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Stoicism, Moral Education and Material Goods

by

David Patrick Burns

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To my loving wife, thank you.

ABSTRACT

Material goods play an important role in ethical life and moral education. Judging which goods are preferable to which – and which are therefore worth pursuing over which – is an ethically crucial process. The currently dominant paradigms of moral education (virtue education, cognitive developmentalism and care theory) do not satisfactorily contribute to this important topic. I argue that the resultant lacuna may be resolved by attending to the insight of the classical Stoics and their modern day neo-Stoic interpreters. Stoicism, I argue, provides a unique set of philosophical resources that fosters critical deliberation and reflection regarding the attribution of value to material goods. I begin this study by detailing the extant lacuna via discussion of virtue education, cognitive developmentalism and care theory as they relate to material good education. Once the lacuna's existence is established I move on to introduce Stoic philosophy (both classical and contemporary). From this philosophy I construct a moral educational framework. This framework is then applied to two topics related to the material good lacuna: consumer education and environmental education. I conclude that, while Stoicism must be softened and revised for a modern pedagogical audience, its core philosophy has much to offer moral educationalists.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION[1]

The currently dominant paradigms of moral education do not provide a direct, philosophically complete approach to addressing the view students hold of material goods. This thesis will address this lacuna, which I will refer to as the *material good lacuna*. It will be argued that neo-Stoic[2] philosophy is exceptionally well suited to the task of filling this gap. In this introductory chapter I will identify the objectives of the study, the method by which I have conducted it, the motivation for pursuing it, and the headings under which it has been written.

Having done so I will move, in chapter two, to demonstrate the existence of the material good lacuna via a discussion of the currently dominant paradigms of moral education. In this chapter it will be shown that these paradigms, in light of their narrow philosophical scope (as in cognitive developmentalism and care theory) and foundational assumptions about the importance of material goods (as in Aristotelian virtue theory) do not provide the moral educational resources necessary to directly address the views students have of material goods. In chapter three I will introduce the relevant aspects of Stoic and neo-Stoic philosophy. In the fourth chapter I will

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[1] This research was supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.
[2] In this document I will distinguish classical Stoicism from contemporary neo-Stoicism. References to "Stoicism" are meant to invoke Stoic tradition in general. Discussion of this distinction takes place in chapter three.

first address the work that has already been done on the subject of neo-Stoic moral education. Second I will introduce my framework for a neo-Stoic moral education regarding the material good lacuna. In chapter five this framework will be used to examine two issues related to moral education regarding material goods: student consumer education and environmental moral education. This document will end with a series of concluding remarks in chapter six.

This study does not advance the comprehensive teaching of the Stoic tradition as ethical truth above other perspectives. I argue, rather, that learning neo-Stoic methods of analysis and ethical thought can help students evaluate the role of material goods in ways not possible under the currently dominant paradigms. In other words, I argue that neo-Stoicism is superior to these paradigms within the specific context of the material good lacuna. These competing paradigms have important contributions to make, and I will outline some of those contributions in this document, but they do not contribute to resolution of the material good lacuna in the way that I argue neo-Stoicism does.

Methodology

This study has been conducted as an education-philosophical inquiry. This approach means that, although I will be asking pedagogical questions and referencing pedagogical needs, I will be employing philosophy as the primary mode of analysis. It is the case that the precise role and nature of philosophical method in education is a matter of some confusion (see Burns, 2008) and so a few comments of explanation are in order before I proceed.

Most importantly I wish to follow Bridges' (2003) argument that philosophy can be viewed as a research program itself. An approach that views philosophy in this way is one whereby philosophy is the chief method of interrogation. While in some cases philosophy might play a subsidiary role in research that is not primarily philosophical (such as in clarifying concepts in empirical research) in the case of this study philosophy forms the core of the contribution I make. It is expressly not an enterprise I engage in to inform some other research method or approach. This method will involve philosophical activities such as: making arguments about what should be done; examining and comparing the implications of normative positions; and testing the coherence and defensibility of such positions. In short, I have conducted this philosophical study as research.

The label of research must be carefully applied, however, and thus before moving on I wish to briefly comment on the role of the educational philosopher in enterprises like this one. Most clearly I do not follow the investigative structure sometimes invoked by the label of research. I do not, for example, proceed from a hypothesis to data collection and subsequent analysis. Philosophical study does not typically follow such an orderly sequence (Ruitenberg, 2009). I begin this document by demonstrating the material good lacuna, but it would be a mistake to think this lacuna is intellectually distinct from the Stoic resolutions I propose. Stoic thought does not merely provide aid in resolving this lacuna – it also makes it possible to name and frame the issues which define this important topic.

This interplay helps me to define my role as a philosopher in this study. Most fundamentally this role involves providing educationalists with insight that: defines an ethical problem they might not have recognized; clarifies the fundamental issues within this problem; and proposes a set of philosophical resources for the resolution of this problem. Each of these facets of my role might involve several philosophical methods – I compare the implications of normative positions, for example, at several stages of this study. It is also important to note that these facets do not necessarily proceed in a straightforward order. While I introduce the problem I seek to address early in this document, it is my hope that the reader will continue to consider the nature of the problem itself throughout this document. This study is, in general terms, an invitation to consider a new (or reintroduced) form of educational reflection that continually introduces both questions and answers.

The Need for This Study

This study is motivated by a need to provide students with the philosophical resources to critically evaluate the ways in which they interact with and view material goods. This need becomes clear in the two key educational contexts I have identified: consumer education and environmental education. I will now broadly introduce these issues, beginning with the former.

Issue 1: Consumer Education

Over time marketing researchers have noted an increase in the amount of advertising targeted at young people (Valkenburg, 2000). Valkenburg (2000) explains that as children increasingly become the focal point of advertising programs these advertisements come to exert more and more influence in their lives – a reality that reduces the possibility that these children can be taught critical awareness of capitalist practices before being deeply influenced by them. As a result, she notes, many countries have taken steps to reduce the influence of such advertising on children.

In moral educational terms this reality produces an important problem. In virtue educational thought – both Aristotelian (1992, *The Politics*, I.13.1260a.13-14) and Stoic (Seneca, 1996, *Ep.*, 7.5-6) – the early years of one's life are marked by an important imbalance – children are not yet rational[3] (not rational enough, a modern teacher might more accurately say) but they are deeply vulnerable to the social influences around them. The guardians and teachers charged with raising these young people must pay

[3] It is useful to note here that the ancient Greek Stoics, like their contemporaries, believed that mature rationality was a result not just of thinking processes but also of experience (Cooper, 2003).

close attention to the influence of other moral educational forces in children's lives. Today advertising is one such force.

The ethical and philosophical messages contained in contemporary advertisements are not difficult to ascertain. Each product, in a sense, promises a better, more prosperous or flourishing life. Each product also threatens that one may not prosper and flourish without it. These embedded messages are the reason I label advertising a moral educational force. Since advertisements contain important messages about what one should have and do, they contend for influence with traditional moral educational influences such as the family or the school. It is no coincidence that cars, for example, are advertised not only on their technical merits but also on the lifestyles they are said to create. The environment created by such commercialism has become so powerfully influential that psychologists in Canada, the United States, England, Germany, France and Brazil have begun to systematically examine compulsive buying as a pathology (Black and Carver, 2007). Interestingly, Black and Carver note that the currently preferred method of treatment for *compulsive buying disorder* is cognitive behaviour therapy [CBT], which is historically rooted in Stoic philosophy (Weight, Basco & Thase, 2006). This approach centers on critical interrogation of personal belief in an effort to modify resultant psychological difficulty (negative affect). This understanding closely resembles the Stoic account I will discuss in chapter three.

