" (Lerner, Fisher, &Weinberg, 2000, p. 12). Therefore, what we need is a meta-objective moral paradigm that promotes an individual's subjective reflection of his or her own rational and moral development and asks questions about the how to conduct similar moral evaluations in particular aspects of the free market (Hinze, 2009).

"God" is "Good"

So how is moral development affected by whether the paradigm is normative or prescriptive? If we argue that *no* human rights are natural, then there is no basis for a meta-moral moral adjudication at all. Instead, everyone should be allowed to act in whatever way pleases them, regardless of whether it is beneficial or harmful to the future of mankind (or in a religious sense, whether it pleases or displeases "God"), which results in a destruction of moral character. However, if we argue that *all* human rights are prescriptive, then where moral obligations to fulfill others' rights conflict with rational obligations to protect our own rights, we create irreconcilable tension between self and other that results in the same destruction of moral character.

In a global context, the unfortunate byproduct of the human rights regime is the fundamental opposition of rational (economic) development and moral (social) development, which ultimately reflects the fundamental conflict between the development of a rational and moral orientation in the individual.

For most humanitarians regardless of philosophical orientation, human rights have become the mediating language between social justice and the global economy. Social justice, "an ideal condition in which all members of society have the same rights, protection, opportunities, obligations, and social benefits," is a complex, multi-faceted, and demanding concept (Encyclopedia of Social Work, n.d.). Therefore, the obvious advantage of a rights framework is its transparency; it captures basic tenets of human need and specifies minimal humane treatment. Taken together, the UDHR vilifies

common manifestations of deliberate inhumanity and validates common manifestations of deliberate humanity, raising consciousness of inequities. They represent an international commitment to beneficence and non-malfeasance through a "lived awareness" of diversity, peace, equality, reciprocity, humanitarianism, and justice (Wronka, 2008, p. 425). As Sanjay Reddy puts it, one of the primary reasons "rights talk" is efficacious, is that it captures the *consensus of minimal justice* (the point of overlap between different concepts of justice). The UDHR represented "unity in fragmentation and fulfilled its function as the *lowest common denominator* in the dynamically evolving and increasingly antagonistic institutional human rights discourse; a political role the Declaration has continued to assume to date" (Von Bernstorff, 2008, p. 916).

Essentially, rights language synthesizes what may be an otherwise unmanageable and subjective discussion about which social outcomes are most important, to whom, and to what extent they ought to be universally fulfilled. The term human rights helps to disseminate this message in a very plebian way, allowing common people to grasp the universal relevancy of these principles and the urgent need to correct injustice. It is also an empowering phrase, allowing all people to own it. It is recognition of a "common language among the helping and health professions, which almost entirely endorse such principles" (Wronka, 2008, p. 425).

In this way, the human rights regime is a descriptive conception of good that functions in practical terms exactly like a religion that gives a descriptive conception of "God." Keller (2008) makes the claim that like God– which can be taken as the discovery of personal

truth – a secular notion of human rights also attempts to establish universal truth about how to treat people. He argues that for human rights to exist, secular cognitive reason tells us that the notions of justice upon which the rights rest come from an idea that morality is in fact absolute.

Like the Bible, the Quran, or the Torah, the International Bill of Rights also serves as a code of conduct of sorts, by attempting to hold people accountable to such rights and accountable to changing their behavior. It provides a discourse that allows us to measure the progress of national and international regimes and transnational corporations (De Schutter, Human Rights and the Global Economy, November 9, 2011) in much the same way the traditional hierarchal Roman Catholic ministry attempted to do in earlier centuries. Over the past twenty years especially, the United Nation's human rights regime has shaped international conversations around social responsibility and has shed light on recurring themes such as quality of life, opportunity, distributive justice, and equality in the same way the Roman Catholic Church attempted to do before the Reformation. Its very creation marks the necessity among the international community to re-affirm humanistic principles. It has become a cohesive way to quantify the demand for social justice in the global economy. So perhaps, the International Bill of Rights can be taken as a descriptive and prescriptive text in the same way as the Bible or another religious manuscript.

In this line of reasoning, Western secularism can be seen as an imposition of a certain type of "good" in the same way Western theistic "God" was. Accordingly, "human

rights" is a prescriptive element of this religion as the Roman Catholic teachings of the Bible were. On the backdrop of previous social paradigms, the 21st century conceptualization of universal human rights operates in a similar way sociologically as the universal Catholic Church before the Reformation – decreeing from "on high" that these are the culturally universal rights to which we should all adhere. Spragens (2006) review helps highlight the same inherent problem that exists with the "human rights regime." Accordingly, while the Reformation enabled individuals to overcome many of the prescriptive aspects of a Catholic "God" the same problem has arisen as conflicts persist over the descriptive aspects of "God." What is problematic about the régime is that it seems to have become the only way, and it does not seem to be working to achieve its goals. In this way, rights language has written us right into a corner that we have already been in. The human rights regime still dictates what *behaviors* are right and wrong. The concept of "rights" as "God" leaves us grappling once again with the rational tendency to protect my rights and the moral tendency to abandon my rights as a sacrifice for others, leaving us with the same tension between the normative and prescriptive aspects that exist in a religion – both of which are reflective of the normative (spiritual) and prescriptive (moral) codes of motivation that exist within ourselves. In essence, the human rights framework has illuminated this dichotomy and – in many cases – has challenged people to gravitate toward one extreme or the other.

Ultimately, like any religion I believe that the greatest strength of a human rights framework is that provides a foundation upon which individual can imagine how to adapt their behaviors, communities can imagine how to adapt their cultures, and societies can

thus generate adaptive policies. It is a lived awareness of humanitarian principles, but it cannot be a prescription of these principles. In fact, it must not or it will be to its own detriment.

The Secular Reformation

Essentially, five hundred years later we are back to a similar social conundrum that we were in before the Reformation: individuals operate within either a rational *or* moral paradigm, including those responsible for the promotion of society. In this paradigm, there is the idea that there is only a single path to discovery, led either by moral absolutism or rational relativism. Moral terminology is at play in national and global social justice efforts, but there is increasing dissent and lack of coherence in the platforms from which this terminology is justified (Hurley, 2000). What the Protestant Reformation did in the 15th century was to provide a framework through which we can imagine a parallel Secular Reformation. It urged individuals seek a "back to basics" interpretation of the Bible scriptures – which is one adaptive conception of God. In the 21st century, what we need is a similar but secular conception of God that is adaptive in the very same ways.

At this point in history, the context of globalization provides an unprecedented opportunity to challenge the status quo. The technological revolution has given us the tools we need to mobilize consensus building on the nature and scope of international social welfare. In addition, its spread of information has made it so that more and more people can agree on the ways in which human needs are often going unmet and that these outcomes must be improved. It is time to re-imagine how international systems (WTO

and trade regimes, transnational corporations, the World Bank, national citizenship authorities, etc) and national systems (public education, higher education, healthcare, criminal justice, small businesses, corporations, welfare programs, etc) can all work more efficiently for the people. Along this vein, that there are philosophical and practical limitations of the rights framework does not inherently undermine the normative values that beseech them. Rather, it deters nations from embracing the values for fear that the rights cannot wholly be met.

So at this juncture that we must ask: If a global framework is intended to meet goals beyond the protection of freedom, such as social peace and economic justice, to what degree do institutions and systems promote developmental justice? How would national and international organizations function differently if optimal human development was their goal, instead of maximizing profit? Then, how do we create a framework that propels individuals to both produce more physical resources and to produce more psychological innovation about existing goods and resources? How can we accelerate the forward momentum of the human rights regime into an outcomes-driven theory of change? Finally, how do we re-arrange systems in light of such a framework to propel the forward momentum of sustainable reform?