The classical Stoics did indeed provide an analysis of such problems thousands of years ago. They understood, even then, that people were apt to believe that certain *things* promise a better life. They provided an expansive analysis of the ethical and psychological impacts of this tendency and offered a range of therapeutic approaches to address it. In moral educational circles (within education faculties and publications) this insight goes largely unutilized. This omission is unfortunate because the classical Stoics provide what could be called the first sustained ethical critique of consumerism. The currently dominant paradigms of moral education, it will be shown, fail to provide such comprehensive critical analysis.

Why is such analysis required? One example comes from the youth justice system. Although it is important to recognize that crimes account for only some of the ethical lapses of the young, they do account for many of the most grievous ones. As such youth crime statistics give important clues to the sorts of ethical issues young people currently experience. The data indicate that young people are most often charged with property crimes: with the largest numbers being charged with theft under $5,000 (Taylor-Butts & Bressan, 2008, p. 11).

Anecdotally there is good reason to believe that much of this crime relates to the beliefs of contemporary consumer culture. Take, for example, the recent iPod trend. From a neo-Stoic perspective there is a great deal to examine about the way in which students view these devices. Valuable light is shed by a recent *Globe and Mail* article regarding iPod theft in schools ("iPod Loyalists," 2008). This article relays several student reactions to having such an item stolen. One student summarizes these reactions when he says, "there goes my life." Students, the police note, are seeing these objects as highly desirable status symbols, and are obviously pressuring parents to buy them even when their families can ill afford such expenditure. One officer explains, "It's a huge status marker and that's all they can think about. … Kids are showing up at my BMX bike park with an iPhone and they're telling me last week that their mom can't afford groceries."

Within both the student and the officer's comments is a clear indication that iPods are conceived as a necessary part of flourishing for some Canadian youth. From a neo-Stoic perspective issues like student perceptions of iPods, the emergence of compulsive buying disorder, and the unfortunately high levels of youth property theft are all natural products of such beliefs about flourishing. When something is conceived as a good this valuing changes the way in which one comes to decide upon possible beliefs and actions. Goods are things imbued with a value that encourages agents to act in pursuit of them.

Because goods are so imbued there is a good philosophical case to address the material good lacuna regardless of the cogency of evidence that it causes social problems like crime. Without the resources to critically reflect upon their beliefs on such matters students are left without an important opportunity for moral growth. The empirical claim that, for example, approximately 5.8% of Americans (no Canadian data currently available) experience compulsive buying (Koran et al., 2006) is interesting but beside the point. If teachers are to help prepare students to construct flourishing ethical lives this salient element of contemporary life cannot be overlooked. The empirical evidence merely serves to contextualize this important project.

Issue 2: Environmental Education

The issue of consumerism is deeply related to the second issue I will investigate: moral educational responses to the environmental crisis. Environmental education is an important area of analysis in contemporary educational scholarship, both for educational philosophers interested in moral education (see Curren, 2009) and for educators in other areas of the field (for science education see Pedretti & Little, 2008). The concern typically echoed in these publications is that there are serious dangers presented by climate change and that educators have an important role to play in preparing the young to address this problem.

Serious objections have been raised to some of the proposals made in this burgeoning area. Teaching students to accept particular ethical statements about the environment requires one to walk a very tight line between indoctrination and liberal education (for an excellent discussion see Jickling and Wals, 2008). Although I join authors like Jickling and Wals (2008) in being skeptical of attempts to imbue science lessons with particular ethical imperatives (see Burns & Norris, 2009) I do support interventions that enlarge the scope of student analysis of these issues. There is, I argue, a clear moral educational need to equip students with the ethical tools with which to critically evaluate their attachment to unsustainable conveniences.

Take, for example, the dependence of contemporary Canadians on cars. These conveniences are clearly both central to the daily lives of many Canadians and deeply unsustainable in their current pattern of use (see Statistics Canada, 2007).[4] Decades after the harmful impact of this way of life was recognized Canadian cities are still dominated by the same pattern of automobile use that characterized life in previous generations. There has been a crucial failure amongst the general public to take seriously the challenges presented by unsustainable lifestyles, part of which involves an inability to imagine and enact alternatives ways of living.

It is here that neo-Stoic moral education has a critical role to play. In both cases – consumerism and environmental education – students must be equipped with tools to critically evaluate the way in which they interact with and view material goods (be it iPods or their first cars). In the absence of such pedagogical intervention we risk graduating another generation locked into the currently dominant constellation of vicious practices. Dependent on

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[4] Statistics Canada (2007) notes several relevant facts in their report. Canadian drivers, for example, tend to commute to work alone, as opposed to carpooling, and respond to temperature decreases in the winter months by driving more and using alternative methods (such as public transportation) less.

conveniences like music players and utterly unable to part with their current lifestyles they will be ill equipped to deal with the problems they are likely to face. This situation denotes a serious abdication of pedagogical responsibility. As Curren (2009) argues, "we owe children an education that will prepare them to live well in the world in which they will find themselves" (p. 1). As long as moral educationalists fail to prepare children to critically reflect upon their view of material goods — a reality I will demonstrate in the following chapter – Curren's standard will not be met.

The Extant Lacuna

The dominant paradigms of moral education – cognitive developmentalism, caring moral education (or care theory), and character/virtue education – do not sufficiently address this problem. Each of these critiques will be discussed in detail in the following chapter but I will introduce their broad outlines here. Cognitive developmentalism, in light of its narrow form of Kantian-Rawlsian rationalism, is the most obviously insufficient approach. Although this paradigm provides valuable resources to address questions of distributive justice and rational decision-making its failure to provide significant insight both into education of the emotions and ethical habit-forming is highly limiting.

One could, for example, profitably use cognitive developmental insight to teach students about how material goods ought to be shared between persons. This approach would leave out, however, the critical element of how the students actually feel and think about the importance and role of those goods. This omission, caused by the reliance of cognitive developmentalism on abstract reasoning over practical judgment and habit, has been a part of this paradigm since Kohlberg's early work (see 1966). Since these elements help to determine how one acts this weakness ultimately disqualifies cognitive developmentalism as a viable paradigm with which to address the material good lacuna.

From a care theoretical standpoint different but equally problematic issues arise. Although caring moral education provides valuable philosophic resources to address disputes between students (or between students and other persons) regarding material goods, such resources do not directly address the view students have of material goods. Within caring moral education the view a student has of material goods is only truly salient when it impacts the level of care that person provides. The role of particular material goods to a student's flourishing cannot be profitably discussed in this paradigm apart from that student's subsequent overt behavior within a given relationship.

Character/virtue education, it will be seen, provides the strongest extant contribution – though it too insufficiently addresses the view students have of material goods. I will argue that because this paradigm is built upon Aristotelianism it includes a notable lacuna that Aristotle's work also did. Since Aristotle accepted the importance of certain material goods to flourishing neo-Aristotelian virtue educationalists have never developed the full examination and critique of the role of material goods that classical and neo-Stoic philosophers have.

CHAPTER 2 MORAL EDUCATION AND MATERIAL GOODS

In this chapter I will contextualize this study by explicating each of the three dominant paradigms of moral education. In each case I will do so in order to determine the extent to which these paradigms provide the philosophical resources necessary to address student views of material goods. This examination will also serve to identify a number of themes by which material good education may be considered. These themes, which I refer to as *moral educational touchstones*, will be discussed in summation at the end of this chapter and will be utilized in the following chapters.