We are faced with a crucial choice that we have faced already in the past. So where has history led civilization thus far? The Great Awakening which seemed to be about acting morally right or wrong paired with the Enlightenment which seemed to be about acting

rationally good or bad created the fertile ground for the language, concept and paradigm of the human rights regime.

Taking a step back from the contexts of the Reformation and the human rights regime, the argument presented thus far gives credence to the idea that there are still two competing conceptualizations of morality that need to be reconciled. One is the secular viewpoint that goodness is rational. The other is the religious viewpoint that goodness is moral. Each is vying for the top spot as "most adaptive."

Although the idea of personal reflection that developed from the 16th Century Protestant Reformation led to these two radically different ways that one might discover "God," or "goodness" it was not for lack of ingenuity.

The first lesson from history is that religious extremism will ultimately undermine any serious attempt to achieve social and collective agreement on important moral issues and responsibilities because religious absolutism leads to bigotry, intolerance, and the imposition of one group's values on another's. What has been less clear throughout history is that secularists arguing for the existence of human rights can also be accused of imposing their own secularist standards on non-secularists; the current climate of polarized disagreement in some Western countries (Europe and the U.S.) is based on this fundamental conflict of interpretations, secularist vs. religionist.

The second history lesson is that prescriptive and descriptive brands of morality are nearly impossible to gain consensus around – whether they are religious or secular, and that while each of these descriptive and prescriptive brands of morality may work well for homogeneous communities, they do not for pluralistic societies.

What we have failed to recognize is that when two concepts of the good life as religious faith ("God") versus secular truth ("human rights") are placed side-by side, it becomes clear that both are fundamental conceptions of "the good life" that emphasize the importance of human relationships. Both are a form of "spirituality" or deeply held beliefs about the world, and it is spirituality that guides our rational and moral decision-making.

The great philosophical conundrum arises with those "moral relativists" who do not subscribe to either a religion *or* to another existential conception such as human rights. Spragens (2006) make this astute, albeit abstruse point that

> Pan-nonjudgmentalism…[through] insistence upon a contestable metaconception of the human good…cannot avoid incoherence and hypocrisy when it is put into practice in a morally pluralistic society in which some members are moral cognitivists/realists…The real world political consequence is that "some members of society wind up being treated in a somewhat patronizing and marginalizing fashion. They are told in effect that their moral identity is 'affirmed and recognized' but only in a manner that de facto logically depicts it as delusionary… However well-intentioned…this de-facto 'bigotry' of enforced pan- nonjudgmentalism

represents a genuine problem – that is a 'softer' form of bigotry – but one much less

likely to lead to killing or oppression and hence one much to be preferred to the old

fashioned kind…[Nonetheless] you cannot discriminate against modes of human

behavior and simultaneously accord full and equal ''affirmation' to every way of

living because practically speaking, contrary to what seems to be the tacit

assumption made by many who champion this position, judgments about justice

cannot be protected against this undermining dynamic of pan- nonjudgmentalism.

The fact is that beliefs about the right are judgments that can be reduced to matters

of idiosyncratic taste in the same way as judgments about the human good. (p. 209)

Because Spragens (2006) insists that the moral relativity of pan-nonjudgmentalism still

rests on a meta-conception of human good, he is actually making the point that those with

a claim to moral relativism base this moral relativity on a set of absolute ideas. In this

way, intrinsic spirituality (subjective rational judgments about of the "good" life that

precede motivation) is absolute even though extrinsic spirituality (subjective moral

judgments about the "right" behavior that lead to the "good life") is relative.

A New Paradigm for a Global Age

Love as a "Good God"

The integration of faith and truth that was evident in the best conceptions of the

Reformation has not disappeared entirely. Instead, a minority has come to the post-

modern realization that mirrors that of the Reformation in that *discovering faith in the self*

is an pre-requisite for morality while *discovering truth in the others* is a pre-requisite for

rationality. Therefore, rational goodness and moral rightness do not have to be mutually exclusive. Instead, they can be integrated through spirituality. In this way, the lessons learned from the Reformation, the Awakening, and the Enlightenment, and lessons based on the adaptive conceptions provided by interpretations of all major religions point to the conclusion that knowing "God" means overcoming the ego and learning the Golden Rule – to "love thy neighbor as thyself."

When viewed from a multidisciplinary lens, the twin concepts that developed from the Awakening and the Enlightenment – personal responsibility (self-love) and social peace (love for others) – offer a holistic paradigm for this the revival of the reformation in a secular framework. Except this time, maybe our Western culture that has now faced the same dilemma twice can take some lessons from Eastern culture that gives credence to the importance of spirituality, which speaks to a process of development upon which we each develop an extrinsically relative but intrinsically absolute notion of morality. In the same way that the Protestant Reformation not only allowed but encouraged individuals to generate their own interpretations of the prescriptive aspects of morality (i.e. I accept that I should want to know "God" but only I can discover *how* I will know God), a Secular Reformation must allow individuals to generate their own interpretations of the descriptive elements of spirituality as well (i.e. I accept that I should want know "good" but only I can discover *how* I will know good).

In other words, "God" is the freedom to love – when freedom is defined as the reconciliation of faith and truth to understand the limitations of one's inherent capacities

and love is defined as the desire to release those limitations and to express one's capacities as wholly as possible. To embark on this discovery of freedom involves making the object of one's love both the self and the other, not either or as the terms rationality and morality might otherwise suggest. Thus, individuals experience "God" when they have complete autonomy and thus the ability to discover and reproduce the love that they create and experience uniquely with one another.

"God" as an "Earned Secure Attachment"

So, perhaps what we perceive in society to be competition between religious and secular moral adaptivity, to be overcome through cooperation, is really just an echo of the core relational conflict that exists within ourselves in the sense that our behavior is motivated by more than one "code of conduct." One of these is the "rational" code that tells us that the survival of our present self is more important than the thriving of our future self. The other is our "spiritual" code that tells us that respecting the potential thriving of our future self will allow us to both survive and thrive. According to this analogy, our future self acts as the existential "other" and it is in this way that "God" or "goodness" can be said to represent the existential moral future of the individual (whether our descriptive imagination of creationism or of the future is natural or supernatural is irrelevant). If this is the case, ADS and social workers who are concerned with changing moral behaviors should actually be more concerned with how moral behaviors are impacted by a rational, dependent, survival, fear based motivation versus a spiritual, autonomous, thriving, fearless motivation and in what circumstances each is developmentally adaptive. It seems that a rational and present-focused orientation has importance for survival in crisis mode

but ultimately results in narcissism and selfishness. Once an individual is able to survive crisis or developmental trauma, they can develop a future and "other-focused" orientation that results in humility and selflessness.

When Fromm discusses love of God (or in a secular view, love of virtue) I believe that there may also be a connection between "spiritual addictions" and adult attachment disorders that can be resolved by establishing spiritual competence. The reason spirituality is so adaptive is because it presents a sure-fire way to overcome developmental trauma by creating a secure attachment with an existential self. In this way, the idea of "God" as the future self provides what we might call an "earned secure attachment" that can be carried with an individual throughout of all her/his life experiences regardless of whether they had developed a secure attachment with an actual other (parent, primary caregiver, mentor, or lover) in the past. This spiritual regeneration likely requires that adults reconcile disorganized attachments from childhood and adolescence and form a new secure attachment style. Otherwise, individuals with severe disorganized attachments and other dissociative tendencies will be susceptible to similar dependent relationships in adulthood. The idea of building a relationship with "God" provides a blank template from which maturing individuals can base a universal and timeless secure attachment style.

In this way, overcoming the immature rational "ego-focused" identity (our descriptive beliefs about who we are) and developing a mature, spiritual, "God-focused" purpose (our normative beliefs about who we can become) becomes translatable in society in the

way that our moral character (our prescriptive beliefs about how to treat the *actual* other) reflects to actual others the same humility and selflessness with which we treat ourselves (the existential other). Without a spiritual compass that helps us transcend our rational selves, our character toward others will be only to use them as a means to an end for our rational purposes. Similarly, if our spiritual compass is unclear, our behavior toward others will be inconsistent and unpredictable. For example, perhaps the coercion that we feel is necessary to control others' actions is simply a projection of our inability to reconcile how we want to act ourselves. Therefore, individual moral development represents a meta-objective development of our subjective codes of rationality or spirituality within the individual. Without moral development, individuals will be unable to test the transparency of their actions relative to their beliefs. In this way, morality is relative between individuals but spirituality should be absolute within the self.

Taken together, it seems clear that while moral legislation cannot be founded on a single spiritual conception, having some absolute, existential, spiritual viewpoint is normatively adaptive and therefore rational. So unlike a universal religion or a universal human rights framework – which are intrinsically normative (rationally relative) and extrinsically prescriptive (morally absolute) – spirituality is most adaptive when it is intrinsically prescriptive (rationally absolute) and extrinsically normative (morally relative). Put another way,

> Misconstruing the world's nature is not necessarily, or even primarily, a matter of empirical error. We are concerned here with the adaptiveness of conceptions, not with what the knowledge available at a particular historical moment takes to be

empirically accurate. We are concerned with the consequences of the actions to

which such understandings lead. If such actions tend to increase the actor's

chances of staying in the existential game indefinitely, and if, in this age of ever-

increasing human capacity to destroy the world, such actions tend to preserve the

existential game itself, then the understandings upon which they are based are

adaptively true even if empirically absurd (Rappaport 1999, p. 452).

So what is it that makes these spiritual conceptions adaptive? It must be that each

conclusion leads us not to a relative transformation of our moral behaviors or actions but

rather to a absolute transformation of the rational motivations of our heads and hearts. In

the same way that a normative understanding of a religious "God" leads us to the

conclusion of free will (even the free will to choose or reject God), the normative

understanding of human rights leads us to the conclusion of the right to development. All

other dogma involving "God" or "human rights" are a matter of interpretation and

preference of the descriptive elements of religion and secularism, respectively. What is

important is that these interpretations are derivatives of the existential lens that is

necessary to integrate rational identity, spiritual purpose and moral character. As Keller

(2008) notes,

> Both religion (in which one you build your identity on moral and achievements)
>
> and irreligion (in which you build your identity on some other secular pursuit or
>
> relationship) are, ultimately spiritually identical courses to take. Self-salvation
>
> through good works [whether religious or secular] may produce a great deal of
>
> moral behavior in your life but inside you are filled with self-righteousness,

cruelty and bigotry, and you are miserable. You are always comparing yourself to

other people, and you are never sure if you are good enough. You cannot,

therefore deal with your hideousness and self-absorption through moral law, by

trying to be a good person through an act of the will. You need a complete

transformation of the motives of your heart. (p. 183)

Another way to describe this flaw in moral development is that as it exists today, "moral"

living seems to consist of doing as many good acts as possible and avoiding wrong acts,

which is consistent with the institution of the legal system.

The legal understanding of the model of the moral life [is] very *act*-centered, i.e.

it concerns itself with the individual moral actions that a person performs or could

perform. There is little focus on the person doing the acts and what effect these

actions are having on her/him and on her/his growth or decline in goodness and

virtue…[Whereas] a relational model of moral life focuses primarily on the

person-in-relationship and person-in-community and therefore, on the moral

subject and her/his growth or decline in goodness and virtue. In this model, an

essential pre-requisite is an adequate understanding of the human person.

(Cosgrave, 2006, p. 128)

In this way, knowing "God" has the potential to be either highly adaptive or highly

maladaptive. Essentially, the more we know "God" as our responsibility to love, the more

we will give love, and the more we will know giving as "God". But by the same token,

the more we know "God" as our right to justice, the more we need justice and the more

we will know needing as God. In reality, the more we all give, the less we will all need;

love heals and justice prospers. On the other hand, the more we all need, the less we are

able to give; justice divides and love suffers. This reality is reflected in the structure of

modern day global capitalism, which has imbued a hierarchy of values, such that the

principle of secular justice are not "God-less" but rather have transformed the meaning of

"God" into ensuring the distribution of dead material capital above and beyond the

human powers of love and other virtues of aliveness (Fromm, 1956).

Therefore, justice cannot be legislated in the same way that responsibility cannot be

legislated – not because either does not exist but because each becomes a reality when it

is discovered rather than imposed. In this way, we can believe in human rights in the

same way we can believe in God, but we cannot force our beliefs on others. We can only

create more opportunities for others to share in the faith with us by becoming exemplars

of our own faith. If the restorative powers of God and human rights are innate, they can

only become true in our ability to be productive, responsible, and just citizens and to

reproduce this intrinsic orientation in others.

Spiritual Competence

From what we know so far, if both the secular and religious approaches to truth and faith

have been curtailed by morality and rationality alone, then it seems that a more process

oriented view of spirituality is in order. This conception can be articulated through the

development of an integrated "moral rationality" which recognizes from a social

constructivist perspective that there is an objective higher order moral maturity without

specifying the substantive nature of this morality (Moshman, 1995).

I propose that the meta-objective reconciliation of subjective rational and moral

development should be considered a kind of spiritual competence (Singh & Premarajan,

n.d). Spiritual competence is an intra-personal peace that transcends attachment and leads

to true autonomy and self-love. It requires that an individual's conscious, autonomous,

"adult" behaviors are reconciled with their unconscious, dependent, "childish"

motivations. Spiritual competence produces intrapersonal love – thriving productivity,

reciprocity, and connectedness – rather than anxiety, neurosis, dependence, and

disconnectedness from the pursuit of interpersonal justice. Spiritual competence requires

reflection upon and reconciliation of the past, present, and future self in order to achieve

moral autonomy, reciprocity, and an orientation of love for self and others. An individual

who is spiritually competent has become "a witness to one's own experience" (Schwartz,

IAEDP Conference, 2013) and is well situated to truly have compassion for the

experiences of others.

Spiritual competence is being free to develop our moral and rational capacities in

harmony. Religion can be considered a narrative that suggests *how* one might go about

reconciling one's intrinsic motivations and extrinsic behaviors around a transcendent

purpose, but religiosity and spirituality are different (Singh & Premarajan, n.d). For the

spiritual individual, "God" can be defined as anything an individual uses to settle the soul

to harmony between rational motivations with his moral behaviors (e.g. money,

relationships). As Hurley (2000) describes, modern secularists haven't abandoned the morality of "God" at all, they have just abandoned the platform to defend any morality other than the pursuit of natural passions. These natural passions can be deemed "spiritual addictions" and would be considered evidence that an individual is not spiritually competent.

What matters to the spiritually competent individual is that a focus on the autonomous development of others, as well as the self, is rational. The only way to reach this conclusion is a personal conviction that the fate of humanity matters, hence the idea that an existential "God" cares about us. This conclusion leads *us* to care about humanity. However, along with the idea *that* humanity matters comes the parallel notion that despite our beliefs, we will never fully understand *why* humanity matters and therefore, we should not try to control the fate of humanity but should rather try to respect that humanity as well as the individual discoveries of the individuals who make it up. At the same time, while cannot control the fate of humanity, we can control ourselves, which will ultimately influence the fate of humanity.