Criteria for Selection

To qualify as a dominant paradigm I propose that the ideas being discussed must be comprehensive, influential and vibrant. They must be comprehensive in that they must provide an account of moral education that addresses a substantial number of the key elements commonly identified by moral educational philosophers as centrally important.[5] These elements include accounts of moral learning and pedagogy, a notion of what is and is not good, an account of moral corruption or pathology, and a diagnosis of common moral ills or problems that need to be addressed in schools, among others. On the criterion of comprehensiveness character/virtue education

[5] The task of authoring a definitive list of this sort exceeds the scope of this study. I have thus excluded those paradigms with highly salient lacunae.

would qualify because contemporary accounts address all of these issues (and others), while environmental moral education, for example, would not, in light of its focus on one particular element of moral life to the exclusion of others. This criterion is valuable because it serves to focus attention on those paradigms most capable of addressing the totality of moral life.

To qualify as a dominant paradigm also requires influence. By influence I mean that the paradigm must have impacted moral educational thought or practice to a substantial extent. Character/virtue education, in light of its widespread influence in schools, is again an ideal example. Stoic moral education, in light of its near total obscurity in educational circles, would not qualify. This criterion allows me to select paradigms currently relevant to moral educational practice. When I compare my proposed vision of moral education to these paradigms, I am thereby able demonstrate that it does indeed contribute to moral educational conversations currently taking place.

Third and finally a dominant paradigm must be marked by vibrancy. To qualify as vibrant an approach must currently be under serious discussion and analysis in education research. On this criterion caring education most certainly qualifies because its development is ongoing and it is currently a major, if mature, force in moral educational discourse. Values clarification would not qualify because it has been out of favour long enough and to such a great extent that it is safe to say that it is no longer progressing or evolving. This criterion permits me to take advantage of recent moral educational scholarship by disqualifying those paradigms whose faults have been deemed sufficiently salient to merit their exclusion from the central normative debates of this field.

These three criteria yield three approaches: cognitive developmentalism, caring moral education, and character/virtue education.[6] As a result of their comprehensiveness, influence and vibrancy, I shall refer to these approaches as the dominant paradigms of moral education. Each paradigm will be examined under four headings: historical background, theoretical roots, proposals for moral educational practice, and relevance to the material good lacuna. I will begin with cognitive developmentalism. Before I do so, though, it is important to note two things. First this overview is necessarily broad and general in its approach. Second this review focuses on proposals for secular public schools and thus will not examine religious proposals for moral education. [7]

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[6] The identification of these three paradigms is common in moral educational literature (see Carr, 2007) and major normative rivals are typically judged in comparison to them (see Noddings, 2002).

[7] For an example of a relevant development in religious moral education see Vokey's (1999) discussion of Buddhism and Macintyrean virtue ethics. The Buddhist treatment of the material world's significance is, in many ways, similar to the Stoics'.

Cognitive Developmentalism

Historical Background

Piaget and Kohlberg are typically credited with establishing the foundation for modern cognitive developmentalism. Studying children playing a marble game Piaget concluded that over time children developed a kind of moral rational autonomy (Piaget, 1948). Children would, for example, move from following rules uncritically to viewing them as instrumental and open to revision (Piaget, 1948, p. 32). Following this foundational insight Kohlberg (1966) proposed that moral learning was really about moving from one stage of reasoning to the next along a six stage developmental path that represented progress towards increasingly mature forms of justice reasoning. He thought that the then current, largely Skinnerian, practice of reinforcing socially acceptable behaviour was badly mistaken, as evidenced by Kohlberg's placing reward and punishment motivations at the bottom of his stages. Kohlberg's theory quickly rose to prominence in the 1960s and by the 1970s was clearly a dominant force in psychology and moral education (Crittenden, 1999). Since then it has been "perhaps the single greatest influence on post-war thinking on moral education" (Carr, 1999b, p. 142).

The most widely recognized source of critique for this movement has been the prominent "Justice-Care" debates of the 1980s and '90s (Sherblom, 2008). These debates originated in an ongoing dialogue between Gilligan (advancing a care conception of moral experience) and Kohlberg (advancing a justice conception). Gilligan (1998) argued that voices, most clearly feminine ones, were being left out of Kohlberg's progression theory and concluded that he had missed this substantial part of moral experience. Regardless of the merits of the two sides of this debate what is clear is that by the 1990s Kohlberg had begun to lose ground (Sherblom, 2008). The result is a long standing tradition of division between justice and care conceptions of moral education.

Although it is still said that Kohlberg's moral educational theory is "alive and well" (Minnameier, 2001, p. 317) it has clearly passed it zenith. A number of approaches that may be fairly labeled neo-Kohlbergian stage theories have arisen, however (Minnameier, 2001). These approaches include that of prominent psychologist William Damon (1988), whose work has become the most popular of the neo-Kohlbergian contributions (Kristjánsson, 2003). Damon advances a justice based stage theory, much like Kohlberg, but attempts to avoid making the broad philosophical assumptions Kohlberg does about the nature of moral reasoning[8] (Kristjánsson, 2003). His questioning is, for example, more open-ended. For other examples see Reed (2008), Rest, Navarez, Thoma and Babeu (2000) or Minnameier (2001).

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[8] The philosophical basis for Kohlberg's proposals will be discussed in the following section.

Theoretical Roots

Although there are many cognitive developmental approaches this paradigm is typically represented by some formulation of Kohlberg's proposals. As such Kohlberg's work will be used here to define the cognitive developmental paradigm. Kohlberg (1966) argued that teachers in liberal societies are afraid of teaching overt moral lessons because of the danger of indoctrination. The result, he argued, is that moral lessons are confined to the rather myopic requirements of order in the classroom – with moral education thus becoming a narrow form of control. The kind of didactic character education that resulted from this concern relied on virtue terms and was viewed by Kohlberg as a system of empty praise words aimed at securing classroom control (Kohlberg, 1966). Students would be told what a good student is like and were then admonished to be one.

Kohlberg's arguments relied heavily on empirical research on character education, including the famous Hartshorne and May (1928-1930) studies, which he argued demonstrated that character education was incoherent (Kohlberg, 1966).[9] He built his alternative approach on the belief that "there

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[9] His argument was that Hartshorne and May had demonstrated that the concept of fixed character traits has no psychological reality. This is an early example of a long-standing debate between proponents of virtues as fixed character traits and proponents of the view that agents respond in light of circumstances and not personal characteristics. This debate continues in psychological and philosophical circles today. For examples see Harman (1999), Athanassoulis (2000) and Harman (2000).

appears to be considerable regularity of sequence and direction in development in various cultures" and concluded that "because of this regularity, it is possible to define the maturity of a child's moral judgment without considering its content (the particular action judged)" (Kohlberg, 1966, p. 20). He argued that it is possible to identify six stages leading to fully mature judgment. He characterized this judgment as a kind of Rawlsian justice reasoning. This justice reasoning is characterized by its being "universal, inclusive, consistent, and… grounded on objective, impersonal or ideal grounds" (p. 21), a claim he argued was largely agreed upon by philosophers. For Kohlberg, "the basic referent of morality is judgment…[not] behavior, emotion, or social institution" (Snauwaert, 1995, p. 438). The foundational assumption that morality is built upon judgment led Kohlberg to view mature judgment as other-regarding and essentially defined in the work of John Rawls (Alexander, 2003; Henry, 2001; Slote, 1999b), and Immanuel Kant (Carr, 1999a). In what has become a major focal point for critique of Kohlberg his view is seen as "primarily concerned with the resolution of conflicts between competing claims of individuals or groups" (Crittenden, 1999, p. 173).