When "God" becomes the pursuit of rational gratification rather than moral discovery, the fruits and experiences of "God" will be finite and time-bound and an individual can be considered spiritually addicted to those time-bound things. Rather, in loving and respecting our future selves, we give ourselves a gift to *eternally discover* a "God" that bridges rational faith and moral truth for survival and productivity. In loving others, we generously and freely give the fruits of our discovery, without expectation or force. This

conceptualization of the "discovery of God" as the experience of love is evidence of one's spiritual competence.

Although the process of developing spiritual competence may be as individualized as a thumbprint, we can understand enough about it to know that from a meta-objective standpoint, most thumbprints look remarkably similar. In most senses, there are no right or wrong ways to experience and act in the world – although there are certainly stronger cases for some brands of moral action or inaction as universal. I cannot, in any final sense, tell you what is good and bad for you, nor can I tell you how to treat others. But together, we can agree that the way humans develop a sense of good and bad and right and wrong is universal, and that we already know there is an adaptive and a maladaptive trajectory. Benson and Scales (2009) assert that "notions of relationism and integration, bidirectionality, active production of one's own development, relative plasticity, and relational developmental systems theory suggest that human development can be strengthened through what has been termed adaptive developmental regulation."

For an agent of change in the 21st century, the task is to integrate moral development around an idea of spiritual competence; that requires reconciliation from two of the most doggedly opposed camps – the religious and the secular. To realize developmental justice, these two camps must draw collective conclusions about development that become objective in the collective sphere, even though they are inherently morally relative judgments. At the same time, as Spragens (2006) suggests, "given that all citizens are to be given equal respect and treated equally, and given that they subscribe to

different conceptions of the human good, the state must as far as possible adopt a stance of neutrality vis à vis these different conceptions of good…[therefore] those judgments with any real claim to credibility must be a form of 'judgment with' not simply 'judgment of'" (p. 216).

By legislating this framework under this justice-rights model, an effort to promote economic justice has actually compromised our moral development. By making the normative aspects of "God" (the good of our future selves) prescriptive, we are compromising our eternal discovery toward spiritual competence and are instead promoting a less developmentally mature rational ego – the one that tells us that the fears wired into our brains by our past self are more powerful than the possibilities of our present and future self. When we try to control "God" in this way, it is a protective mechanism that limits our possibilities for development. In this analogy, when we try to control "God" we also try to control others. We demand that others respect, protect, and fulfill our needs. This implies that we are narcissistic, developmentally needy, and pessimistic about our inherent strength to fulfill these needs. In this way, we have been unable to overcome the rational ego and can only use other people as means to our end, thereby limiting the cooperative capabilities of mankind. Instead, we will always try to wrangle free from the controls we have placed and this will result in spiritual addiction, which leads to vice, idleness, and futility.

Rather, under a peace-love model, we feel an inherent sense of moral responsibility to each other's economic justice because of the power of our autonomy. When we

relinquish the "rights" and control of our past emotional scars, and pay respect to the

protective rational self for the good of our present and future selves (or in the name of

"God") we become whole and our future becomes limitless. In experiencing an overflow

of the self, we rush to not only respect and protect others' autonomy, but to help them

fulfill their own autonomous potential. This implies that we are transcended,

developmentally fulfilled, and willing to cooperate with others for mutual benefit. That is

the essence of moral reciprocity. In this model, we are optimistic about our future and we

give power and control to our future selves and ultimately to one another. This will result

in spiritual competence, which leads to virtue, productivity, and promise.

Although the peace-love lexicon seems elementary, its intuitive qualitative nature may be

what has kept it from being accepted as an academic paradigm. Ultimately, it appears that

an orientation of "peace" and "love" leads to "justice" and "rights" and not the other way

around. Therefore, the development of spirituality is a crucial process mechanism for

individual survival in any ecological context. It is this spiritual competence that leads one

to "thrive" psychologically regardless of the circumstances that present challenges to

one's survival. In this way, a research focus on the development of spirituality can

provide important insight into positive pathways for adaptive developmental regulation

that include rational intrapersonal regulation and moral interpersonal integration. Because

a spiritual competence of love closely mirrors the form of love described in the Hebrew

and Christian scriptures, and mirrors the Golden Rule that is present in all major world

religions (Armstrong, 2009, July), a framework of developmentally contingent spiritual

competence based on what we know about love addresses the problem of meta-moral objectivity with great promise.

As a result, knowledge of love can be considered a commodity in the free market, and spiritual competence – whether religious or secular – is a developmental asset that is produced by such knowledge. Spiritual competence is also a way for individuals and institutions to resolve the conflicts of moral pluralism in today's global world and its economies. If successful, the integration of spiritual competence into a developmental framework for policy-making should catalyze the free market to function at optimal levels *and* promote more peaceful and loving relationships between citizens and institutions. In a society that that fosters spiritual competence, individuals will thrive and developmental injustice will be naturally reduced. While competition between rational preferences will persist, moral reciprocity will prevail when spiritually competent individuals are producing and reproducing loving relationships and institutions.

Ultimately this should maximize economic development and the recycling of this capital back into institutions to sustain a positive social ecology (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) – one that promotes both peace and justice within individuals and between individuals and their institutions.

However, spiritual competence is still a meta-objective developmental goal upon which subjective rationality and morality rest, and therefore must be created by multiple cross-cultural voices. So the question is whether a concept of development that includes a

meta-objective spiritual competence helps us sidestep the tensions of moral pluralism? If so, can we find a way for humanity to converge our religious and secular narratives toward a judgment together that the development of a spirituality of love is relatively more moral than a spirituality of justice? How do we begin to define the processes that are utilized by the spiritually competent individual to display rational responsibility and moral reciprocity and to iron out the idiosyncrasies of what "love" means with candor and tact?

Directions for Future Research

Golden Triangle, Golden Rule

Karen Armstrong, in a July 2009 Ted Talk, surprised her audience by speaking not about the existence of God, as she does in her *New York Times* bestseller, *The Case for God,* but rather about a simple child's dictum, the Golden Rule. Armstrong (2009, July) asserts that compassion is the central theme of all major world religions and that the Golden Rule encompasses this compassion in a secular way. If we consider, as Armstrong suggests we do, the necessity of a true revival of the Golden Rule, it is not far off that: 1.) an orientation of "love" should be the cornerstone of universal framework for spiritual competence; 2.) a healthy self-love is required for us to mirror love to others; and 3.) this self-love stems from a sense of *self*-compassion not narcissism.

This makes intuitive sense. Love has been exalted as an integral part of the human condition for many centuries, across many disciplines and cultures. Why then, have we

been hesitant to include a paradigm for love into public policy and institutional analysis? The likely answer is that research about love has taken too many different directions.

Philosophers and laypeople alike have thought about and written about love in innumerable contexts. The notion that love is an essential part of the human experience is not controversial; the concepts of what constitutes love and how love is developed and practiced are more so.

First, love has been explored as an intrinsic *identity*. We see this approach to love primarily in the sciences such as psychology (e.g., love styles in romantic and platonic relationships, parental love), neuroscience (e.g., cognition and choice in love, sexual orientation) and biology (e.g. hormones, sexual DNA), and in the mental health and self-help fields (e.g., self-love). These understandings of love begin differently but seem to be converging as research between fields overlaps, and outward toward fields of purpose and character (see below). These understandings of love are helpful because they explore love as it develops *within* one individual. These understandings of love are limited because they often only focus on certain types of love (e.g., the biomechanics of sex).

Secondly, love has been explored as an extrinsic *character*. We see this exploration of love as the meta-observation of the individual phenomena of love. History is this meta-observation through a lens of time/culture (e.g., love as marriage in America from 1700's to present), anthropology is a meta-observation with the lens of culture/time (e.g., love as it is expressed in Western v. Eastern culture, closed v. open relationships), and in

sociology is a meta-observation with the lens of point-in-time or point-in-culture (e.g., love as the present day demography of unmarried couples who are cohabitating). These understandings of love are stifled in mainstream Western dialogue because they are controversial. These approaches to love are helpful because they explore love as a social construct in constant interaction with institutions. These approaches to love are limited because they are more meta-analytical then experiential.

Finally, love has been explored as an eternal *purpose.* We see this exploration of love primarily in philosophy (e.g. Fromm's pillars of love: self-love, motherly love, fatherly love, brotherly love, erotic love, love of god/life) and in religion (e.g., marriage, love of God). These understandings of love are helpful because they are not very controversial. Yet although they begin very similarly, they diverge as they develop in complexity because of existential and paradigmatic conflicts between secular philosophy and religion, and between one religion and another. These understandings are still helpful because they examine love as a developmental phenomenon between individuals. They are limited because they say little about love of individuals for goods, services, and brands (e.g., love in economics), or love of individuals in different social roles or institutions (love as manifested by various cultures), and so on.

At the intersection of each of these fields is a consideration of the relationship between self-love and love for others. The next logical possibility is to explore love within and between institutions. If love can provide individuals with a powerful healing mechanism to overcome the inherent neurosis of our moral fracture—within our ego, with our fellow

man, and with the universe/God (Fromm, 1956)—then love can similarly provide society with a framework to begin healing the developmental fracture that has resulted from the inherent tensions of pluralism (Massingale, 2007). Therefore, defining and understanding love at the intersection of all of these fields is critical for both human and institutional development.

One of Fromm's greatest contributions to the conceptual understanding of love is that self-love is critical to the development of love in any individual, and is the hallmark of a person who is developmentally mature. Fromm maintains that self-love is inextricably intertwined with love for others and for the world. Fromm was one of the first to distinguish self-love from narcissism and he believes it is necessary to develop self-love in order to possess a mature love for others. This paper has further shown how a sense of spiritual competence, which acts as an "earned secure attachment" is a unique model of a developmentally mature love that can move individuals from surviving to thriving.

Therefore, to guide future research, I propose a developmental framework, called the Golden Triangle. Based on Mary Ainsworth's (1979) attachment theory and Fromm's (1956) theory of love, the Golden Triangle is a three-lobed model of self-love that can apply to both individuals and institutions. It articulates three processes of developmental competence (rational, moral, and spiritual) influenced by three core psychological assets (identity, character, and purpose) that are in turn influenced by three sources of contextual knowledge (physical, cognitive, and emotional). It rests heavily upon Fromm's foundational insights about love, but articulates Fromm's theory of self-love as

a developmental construct. Its three psychological assets (*identity, character*, and *purpose*), when aligned through spiritual competence, integrate the rational and moral consciousness and catalyze the morally contingent element of an otherwise egotistical rational competence.

It is only through this type of coherent concept of self-love that the love for others expressed in the words of the Golden Rule can be authentically realized. If a paradigm of self-love can also be woven into ADS scholarship and applied to institutional analysis, the resulting insights and policy recommendations may contribute greatly to establishing developmental justice, and eventually bring us closer to realizing the noble goals of the human rights regime and the global social work movement– world peace and social justice.

In the presence of an integrated self-love, love for others manifests itself in personal and social development and competence. Integrated self-love moves individuals toward moral maturity by transforming their orientation from an egotistically rational competence—reflecting the self-interested survival mode of the individual in competition for scarce resources—into an orientation of spiritually rational competence that reflects the self-transcendent mode of the thriving of an individual man for the greater purpose of the survival of mankind (Conn, 1998). It is in the absence of this integrated self-love that love-for-others can be absent altogether, or manifested in personal and social regression and addiction. In this case, individuals may actually move from a state of egotistically rational competence to spiritually rational addiction – which reflects the destruction of

the individual man to the detriment of mankind. This meta-objective conceptualization of self-love is a synthesis that does not seem to immediately threaten religious or secular ideas of the self and the human condition. Rather, it fits neatly within, and even bridges some existing theories of self-consciousness, self-worth, moral reasoning, moral identity, etc.

In the framework of The Golden Triangle, a spiritually competent self-love refers to an authentic integration of personhood which

> …comes by a long and complex process of formation, both formal and informal [and] consists of a very specific and personal configuration or arrangement of virtues and vices, affections, intentions, dispositions, beliefs, values, and priorities [that] gives one a particular direction or orientation in and to life, so that one acts in a consistent way, either doing good or doing evil. (Cosgrave, 2006, p. 129)

However, Cosgrave fails to make some important distinctions in this analysis. These choices of "configuration," "direction," and "action" can be described and analyzed in three ways. It can be an identity choice (an internal process) a character choice (an external process) or a purpose choice (an eternal process). For Cosgrave's terms, the configuration of values is an identity choice, the direction or orientation of life is a purpose choice, and the consistent action is the character choice.

After developing this three-lobed model in much greater detail, I will discuss how this model of self-love serves not only as a developmental phenomenon, but also as a social

phenomenon. The "Golden Triangle, Golden Rule" model demonstrates how a theory of spiritual competence will be manifested in a rational self-love and a moral love for others. Developing one's own self-love through rationally competent behaviors must include a genuine moral concern for the development of *others'* rational self-love, since authentic self-love is both highly developmental and highly social. Viewing love in this way also reconciles the competing notions of nature vs. nurture: the capacity to love is inherent in our nature, while the capability, desire, and expression of love is dependent on our nurture.

Although this essay presumes that rationality is a given, it is important to note that the development of rationality is a separate but equally compelling topic of interest that is itself a critical pre-requisite to self-love. Fromm postulated that love is a "rational phenomenon," based on the unique human capacity for cognitive reason, and love as the ultimate cognitive choice to overcome our inherent human separateness. While I agree with this theory, I find his nearly interchangeable usage of "reason" and "rationality" problematic. While Aquinas argued that cognitive reason refers to an inherent and "specifying potentiality," a distinct capacity of the human species (Stump & Kretzmann, 1991), more complex psychological understandings of rationality exist in contemporary literature. Contributions from neuroscience have made it clear that a concept of rationality should not be limited to cognitive reasoning, but should consider the impact of emotions and physiology (Damasio, 2005; Pham, 2007). In a meta-analytical review of various theories of love, e.g., Ainsworth's attachment theory (1979) Freud's concept of love as a sublimated sexual drive (as cited in Fromm, 1956) Sternberg's (1986) view of

loving relationships, and Levin's (2000) view of love as a predictor of health outcomes, it becomes clear that the phenomenon of love is experienced in ways that are cognitive, emotional, and physical – lending credibility to the idea that rationality requires the development of those same capacities. This conceptualization of rational competence is consistent with Moshman's (1995) theory that every person creates an internalized and individualized "rationality structure" that comprises our subconscious modes of processing the world (cognitively, physically, and emotionally) and is dynamically influenced by our ability to both attach and remove our experiences from others' experiences through a secure attachment.