This theoretical focus is clear in the empirical work Kohlberg conducted to support his theory. This work involved posing dilemmas to young boys and probing them to determine what kind of reasoning led them to their decision (see Kohlberg, 1966). In one famous formulation he would ask what should be done if a dying spouse required a drug that was not affordable (p. 8).[10] Student responses would be used to classify the subject into one of six stages defined by the characteristics of the given reasoning (these stages are reproduced in Table 1) (Kohlberg, 1966).

[10] It is important to note that Kohlberg's dilemmas were focused on other-regarding ethical issues. The dilemma noted above, for example, focuses on the student's method of adjudicating the various rights and needs at stake. It is at its core a question of distributional justice. This issue will become salient later in this chapter.

Table 1
Kohlberg's Stage Theory

Stage	Form of reasoning employed within stage
1	Obedience and punishment orientation. Egocentric deference to superior power or prestige, or a trouble-avoiding set. Objective responsibility.
2	Naïvely egoistic orientation. Right action is that instrumentally satisfying the self's needs and occasionally other's. Awareness of relativism of value to each actor's needs and perspective. Naïve egalitarianism and orientation to exchange and reciprocity.
3	Good-boy orientation. Orientation to approval and to pleasing and helping others. Conformity to stereotypical images of majority or natural role behavior, and judgment of intentions.
4	Authority and social-order-maintaining orientation. Orientation to 'doing duty' and to showing respect for authority and maintaining the given social order for its own sake. Regard for earned expectations of others.
5	Contractional legalistic orientation. Recognition of an arbitrary element or starting point in rules or expectations for the sake of agreement. Duty defined in terms of contract, general avoidance of violation of the will or rights of others, and majority will and welfare.
6	Conscience or principle orientation. Orientation not only to actually ordained social rules but to principles of choice involving appeal to logical universality and consistency. Orientation to conscience as a directing agent and to mutual respect and trust.

Note. Adapted from *Moral education and the schools: A developmental view* by L. Kohlberg, 1966, p. 7.

The stage progression Kohlberg advanced deals with students' developing capacities to rationally resolve dilemmas like the one noted above. The most advanced agent, Kohlberg believed, would reach a Rawlsian-Kantian endpoint that involves reasoning closely related to the categorical imperative (Alexander, 2003). This end point is devoid of direct and explicit content. In other words Kohlberg left the actual moral decision to the agent and did not define any particular choice as right or wrong aside from the process through which one must come to it (Carr, 2002).

This stage theory is only the first phase of Kohlberg's contribution to moral education. The second major phase results from the "judgment-action gap" (Oser, Althof & Higgins-D'Allesandro, 2008, p. 406) that was observed in Kohlberg inspired programs. In short Kohlberg had failed to fully examine the gap between knowing what justice requires in a particular case and doing what justice requires. In response to this problem, in the early 1970s, he began advocating for his "Just Community" approach (see Kohlberg, 1985). On a theoretical level the Just Community has been described as a way to model a school on Kohlberg's theory while also attempting to embody a kind of *gemeinshaft* community (see Blum, 1999) in which belonging and attachment are balanced with a Deweyan democratic school approach (Kohlberg, 1985). It was hoped that this approach would help to socialize students in a way that would foster stage progression, social concern and caring. Alongside the stage theory Kohlberg's just community approach provides the foundation for his contribution to moral educational theory. Although the stage theory is far more influential and better known this study will draw important insight from both.

Proposals for Moral Educational Practice

Kohlberg's writings often include suggestions and practical observations that may be of use to moral educationalists. One such suggestion is that teachers clearly differentiate questions of fundamental moral significance from the procedural requirements of the schooling environment (see Kohlberg, 1966). In other words teachers ought not to confuse classroom discipline with moral education. Kohlberg also suggests that "a teacher's moralizings must be cognitively novel and challenging to the child, and they must be related to matters of obvious, real importance and seriousness" (Kohlberg, 1966, p. 22).

The original practical model that arose from Kohlberg's stage theory is called the *plus-one* model (Leming, 1997, see Kohlberg, 1966). In it, the educator asks questions and provides probing comments that are drawn from reasoning present in the stage directly above the stage the student is in. It was argued that questions from below the current stage are unhelpful and that questions from more than one stage up are too cognitively difficult to provide meaningful opportunities for development. This approach was not broadly adopted by teachers because "even though discussion of moral dilemmas proved to be successful in facilitating stage development, it provided little practical guidance for teachers in their efforts to influence students' personal and social behavior" (Leming, 1997, p. 39).

As noted above, however, Kohlbergian moral education gained its fullest practical expression in the Just Community approach. The core idea of this proposal was that students needed experience deliberating about issues of real significance (Kohlberg, 1985). There was strong emphasis on collective discussion, individual rights, justice and individual moral growth (Kohlberg, 1985).

The Just Community had three key structural components: advisor meetings, community meetings, and a discipline committee (McDonough, 2005; for examples see Kohlberg, 1975). Advisor meetings involve small group gatherings that would promote a feeling of belonging between students. Community meetings are a large, democratic venue for deliberation. Discipline committees both create rules and author punishments with a focus on re-enfranchisement of the offender (Oser, Althof & Higgins-D'Allesandro, 2008). Students were the focal point of all three meetings.

Relevance to the Material Good Lacuna

There are two positive, if general, contributions that cognitive developmentalism can make to my discussion of the material good lacuna. First this paradigm offers a compelling account of the moral educational development of critical reflective and deliberative capacities. The proposal that students be challenged to think about moral dilemmas at increasingly sophisticated levels of reasoning is a valuable one. Regardless of whether one accepts the Kohlbergian position that justice reasoning be given primacy (over concerns related to habituation or emotion, for example) the student capable of thinking at stage 6 is clearly better prepared to critically evaluate the role of material goods than the student capable of thinking only at stage 1. As noted in chapter one students are increasingly subjected to messages from consumer culture that, if accepted uncritically, threaten to foster an array of materialistic dependencies.

Kohlberg's proposal that students be organized into Just Communities is similarly valuable. Organized as a mutually responsible and deliberative community students would be strongly positioned to engage in necessary critical reasoning. Take, for example, the proposal that a school accept an offer from a particular company to place a snack food machine inside a hallway. If students were given meaningful control over that decision, along with the time and appropriate guidance[11] to engage in serious deliberation about it, they would be furnished with a deeply valuable moral educational experience.

[11] Teacher guidance is important in this regard. Kohlberg was ultimately correct in arguing that students need adults (in this case teachers) to present them with probing questions and draw their attention to aspects of ethical questions they might not immediately recognize.

These two strengths are important to keep in mind and I will note them in the pedagogical touchstones at the end of the chapter. Both contributions are, however, indirect and only partially valuable. Both the emphasis on critical reasoning and the Just Community proposal make good moral educational sense – neither, though, provides a direct and complete way to address the views students have of material goods. This argument is based on two main reasons I will now address.

First a Kohlbergian inspired cognitive developmental approach focuses on interpersonal disputes and not on the requirements of personal flourishing. When Kohlberg (1966) poses his dilemma about obtaining an expensive drug for a sick spouse, for example, this situation is viewed as a dilemma because of the conflict between the individual interests involved. Although this situation would likely elicit valuable conversation about the value of human life vis-à-vis material goods like money, little can be said from a Kohlbergian perspective about situations where such distributive, or otherwise interpersonal, questions are not at stake. Situations where one degrades only oneself are outside of this perspective. Since it is a key concern of this study that students are personally and individually affected by their views of material goods such an omission is significant.