The key to unlocking this secure attachment within the self, and thus experience "God" as love, is an integration of the conscious and unconscious motivations. One promising way to do this is through a process of self-reflection in regards to our adult attachment style. When we reflect frequently and objectively on or past relationships and moral development, we can each tap into what Schwartz (2013) has called a "Love Map," a template in the brain that depicts the idealized other as projected in imagery rather than in actual engagements with the other. When the actual other does not coincide with the idealized other, there is an activation of the "old brain", rational survival mechanism rather than "new brain" spiritual thriving mechanisms. This is a crucial concept that can be linked to our ability to form true ideas of self and other in an age where social media creates idealizations of the self through internet personalities that then become projected onto others. What is promising about the idea of a "Love Map" as a tool for spiritual competence is that it allows us to engage our reflective functioning and bring our

unconscious motivations into the conscious mind as a way to alter behavior. While these experiences will be undoubtedly subjective, the spiritual regeneration that occurs can be considered a meta-objective process in itself.

Taken as a whole, this model of self-love is an active art that is influenced by transactional social contexts it is clear that self-love leads to love for others and for mankind. With more robust support, this framework can lead to a new approach to institutional analysis that includes a spiritual competence of love that is both morally rational (Moshman, 1995) and epidemiological (Levin, 2000). The application of interdisciplinary and multi-tiered scholarship around love can provide an advanced approach to social problem solving (e.g., policy making, systems reform, and cultural change) by integrating the roles of morality and rationality that may seem diametrically opposed when masked as religion and science respectively.

Therefore, another direction for future research is to translate the Golden Triangle framework from a theory of individual moral development into a theory of institutional analysis and development. Currently, institutional analysis frameworks are drawn primarily from economics, political science, and sociology.

Through the lens of ADS, the corollary questions of this research for institutional analysis become: what macro-level institutions and paradigms prevent adults from moving past dependent/disorganized attachment and a dissociative ego? How do new global narratives contribute to a disintegrated emotional ego (personal and institutional) and a lack of hope

in humanity's future peace and justice? How can macro-level workers contribute to moving individuals from a lack of self-love and an attached, dependent, and implicitly hopeless orientation to an overflow of self-love and an integrated, autonomous, hopeful orientation? How does a mature rational love flourish in social institutions?

One assumption for each of these questions is that institutions and social contexts contribute to the progression or regression of moral development. Once we accept the idea that autonomy is both intrinsically developmental as manifested in a rational self-love and fundamentally social, as manifested in a moral love for others, we can consider the idea that institutions and organizations might also share these traits. Nutt-Powell et al. (1978) provide grounds to believe that we can understand institutions in the very same way that we understand individuals by purporting that an individual is in fact a distinct kind of institution. Unlike a common misunderstanding of institutions, several authors have distinguished the institution from the organization – the latter being a subset of the former (Polski & Ostrom, 1999; Nutt-Powell et al., 1978). What we know is that:

> Only persons can construct moral or just communities, and central to such construction is moral character, what the community members are as moral persons. Thus, we have convincing reasons for giving priority to moral character and its formation over particular choices and actions in relation to both individuals and communities… While this is a more complex and difficult concept to understand than character in relation to an individual person, we can speak of a group or community character in so far as that group or community is based on or held together by its common choices or activities... In a similar way,

one may refer to the moral character of a family or neighborhood or even a

society or political community. Thus to speak of [American] character does make

sense, since we as a nation have in common many values, such as a commitment

to democracy, the equality of all, the consequent requirement of justice and

fairness as well as other values and virtues. (Cosgrave, 2006, p. 133)

This happens as institutions influence individual trajectories toward achievement or

diffusion of spiritual competence and by contributing to the expression of one's morality

through one's moral rationality structure (Moshman, 1995). The mature individual is thus

one who has achieved integration of self – through receiving these various forms of love

– and who displays coherence of self – by giving these various forms of love. An

institution, organization, or social context is thriving when individuals within or

influenced by it tend to become mature individuals, integrated and coherent.

In the same way that we can attempt to understand individual and reciprocal

productivity—through rational predictability and a loving orientation—we should attempt

to understand collective productivity through the lens of our most enduring social

institutions. Viewing institutions in this new light – and understanding how they both

shape and reflect our concept of love – makes existing theories of institutional analysis

seem inadequate.

In order to translate my psychological framework to the institutional scale and to put this

it in the context of existing models of institutional analysis, I will explore existing models

of institutional analysis and examine what they offer to moral development, and what they lack. I will argue that the success of an institution, similar to the success of an individual, depends on how loving the institution has become, based on its rational competence and developmental maturity. Therefore, institutional analysis must not be done through a piecemeal evaluation of individual policies but rather through a systematic examination of the institution's development over time and its relation to other institutions. Thus, I will apply the terms used in the psychological framework, "Golden Triangle, Golden Rule" to institutions. I will define institutional identity, institutional character, and institutional purpose and will discuss how an institution develops "self-love" within this Golden Triangle and how an institution models love for others using the general types of active love discussed by Erich Fromm (motherly, fatherly, brotherly, worldly, interdependent). Based chiefly on the six types of institutions described by Nutt-Powell et al. (1978) – formal organizations, informal organizations, members, persons, collectives, and social orders – I will apply the model to a hypothetical or actual example of each type of institution.

Love as a combination of the relational, moral (social) model of decision-making often associated with religion and humanism, and the rational (egotistical) model of decision-making that is generally considered secular can provide a new alternative for moral living through spiritual competence. This is a crucial matter: we must reframe the fundamental priorities of the human race around love and assess how well the global and capitalistic regimes embody those principles to produce and reproduce a healthy manifestation of

love. This means creating a way to assess the institutional effects on love and including love in policy discussions and other political process.

Conclusion

In a global age, humanitarian and knowledge workers face unprecedented challenges to achieving world peace and social justice. The birth of the United Nations was a huge step toward global consensus on issues of peace and justice, creating space for international cooperation instead of just trade agreements and political competition. Today, the human rights regime that gained traction under Eleanor Roosevelt has exploded into a nearly universal paradigm for social justice that has even been explicitly adopted by the social work profession (IFSW, 2012) and is used as justification for the implementation of many national social welfare services and programs (e.g. the Affordable Care Act) in addition to political movements (e.g. gay rights).

As I have shown, this human rights paradigm is facing serious setbacks and is failing too many people who are deprived of basic resources necessary to live. Even at the most basic level of understanding human rights, unless all nations ratify all components of the UDHR and its accompanying covenants, and work together to fulfill them on a global scale, we may be promoting more international tension, competition, and extraterritorial rights violations. Furthermore, in order for such a system to viably function in a global economy, it is necessary to acknowledge that asserting the indivisibility of human rights leaves nations in an ethical gridlock. A deeper look into the blind assumption that human

rights are naturally given reveals important contradictions between objective individual

rights and subjective moral development, upon which the ideas of political, social,

cultural, and religious pluralism rest. So we are left to resolve the place for rights in a

globalized economy marked by moral pluralism. This requires a nearly impossible level

of consensus.

The spiritual and symbolic values driving the human rights movement are both

appropriate and relevant to a new way of thinking, and the social agenda put forth by the

regime is a critical and urgent one. Nonetheless, the co-dependent nature of human rights

when they are prescriptive rather than normative seems to have led humanity into to a

disturbing picture of developmental injustice and "efforts to repair things may accelerate

decline precisely at the moment when a potential for growth could be coming into play, if

decision-making were appropriately informed" (Hinze, 2009, p. 174).