Second Kohlberg famously failed to develop a fully articulated and compelling way to address ethical habit (see Carr, 1996b; Peters, 1981). The cognitive developmental paradigm is, thus, ill equipped to account for instances of *akrasia* (moral weakness) where one knows what ought to be done and fails to do so. Within the context of environmental education, for example, this omission will prove to be an important moral educational concern. Although it is commonly recognized that certain practices are environmentally unsustainable (commuting alone when one could carpool, for instance), it is often the case that such practices continue.

Thus although Kohlberg and cognitive developmentalism offer two important (general) moral educational touchstones two serious flaws prevent this paradigm from strongly contributing to resolution of the material good lacuna. The Kohlbergian emphasis on critical reasoning and Just Community schools is admirable and worth noting. The conspicuous absence of attention to self-regarding ethical issues, along with the lack of attention to ethical habit, however, mean that this approach cannot provide a compelling account of moral education regarding material goods.

Caring Moral Education

Historical Background

Caring moral education is a diverse paradigm (Schutz, 1998). Despite the admitted diversity within this perspective it is most often characterized via reference to Carol Gilligan and Nel Noddings in much the same way as cognitive developmentalism is via Lawrence Kohlberg. Gilligan (1982), a psychologist, argues that Kohlberg's theory projected an incomplete picture of moral life (p. 19). Specifically she charges him with leaving important moral voices out of his development theory and argues that the individualistic justice reasoning he advanced, while not mistaken, is merely part of the picture (Gilligan, 1998).

In her work Gilligan (1982) proposes an alternative stage theory, charting the reflections of women dealing with unplanned pregnancy. She argues that these women moved through three stages: exclusive caring for the self; exclusive other-oriented caring; and finally a more balanced caring for the self and others. Much like Kohlberg's early work with the stage theory, Gilligan's psychological contribution was then developed into a fuller pedagogical paradigm. This work was done by Nel Noddings, and began with the publication of *Caring* in 1984. Noddings proposed that caring become both an aim of moral education and a way of teaching (1988). Her form of care theory, along with her specific recommendations for teaching, have been enormously influential (Sherblom, 2008) and continue to be actively discussed over twenty years later. Taken together, Noddings and Gilligan's work forms the core of what is often referred to as the "care challenge" (Sherblom, 2008, p. 81) to conventional moral education and moral psychology. Their books also represent the most important volleys in the justice-care debate.

Theoretical Roots

Although caring paradigm is best traced to Gilligan's research and subsequent developmental theory its moral educational content comes primarily from Noddings, care theory's "richest and most complex thinker" (Schutz, 1998, p. 373). As such Noddings' work will be used, much as Kolhberg's was, as the representative core of the paradigm. Noddings does not carry on Gilligan's stage theory itself (Noddings, 2001) but her ideas clearly build upon that work.

First it is important to note that Noddings' notion of *care* has two related uses. It is both a description of what Noddings takes to be a key part of the human experience and also a normative ideal meant to name "the obligation to care and develop communities that promote caring relations" (Laverty, 2007, p. 136).[12] As a normative concept it is both an aim of education and a way of approaching the practice of teaching (Noddings, 1988). Although Noddings takes care to be an end unto itself she also notes that it is a useful pedagogical instrument, arguing that a caring relationship also fosters learning (see Noddings, 2004).

Care is not a fully defined concept, however, because "the characteristics of *all* caring relations can be described only at a rather high level of abstraction" (Noddings, 1988, p. 219). Slote (1999a) goes so far as to say that a fully systematized care theory is not Noddings' goal. She is proposing, he argues, something much more immediate and present than

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[12] As a normative ideal care functions much like a virtue. Once one knows what care requires there is a built-in obligation, and motivation, to carry such an act out.

conventional ethical theories. There are, however, a number of key theoretical points that can be made.

Most importantly caring is “fundamentally relational” (Noddings, 2002, p. xiii). In contrast to agent based ethical theories, for example, Noddings sets the *relational dyad* as the basic ethical unit (1988). On this understanding the mother-child dyad is the prototypical caring relation, though not all relationships need take on its particular intensity.

This dyadic relationship is generalized into the *carer - cared for* relation that Noddings (1988) applies universally. The carer’s “mode of response” (1988, p. 219) is defined by *engrossment*, which is a kind of “non-selective attention,” (p. 219) with “total presence to the other for the duration of the caring interval” (p. 220), and *displacement of motivation*, in which “her motive energy flows in the direction of the other’s needs and projects” (p. 220). The cared-for responds to this displacement by showing certain signs of approval such as the “energetic pursuit of the student’s own projects” (p. 219). As relations mature the dyad often reverses itself with each person serving an interval as the carer periodically in response to circumstance. In other words, in a mature relationship both agents will serve as a carer at some point. I might be experiencing a difficult time in my life and so my friend might take the caring role while I serve as the cared for. As those times pass and my friend comes to struggle in his life I might then take the role as carer. Throughout, however, the dyad remains asymmetrical (Bergman, 2004). There is always a carer and a cared-for (not two co-carers).

In ideal circumstances one naturally feels the need to care for another, a disposition Noddings traces back to one's having been cared for at some other point (Noddings, 1988). This state is called natural caring (Noddings, 1988, 2002). If one does not naturally care Noddings invokes a kind of care-duty conception she calls *ethical caring* whereby one works to care out of obligation (Noddings, 1988, 2002). The concept of ethical caring applies particularly to teachers, who might not naturally care for all of the dozens or hundreds of students in their charge. Ultimately the ethical agent in the care paradigm is always either forging new relations of caring or striving to deepen and preserve extant ones.

Although it is often overlooked this effort to advance caring relations involves an important rational component. Despite the fact that Noddings does not place rationality as an end unto itself, or give it a strongly emphasized position in her paradigm, she does advance a form of practical reasoning that has been likened to Aristotelian *phronesis* (Bergman, 2004). In short, rational capacities are to be put to work determining how best one might care (Noddings, 2002). Different people will notice or respond to different kinds of caring, and at different times, and so it is important to engage in reasoning about how best to care. Some people will, for example, view physical contact as a strong expression of care while others might be made uncomfortable by such expression. One is also obliged to reason about the effects of actions on the totality of relations one is a part of, referred to as a network of caring relations (Noddings, 2002).

The “level and power of reasoning” (Noddings, 2002, p. 22) is not the main ethical criterion, however, as is the case in cognitive developmentalism. Rather, persons are judged by “the actual effects of their behavior on the relations of which they are a part” (p. 22). Success in advancing caring relations is required for one’s actions to be praiseworthy. In other words one may only be fully good if one’s efforts to care for others are successful and if one is cared-for appropriately (Noddings, 1988, 2002). One’s goodness is a result not only of one’s own caring but the quality of caring one receives from others. If an agent is not cared for appropriately he can fail to achieve the care ethical standard despite being an exceptionally caring person. Agents are, in effect, co-responsible on this understanding.

Proposals for Moral Educational Practice

At the school level, Noddings proposes that students receive consistent, long term caring (2002). Her practical vision of moral education, because of its emphasis on relationships, cannot rely on didactic instruction. Rather she emphasises the conditions in which students live and learn. She explains, “moral education cannot be formulated into a course of study or set of principles to be learned. Rather, each student must be guided toward an ethical life– or an ethical ideal– that is relationally constructed" (1988, p. 222).

This sort of project would require sweeping and fairly radical changes to the organization of contemporary schooling (Noddings, 1988). Somewhat pessimistic about the likelihood of this kind of change, Noddings proposes a number of less structurally revolutionary changes. She emphasizes that teachers need to recognize the importance of opportunities to show caring and that traditional pedagogical practice (ie. emphasis on didactic instruction) often prevents such occasions. She also notes as problematic "impersonal grading in written, quantitative form… [and] modes of discipline that respond only to behavior but refuse to encounter the person" (p. 222). In response, for example, she (1988) suggests that teachers follow students for longer periods of time, teaching a group for three years instead of the customary one year.

Noddings (1988) also gives a set of four key pedagogical activities: modeling, practice, confirmation and dialogue. Modeling involves showing students how to care by actually caring for them and "steadfastly encourage[ing] responsible self-affirmation…" (p. 222). Practice involves giving students meaningful opportunities to practice caring. Students should be given opportunities to support each other and value relationships on the same level as conventional academic goals, she argues. Confirmation involves encouraging what the teacher views as the most ethically praiseworthy part of the student (1988, 2002). Here the teacher responds to objectionable conduct with an attempt to "impute a worthy motive" (1988, p. 225) with the goal of encouraging students to develop their better selves. Dialogue, which Noddings refers to as "most fundamental" (2002, p. 16), is also the most fully developed.

Ideally dialogue is meant to manifest what Noddings refers to as *ordinary conversation*. This form of conversation involves the kind of care reasoning Noddings emphasizes, whereby one uses social reasoning to affirm and support the other party (2002). It is not the kind of combative, "war model" (p. 24) of conversation Noddings (1994) claims is prevalent in conventional ethical discourse. In ordinary conversation the two parties are most interested in developing a caring relationship, not the pursuit of truth (which may come after).

Relevance to the Material Good Lacuna

Care theory has valuable insight to offer the proposed study. Much as was the case with cognitive developmentalism, though, this contribution is general and indirect. First and most clearly, care theory offers a compelling account of the need to engage in the fostering of deep personal relationships as a constituent element of appropriate moral education. One could not hope to guide students through reflections on the contribution of material goods to flourishing without having some concept of the way in which those students view their flourishing. This teaching requires a fairly intimate level of familiarity.

Noddings' concept of ordinary conversation also offers valuable insight. Much as Kohlberg's Just Community provides a forum for students to engage in serious ethical deliberation with each other Noddings' ordinary conversation encourages such deliberation between teachers and students. If students are to advance in their thinking about material goods they will require opportunities to engage in serious deliberation. Such deliberation clearly requires that teachers engage in the respectful, attentive conversation Noddings envisions.

These two contributions are, as noted above, quite general and could be noted as relevant to essentially any topic of moral education. Indeed, Callan (1995) has described these recommendations, when taken as general suggestions for practice, as "unassailable good sense" (p. 10). The problem, both for Callan and in this context, comes when one takes this approach to be the primary one.

When care theory is examined as a normative paradigm it becomes clear that it, like cognitive developmentalism, fails to address certain key issues. Self-regarding moral educational concerns are, once again, unsatisfactorily addressed. Care theory is "fundamentally relational" (Noddings, 2002, p. xiii) and Noddings has steadfastly rejected the suggestion that it deal more individually with the agent him or herself (see Noddings, 1999). As a result of this position student views of material goods become ethically relevant only when such views interfere with a given relationship (and only to the extent of that interference). Without the addition of philosophical resources from outside of this paradigm, questions of consumer and environmental moral education are impossible to directly and comprehensively address.

Evidence of this problem is provided most clearly by Noddings (1992) in her attempts to discuss self-regarding ethical issues in *The challenge to care in schools*. Here she discusses both care for the self and care for material goods. In both cases she occupies herself in making a series of suggestions for school reform and ethical life in general. Schools should, for example, foster more exercise and children should be taught to appreciate the intrinsic value of household chores. They should, for example, "be required to take household appliances apart, clean them, and put them back in working order" (p. 141).

She fails to demonstrate that these observations have a substantive connection to her philosophy of caring. Her foundational argument regarding caring for material goods, for example, concedes that this form of caring must be different from the one felt towards other persons. She then proceeds, however, to argue that inanimate objects truly do *respond* to caring. Clean glassware, she points out, shines when well taken care of. Needless to say such a connection fails to demonstrate that her philosophy of caring applies to such objects. One cannot, for example, feel the motivational displacement she argues is part of caring when dealing with one's silverware. At each stage of her explication she defines care as a relation between two acting, feeling agents. Although it may very well be that a form of caring is possible towards inanimate objects such caring is similar to Noddings' conception in name only. Without more fully connecting these observations to her philosophical account of caring her suggestions are left insufficiently justified.

Another serious limitation presents itself in Noddings' discussions of truth. If one accepts' Noddings argument that truth is secondary to care it becomes very difficult to justify pedagogical interventions intended to address vicious student beliefs about material goods. A teacher faced with a student guilty of stealing another student's property, for example, will find very little guidance as to what ought to be done about the belief that led that student to steal. The teacher would begin by working to convert the relationship to a caring one but after that has been accomplished (if it is possible at all) addressing the student's underlying belief is prohibitively difficult. Since the fundamental criterion for moral praiseworthiness is a successful caring relationship attempts to give critical attention to student beliefs must always avoid risking the current level of personal intimacy. If a student believed, for example, that having an expensive jacket is important enough to warrant stealing that belief can be corrected only if the student is in a fully caring personal relationship with the teacher. If the relationship never emerges, which Noddings admits is at least partially a matter of chance (1999), this vicious belief will never be addressed.

In summation care theory provides two important moral educational touchstones: the need to nurture strong relationships with students, and the need to converse with them openly and respectfully. Two serious limitations prevent care theory, however, from filling the material good lacuna. First care theory fails to satisfactorily address self-regarding concerns arising from student views of material goods. Second the priority given to relations above truth creates a prohibitively obstructive philosophical impediment to direct pedagogical intervention.

Character/Virtue Education

Character and virtue education will receive extensive attention in this chapter for three reasons: first, because this paradigm is by far the most dominant in contemporary moral education; second because elements of the virtue educational subcategory will be of importance in the proposed study and; third because, more than either of the other two key paradigms discussed here this paradigm suffers from analytic ambiguity. For reasons that will be clear by the end of this section I will begin by referring to this paradigm merely as *character education* and will proceed to further divide it into two categories: non-expansive character education and virtue education.

Historical Background

Character education, as will be seen, is a fairly vague term that is used to represent a variety of different pedagogical programs and beliefs. This review will focus on modern North American character education. In broad terms the basis for modern character education can be found in ancient Greek philosophy (Smagorinsky & Taxel, 2005), most notably Aristotle's (2004) work in *Nicomachean Ethics*. In a recent sense the roots of this paradigm are typically identified in American religious communities in the mid-1830s (Nash, 1997; Smagorinsky & Taxel, 2005) who used education focused on character traits to foster religious living.

There are two at least partially distinct manifestations of this movement. In academic circles R.S. Peters' (1981) work, which attempted to fill the theoretical gaps in Kohlberg's work with the infusion of Aristotelian habituation, helped form the basis for one key strand (Carr & Steutel, 1999). This strand was also deeply informed by Alasdair MacIntyre's (2007) famous critique of liberal ethics.

At the same time, though, there was a more popular revival outside of academic circles of a more traditional, less academic view of character education. While the Peters-MacIntyre revival spread in university faculties of education populist activists like Thomas Lickona (1991) brought another, less academic form of character education to public attention. These activists began by strongly rejecting values clarification (see Leming, 1997; Shepard

Salls, 2007), a largely relativistic 1970s moral educational paradigm. The legacy of values clarification, along with a broad array of purportedly negative social changes taking place in the 1960s and 70s, was argued to have led to a severe crisis of public morality (see Smagorinsky & Taxel, 2005). The proposed solution is the direct inculcation of the virtues and values of good character.