This sympathetic but critical reflection of the human rights paradigm reveals some deeply

ingrained logical incoherence. As the name implies, the global *free* market operates under

the assumption that exchange agents operate autonomously, while the human rights

milieu implies that individuals are dependent. When viewed in this way, it becomes

glaringly obvious that they will not optimally co-exist because their basic assumptions

are inherently contradictory, which leaves our humanity at a legitimate impasse. To

confine ourselves to a single objective paradigm for economic and social justice may

push us further from the ends that we want to produce. At the same time, to not have a

global paradigm may weaken the thrust of the social work movement toward the type of

sustainable and transformative social work that will produce and *consistently reproduce* justice.

One solution then, is to re-structure the dialogue within the human rights framework, including definition of the nature and scope of competing rights, most particularly of the positive social and cultural rights that require redistributive policy structures.

The second alternative is to unsubscribe to the notion of human rights as operationalized by the International Bill of Rights. In one way this occurred as the United Nations adopted the Millennium Development Goals. Even still, both of these paradigms focus on highly quantitative, largely economic inequities (e.g., poverty) without addressing the underlying causes of developmental injustice.

Because the economy is a temporal thing– ever-changing and increasingly complex especially in a globalized world– levers of change that are economic in nature may very well impact our economic productivity, but an economic agenda will not *inherently* trickle down to shape either human development and social welfare unless it is deliberately designed to do so. On the other hand, individuals who are morally mature will be optimally equipped to interact with their personal and social worlds will be driven act in ways that are creative, innovative, and productive. Put another way, the trickle-down theory employed by many economists and politicians is not a complete fallacy. But it must be paralleled by what we might call "trickle up," for my argument is that it is in the domain of intrapersonal developmental as well as human face-to-face relations, and

social ecology that changes are generated. As we think about these second- and third-generation positive rights, and how to reconcile theory and practice in the context of our current economic infrastructure, we need a brand-new framework that is oriented around developmental justice. We need to transcend tradition two-dimensional approaches to social justice: to fulfill one right or another, to raise taxes or not; to regulate or deregulate; to fund programs or cut them.

Re-imagining social justice in this way is recognizing that it is not a matter of everyone having human rights nor is it a matter of doing what is objectively "right." Rather, it is a matter that depends on our most fundamental human capacity: development. Increased investment in prevention and the sustainability of our most delicate enterprise—ourselves, will ultimately lower expenditures on social and economic intervention and reform our institutions and practices, both nationally and globally. In other words, rather than mandate the lens through which social justice must be viewed, which is the nature of human rights, we should demand concrete and measurable changes in outcomes that indicate growing developmental thriving at the individual and institutional levels.

To create such a brand new framework, a lot more work needs to be done. Sanjay Reddy (Human Rights and the Global Economy, November, 9, 2011) argues that integrating moral reasoning and social science appropriately can forward this agenda without necessarily diminishing any of the other goals (such as increasing trade). He recognizes that policy analysis is essentially a cost-benefit analysis that is largely economic and the fusion of social science and evaluative reasoning is essential for balancing economic with

moral development and welfare. According to Reddy, fruitfully bringing together the empirical and the moral means re-examining the causal assumptions that prompt decision-makers to recycle social policies and disrupting habitual and benign assumptions about the outcomes of social policies by asking "is the purpose of human life to maximize what is good for one's own development, or what is advantageous to society as a whole? And "is the good life one of maximum material accumulation, or should health, leisure, and play come first?" (Spragens, 2006, p. 198) It also requires a new form of qualitative institutional analysis that assesses how well the global and capitalistic regimes embody a lived awareness those principles.

If unity is what Eleanor Roosevelt hoped for when she sowed the seeds for the United Nations, it seems that one of the initial steps to combat moral pluralism is to approach consensus building from a new lens. Politics and economics are by their very nature, a rational, self-serving, competitive game whether at the personal or institutional level. Instead of speaking common ground through political negotiations as the United Nations does, lets augment cooperation and compassion within the two places that those motivations occur organically –the charitable world (e.g. religious institutions, non-profits, private foundations) and the scientific community (especially the social sciences). These communities are, by their inner nature, more cooperative because the more cooperative these individuals are, the better they compete for political and economic resources in their fields. Lessons learned from these communities reveal that guarding against violations of freedom is relatively uncontroversial and the right to development can be justified in a religious or secular way.

The next step is to explore the psychology of autonomous development and the necessity of a spiritual ego-transcendence. A healthy, self-transcendent ego is one that considers both "surviving" (rational, individual, self-actualization, self as object) and "thriving" (moral, social, self-transcendence, self as subject) are crucial for productivity. Rational and moral development are *both* important but they must function in harmony, regardless of whether this spirituality takes a religious or a secular course.

In the same way that spirituality restores peace and hope in an individual, it can similarly restore peace and hope in mankind. When you reduce the lofty goal of world peace down to the individual level, it entirely depends on a person's ability to form and sustain healthy, loving relationships – which is a trait of moral character. When we mirror our treatment of others with our treatment of ourselves, it is so clear that they must first learn to form and sustain a healthy loving relationship within themselves – which is a trait of rational identity. This integration is spiritual competence. Attempting to further legislate economic development without understanding the consequence of economic systems, policies, and programs on human development and behavior – specifically on the development of spiritual competence– may lead us away from our goals of world peace and social justice. As such, it is impossible to answer the initial questions surrounding world peace and social welfare without also considering whether institutions exist in ways that weaken, protect, or promote a meta-objective moral development that rests on an integrated "moral rationality"—on spiritual competence. Thus, I propose that a focus on spiritual competence is a prerequisite for moral reciprocity and that policies focusing

on spiritual competence will actually promote moral development for world peace and maximize economic development for social justice.

What I have shown is that institutions and social contexts contribute to the integration or dissociation of the self. This spiritual dissociation has occurred largely as a result of the change in knowledge structures in a digital age, and can lead to a decline in moral reciprocity and to self-destructive behaviors. Combined, this means that where spiritual competence is lacking, overall collective productivity will decline, and all the more as institutions and organizations reflect the fractured spirituality of the individuals who run, serve, and are served by those institutions. Ultimately this fractured spirit strangles a society's economic capacity to meet the demands of social justice. Therefore, to address global social welfare we must not only assess the effectiveness of institutions to serve the ideals of freedom, but we must also assess whether the citizens who engage with these institutions are prepared to do so with a highly autonomous and healthily-developed moral compass.

Because individuals involved in collective political decision-making still bring normative assertions to the table, it is necessary to reconcile the conflicting descriptions of spirituality that are made more complicated in a pluralistic, technology reliant global economy. The narrowing of "knowledge" in the 21st century to this type of technical information comes a plethora of experiential and developmental changes such as the fracturing of self-concept and the decline of moral reciprocity. As Mother Theresa once said,

The greatest disease in the West today is not TB or leprosy; it is being unwanted, unloved, and uncared for. We can cure physical diseases with medicine, but the only cure for loneliness, despair, and hopelessness is love. There are many in the world who are dying for a piece of bread but there are many more dying for a little love. The poverty in the West is a different type of poverty – it is not only a poverty of loneliness but also of spirituality. There is a hunger for love, as there is a hunger for God….[and] the hunger for love is much more difficult to remove than the hunger for bread. (Good Reads, n.d., para 22)

This sentiment is echoed by Fromm who states that:

People capable of love under the present system, are necessarily the exceptions; love is by necessity a marginal phenomenon in present-day Western society…those who are seriously concerned with love as the only rational answer to the problem of human existence must, then, arrive at the conclusion that radical changes in our social structure are necessary, if love is to become a social and not a highly individualistic, marginal phenomenon….[and] if man is able to love…the economic machine must serve him, rather than he serve it. He must be able to share experience, to share work, rather than at best, share in profits. Society must be organized in a way that man's social, loving nature is not separated from his social existence but becomes one with it. (Fromm, 1956, p. 122)

This leaves us at a crossroads. As we have seen in the present-day United Sates, despite the separation of church and state, which has kept spirituality and institutional development completely separate, it is impossible to divorce spirituality from institutional development. So where do secular and religious narratives collide? According to the golden rule, we can infer that self-love is a crucial element of love that constitutes the highest order of moral rationality. Furthermore, the modern American ideal of social justice – the distribution of equal rights to all members of society –can actually be traced back to philosophical ideas about love of humanity (Trattner, 1999). Love can be viewed as many things; it can, for example, be viewed as a type of "spirituality." According to Fromm's (1956) interpretation that links love, responsibility, and rationality, some (e.g. Moshman, 1995) would consider this perspective as a "rational constructivist" argument. The idea is that there is an objective developmental trajectory– however socially constructed – toward a higher order moral rationality but necessarily an absolutist one therefore supports the notion that spiritual competence can be considered a meta-objective developmental asset. It follows that there are many behavioral manifestations of spiritual competence but that they are all based on love. This interpretation is both in line Fromm's argument and fundamental to Moshman's argument.