The precise connection between this popular movement and the academic resurgence of virtue ethics in education is unclear, though in light of their similar emphases on virtue and character it is plausible to suggest that they are related (Kristjánsson, 2002; Steutel, 1997). Steutel and Carr (1999) refer to this division as the *virtue ethics education* versus *character education* divide. McLaughlin and Halstead (1999) refer to it as the *expansive character education* versus *non-expansive character education* divide. The term character education, though sometimes meant to refer to all education in character and virtue, typically refers to the non-expansive variety advanced by popular educational activists. The term virtue education, or expansive character education, denotes the more philosophically sophisticated virtue ethical variety. For the purposes of this review I will use *virtue education* to denote the more academically minded, expansive form of character education while I will use the term *non-expansive character education* (NECE) to denote the form advanced by the work of popular activists like Lickona.

There is no shortage of critique for NECE. Nash (1997) summarizes this critique as follows:

> …much character education is unnecessarily apocalyptic and narrow in its cultural criticism, inherently authoritarian in its convictions, excessively nostalgic and premodern in its understanding of virtue, too closely aligned with a reactionary (or a radical) politics, anti-intellectual in its curricular initiatives, hyperbolic in its moral claims, dangerously antidemocratic, and overly simplistic in its contention that training and imitation alone are sufficient for instilling moral character. (p. 10)

The content of Nash's critique helps provide insight into why education philosophers commonly treat NECE as a pejorative category. Recognizing this categorization I will not engage in extensive examination of this form of moral education. I will, rather, quickly move on to focus on virtue education in the remainder of this document and will only note NECE periodically for the purpose of contrasting it with other approaches.

Theoretical Roots

I will now begin my discussion of the philosophy of virtue education – at the core of which is the notion of moral virtue. The version advocated by Carr (1991), and typically accepted more widely by virtue educationalists, draws heavily on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. There Aristotle (2004) explained that all things are done in pursuit of some good and that the good of humans is "activity of the soul in accordance with virtue" (*NE*, 1098a15), which is the same as flourishing and happiness (*eudaimonia)*. Virtuous activity is largely to be found in living in accordance with the *doctrine of the mean* which holds that one's dispositions must express neither deficiency nor excess (1104a11). When one is confronted with a mortal danger, for example, it is vicious to proceed with foolhardiness or with cowardice (1107b1). Rather one must respond with the level of courage appropriate to the situation – one must find the *mean*, which is also the virtuous response. The more one does so the more one becomes habituated into a disposition to do so in the future (1104a26). When reacting to a situation, then, one is always looking to react in a way that expresses all relevant means and thus displays and reinforces all relevant virtues.

"Moral virtues are states of character concerned with the reasonable discipline of natural human passions, sentiments and inclinations" (Carr, 1991, p. 251). This discipline is determined via practical reasoning referred to as *phronesis*. Virtue, on this understanding, is "criterial rather than foundational with respect to the operations of moral deliberation" (Carr, 1996a, p. 362). These virtues are central to human life and are of such value that any person who knew what the virtues are would naturally desire to embody them (Carr, 1991).

McLaughlin and Halstead (1999) explain that virtue ethical forms of character education provide a fuller, more substantive framework than NECE. The nature of the virtues being advocated, for instance, is more fully justified and explicated. As a key representative of this category the authors note David Carr. They also note expansive forms of civic virtue, of which Eamonn Callan (1999) and Patricia White (1999) are chief representatives. While virtue education has become a very large and diverse body of literature in educational philosophy, Carr has emerged as its strongest and most prolific contemporary advocate (Steutel, 1997). He, along with Jan Steutel (Steutel & Carr, 1999), provides an excellent basis from which to build a summary of contemporary virtue education.

The first important point to make is that Steutel and Carr (1999) emphatically separate virtue education from character education (read as NECE) – a conflation Carr (2004) refers to as particularly crude. The second point that needs to be made is that Steutel and Carr immediately reject the general definition that virtue education is merely education in virtues (Steutel & Carr, 1999). Since nearly all approaches to moral education deal with virtues on some level, even if they do not focus on them, nearly all of moral education would qualify under such a general definition. This categorization would include Kantian approaches like Kohlberg's (especially the "late" Kohlberg who advocated the Just Communities model). A more narrow and discriminating definition would hold that, in virtue education, the aims of moral education are rooted in virtue ethics itself. Elsewhere Steutel explains that two of the key characteristics of virtue ethics are 1) "that such an ethics takes aretaic concepts and judgements as basic or fundamental, at least in relation to deontic concepts and judgements" (1997,

p. 402) and 2) “that an ethics of virtue reduces aretaic judgements about actions to aretaic judgements about persons and their character” (1997, p. 403). The most plausible candidate for Carr and Steutel, and virtue ethicists in general (Haldane, 1999), is a form of Aristotelianism.

I will now proceed to identify, in broad strokes, the key characteristics commonly attributed to contemporary virtue education, periodically highlighting key points of disagreement. As I conduct this review I will draw from a number of sources and arguments. I will, however, construct an image of virtue education that draws primarily on the body of work produced by Carr.

Comprehensiveness

One of the strengths of virtue education is the comprehensive account of moral life offered by Aristotelian virtue ethics. Although the ethic of care, cognitive developmentalism and non-expansive character education are all seen to contribute something to moral education, they are all narrow in comparison to virtue ethics (see Carr & Steutel, 1999). Cognitive developmentalism charts out a meaningful explanation of justice reasoning, care theory of relational virtue, and non-expansive character education of the didactic element of moral education. Virtue education, on the other hand, is “cognitive, conative, affective, [and] behavioural” (Steutel & Spiecker, 1999, p. 381). Indeed, Carr (2005) argues that if reconciliation is possible between the other approaches, about which he is not optimistic, such reconciliation is best found in an Aristotelian conception. Haldane (1999) summarizes this understanding well in saying that “instead of partitioning off certain behaviour as ‘moral’, virtue theory takes a broader view, arguing that we should be concerned with nothing less than the goodness of our overall lives” (p. 156). He goes on to say that this conception fits well within educational thought more broadly because educators typically hold that the object of education is the development of a whole or rounded student. In a similar vein Slote (1999b) points out that Aristotelian virtue ethics also corrects the myopic other-regarding focus of recent ethical discourse in adding an element of self-regarding ethical concern. Given the relational emphasis in care ethics, and the other-regarding nature of Kohlberg’s justice reasoning, this critique seems well placed.

This more comprehensive view of moral life and moral education is also said to be more closely in accord with normal moral experience. Unlike cognitive developmentalism, which requires special technical training, virtue ethics is rooted in “the rich nuances of ordinary human motivation and association (Carr, 1996b, p. 137). Aristotle “stresses the importance of personal observation and experience as well as the necessity of exercise and training” (Verbeke, 1990, p. 21). The virtue educator is also called to cultivate both intellectual and moral virtues as part of a complete, moral life (Curren, 1999). Some argue that this vision requires some additional theoretical help – Sprod (2001) for example believes that Aristotelianism is in need of supplementing via Habermasian discourse ethics – but a significant group of moral educationalists currently view virtue ethics as the most comprehensive paradigm currently under debate.

Correcting the Failings of Liberal Moral Education

The move to virtue ethics is also portrayed as correcting an important failing of liberal education. Carr discusses this understanding frequently and argues that the live-and-let-live tolerance often practiced in liberal moral education prevents moral educators from making real progress (see 1999a) and that the fear of illiberalism often leads to the avoidance of serious attempts at moral education (see 1991).