Fromm's concept of an active "love," free from symbiotic attachment, coupled with a positive self-love, provides a robust cross-disciplinary, cross-cultural direction for spiritual competence. The "Golden Triangle' provides a preliminary framework for the concept of self-love (identity, purpose, character) that leads to both self-actualization

(rationality) and self-transcendence (morality) Evidence from psychology, philosophy, and ethics support this framework though more work is needed to bridge the theoretical and practical elements of spiritual competence. Perhaps this is an individualized "Love Map" consisting of a particular configuration of cognitive, physical, and emotional self-regulation systems. This work will need to bridge the social sciences with the physical sciences (e.g. biology, neuroscience).

We cannot legislate people's intrinsic orientation toward moral reciprocity, but we can create policies, programs and practices that help individuals develop this orientation. Just as loving individuals are more productive persons, better integrated to their social context, and can be considered more rationally competent (in psychological terms) and morally mature when they exhibit mature self-love and love for others, so institutions will be most productive when they are "developmentally mature" and thus "loving" in an institutional way. This rational competence and moral maturity will very likely improve predictability in individual decision-making, meaning that individuals who are loving will create more stable and lasting institutions. Likewise, the rational competence of institutions with a "mature self-love" will improve the likelihood that individuals involved with those institutions will develop a mature sense of self-love and rational competence, in turn. In my view, psychologists' ability to measure this rational self-love in both individuals and institutions is a huge step toward creating lasting positive change in individual behavior and institutional culture. Developing this new direction for institutional analysis in order to better understand institutional maturity will help sociologists, political scientists, and policymakers to predict and to influence

organizational and social behavior and collective productivity. This results-oriented

approach would be conducive to nations and states adopting more innovative and flexible

strategies to approaching a plethora of social justice concerns, while simultaneously

mandating that they report on the progress of outcomes. It means educating the populous

and political leaders alike that distributive policies nurture human capital, and human

capital is an asset to a thriving global economy, and then gathering data on how well

nations harness this asset.

When spirituality is viewed from a justice-rights framework, it pits rationality and

morality against one another and ends up paralyzing key political players on the

international and national stages from creating policy and practice that are both cost-

conscious and effective. Whereas, spirituality in a peace-love framework supports a

continuum of systems – family, community, nation, globe – a continuum that is available

to absorb the many foreseeable responses of our many societies and nations. If nations

and individuals create policies, systems, and practices that support and promote the

Golden Triangle, Golden Rule framework, justice can be served by helping individuals

utilize interact most positively with their environments.

Fostering peace and love in human development and creatively distributing resources by

recognizing that they are not ultimately finite is simply more intuitive than creating a

legal mandate to fulfill conflicting rights; it is also the only way to reconcile the tenets of

morality in human relationships in a global economy. If we keep healthy development as

the center of our attention, then our social, economic, and political policies will

simultaneously reflect a respect for human dignity and result in well-being, productivity, and fair competition. It is one thing to build bridges between regimes but it is another to reshape these relationships to uphold objectives such as human development (De Schutter, Human Rights and the Global Economy, November, 9, 2011). Ultimately, using a model of love to invest in people's overall physical, mental, and emotional well-being will result in lower costs to society as they begin to reinvest their knowledge and income back into their families and communities, "although, it is likely that much more work needs to be done on exactly how systems and institutions can be effectively restructured to meet these goals" (Safarty, Human Rights and the Global Economy, November, 9, 2011).

The important lesson in this conversation is that spiritual competence is a developmental asset that leads to peaceful, loving, and productive relationships. In the same way, global spiritual competence is a tool for social welfare workers. It inherently leads to developmental justice, which in turn reproduces the development of spiritual competence in individuals. Therefore, when we reframe the paradigm of change as spiritual competence rather than individual rights and we reframe the goal of globalization as world peace rather than social justice, we are starting to address how "human plurality is not simply an obstacle to moral judgment but also a dialectical resource for achieving it" (Spragens, 2006, p. 216). Primarily, it has become clear that there must be a policy to promote intrinsic spiritual competence. As Massingale (2007) has eloquently stated, "we humans create social divisions and injustice. They do not have to be; they are neither natural nor fated. What humans break, divide, and separate we can also heal, unite, and

restore" (p. 162). Armstrong (2009, July) echoes this sentiment, stating that "when people of all different persuasions come together working side by side for a common goal, differences melt away…we learn amity and we learn to live together and to get to know one another…and together with all our expertise, we can change the world."

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Abstract

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An Essay on Moral Responsibility in a Global Age

Master's Thesis directed by E. Doyle McCarthy, Ph.D.

This paper discusses how global social welfare goals might be modified to reflect a commitment to moral reciprocity instead of individual rights. It examines holistic moral development in a global age and notes that a change in knowledge structures has changed the focus from love to justice. It presents a sympathetic critique of the existing human rights-social justice paradigm that has been adopted by the social work profession as a legislative guideline of moral responsibility. Although the United Nations Human Rights regime and most local human rights initiatives have been embraced anecdotally as both progressive and at least somewhat successful, this paper analyzes this "success" by examining political, economic, cultural, and philosophical factors which have slowed, alloyed, or completely frustrated the attempts of "human-rights talk" to achieve its goals of social welfare. The critique is based on insights gleaned from developmental psychology and philosophy that reveal an alternative paradigm of peace-love has been historically more adaptive. It explores the development of inner peace and love as presented in religious and secular philosophy and finds that they are prerequisites to personal responsibility and moral reciprocity. A new framework for the peace-love paradigm is proposed based on the construct of spiritual competence.

Vita

Jennifer Marie Collins was born on April 24, 1988 in Westwood, NJ. After attending a Catholic grade school, she relocated to upstate New York where she graduated in the top 2 percent of her class at Monroe-Woodbury High School. In August of 2006, she enrolled at Binghamton University where she pursued an interdisciplinary course of study in Philosophy, Politics, and Law. She graduated with a BA in 2009 after only 3 years.

From May 2009 to June 2011 she worked as an office manager for a local surgeon. She started attending Long Island University for Adolescent Education but quickly transferred to Fordham University after being accepted into the Humanities and Sciences program in Spring 2011. During her enrollment at Fordham, she was nominated for the Helen and Norman Burg Student Ethics Prize. At the same time, she was working as a research intern at The Center for the Study of Social Policy, where her primary research was on adolescent health and well-being. In January of 2013, she moved to Los Angeles, California to pursue a professional dance career and will be continuing her research on a part-time basis.