This critique is historically rooted in the work of Alasdair MacIntyre. His book, *After Virtue* (2007), is perhaps the single most important text in contemporary virtue education after Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. One of the key arguments in *After Virtue* (MacIntyre, 2007) is that Enlightenment moral philosophy, the key source for contemporary forms of liberal moral education (like Kohlberg's), relies on vacuous moral language. He argues that the language Kant, Hume, Marx and others worked with was built upon a foundation of teleology. Terms like good, duty or obligation, for example, have clear teleological roots. Since one key characteristic of much Enlightenment philosophy was its rejection of teleology, the ethical theories developed at the time essentially built themselves upon empty terms.

Returning to the present day, MacIntyre argues that this situation has led liberal ethics to theoretical bankruptcy. Part of his solution is to move to neo-Aristotelianism. One of the key foci in his account is the notion of *practice* (MacIntyre, 2007). Athanassoulis (2004) summarizes this position in saying "virtues… are exercised within practices that are coherent, social forms of activity and seek to realize goods internal to the activity. The virtues enable us to achieve these goods" (para. 8). These practices are embedded within traditions without which understanding of moral life is impossible.

Responding to Moral Weakness

Virtue education includes substantial attention to the issue of moral weakness, or *akrasia*. It was R.S. Peters' attempt to solve the problem of moral weakness (that Kohlberg did not fully address) that caused him to look to Aristotle in the first place (for discussion see Carr, 1996b, 1999b). Carr (2007), for example, ultimately rejects Peters' project of theoretically supporting Kantian conceptions like Kohlberg's with ideas from Aristotle, but it is none the less clear that Peters draws out early elements of an important critique of Kohlberg that would contribute to the rise of virtue education. The move to account for moral weakness that is found in Peters (1981) sets the theoretical stage for subsequent investigations of virtue.

Practical Reasoning

One of the key elements that distinguishes virtue education from non-expansive character education (Carr, 2005), and which also allows it to claim a certain level of comprehensiveness against other paradigms, is the emphasis placed on its particular conception of practical reasoning, *phronesis*. *Phronesis* is required for virtue (Dunne, 1999) because it connects virtues to the rich contexts and situations one encounters in moral life. In short, *phronesis* is the sort of reasoning used to determine what virtue requires in particular circumstances (Dunne, 1999). It is a kind of attentiveness and sensitivity to the morally salient elements of a situation (McDonough, 1992).

In addition to being a ratiocinative process there is also an important dispositional component (Dunne, 1999). To know in a phronetic sense, Dunne (1999) explains, is to know in the normal cognitive sense and be disposed to the actions that follow from that knowing. In this way the actual content of *phronesis* is derived from interaction and experience (Carr, 1996b) and cannot be more abstractly defined apart from that interplay (Dunne, 1999). In order to be virtuous, the argument goes, one must come to develop one's phronetic capacity in such a way that allows one to "know the facts of the case, to see and understand what is morally relevant and to make decisions that are responsive to the exigencies of the case" (Sherman, 1999, p. 38). This process requires time and practice.

Education of the Emotions

Another key element of virtue education is the education of the emotions. This focus provides another important departure from the moral minimalism in traditional liberal moral education (Carr, 2005). Aristotle does not go so far as to take the Platonic view that emotions must be *suppressed* by reason but he does say they may be habituated so that one feels them "at the right times on the right grounds towards the right people for the right motive and in the right way" (Aristotle, *NE*, 1106b20). A virtuous person has emotions that are appropriate to the situation (as determined via *phronesis*) and such emotions hit the virtuous mean (1106b).

Lacunae

Perhaps the most notable lacuna in virtue education scholarship is the lack of comprehensive lists of virtues as are found in non-expansive programs of character education. Thomas Lickona (1996), for example, is willing to list the virtues he claims are universal, though he sometimes conflates *value* and *virtue* and rarely philosophically defends his choices. This difference between character and virtue education appears to be attributable to the additional emphasis on philosophical rigor found in virtue education literature. The task of responsibly authoring a definitive list of virtues, on this understanding, is daunting. Articles that deal with the question of what should count as a virtue typically focus on a single virtue or pair of virtues (see Kristjánsson, 1998; Musschenga, 2001; Steutel, 1999; Wallace, 1999). Carr's prominent 1991 book *Educating the Virtues*, for example, never really addresses the task of formulating a list in the same way that Lickona does. Elsewhere he somewhat noncommittally notes "honesty, self-control, fortitude, fairness, courtesy, tolerance and so on…" (1999a, p. 25), but advancing a list of virtues is not his focus. Others more readily discuss what is not a virtue, noting that Aristotle's *eutrapelia* or proper wittiness, for example, is an inappropriate moral standard (Kent, 1999).

Proposals for Moral Educational Practice

The Aristotelian tradition, as represented in contemporary virtue education, holds a wide array of pedagogical implications. I will now canvas the most prominently and commonly discussed pedagogical proposals. Although this summary will draw primarily on the general nature of virtue education it will also draw upon work by non-expansive writers where such proposals overlap with virtue educational proposals.

Developmental Stages

Identifying the specific pedagogical implications of Aristotle's work is difficult because he "sets down a rather scattered and fractional account of the development of moral virtue" (Cain, 2005, p. 171) in which several gaps exist. Most fundamentally, Aristotle believed that persons are born with the potential to achieve virtue (*NE*, 1144b1-10) but that they require certain outside conditions (like education) to achieve it (1104b10-15). Tobin (1989) summarizes the Aristotelian position well. At first children act essentially impulsively and do not exhibit the signs of rational agency associated with self control. Later, assuming they are well raised, children begin to develop other desires, most important among which is the desire to be good, manifested in various virtuous-looking behaviours resembling virtues like generosity. It is at this point that the child begins to exert a certain level of rational control over actions in light of these emergent virtues. In the third stage, after having gained life experience, the child (now essentially an adult) may reflect upon her life and actions and engage with ethics on a more theoretical, abstract level. This achievement enables the grown child to truly know and reflect upon the choices she makes and the habits she develops thus becoming capable of developing true virtue.

In this account there is little guidance about how exactly the child moves from the simple satisfaction of impulses to a more considered pursuit of virtuous behaviours (Cain, 2005). It is not clear how the child comes to want to behave honestly, for example. This omission poses a pedagogical problem because Aristotle is, in effect, primarily addressing the moral education of those persons who already have received substantial moral education (Kristjánsson, 2000). His target audience already has a series of virtuous dispositions gained from early childhood and he is thus able to focus on moving such persons toward more reflective and deliberate states of character (Kristjánsson, 2000). Given that the first stage of development, in which children move from impulsive behaviour to the pursuit of virtuous desire, is so important to subsequent development moral educators are left with little guidance about what is a critical early element of virtue education.

Early Use of Rules

One approach Aristotle does discuss for this early stage involves the use of certain rules or generalisations that roughly correspond to virtuous actions (Sherman, 1999 referring to *NE*, 1094b21). It is reasonable, for example, to teach a child that it is wrong to lie and then attempt to develop the child's understanding of this rule over time in the hope of helping him transcend the rule following disposition and adopt a more considered view of the virtue of genuineness. In some cases this method is fairly simple – Spiecker (1999) notes that one teaches a child to wash his hands and discusses a general disposition to hygiene later when opportunities arise. In other cases more complex moral virtues like sympathy may need to be originally introduced in a more complex fashion (Spiecker, 1999).

There is, then, a very strong emphasis in virtue education on intervention via early childhood moral education (Carr & Steutel, 1999; Kupperman, 1999). It is of critical importance that children are taught to want to pursue good deeds (Kupperman, 1999), but it is clear, Curren (1999) points out, that the Aristotelian texts preclude the capacity of children at young ages to be motivated by force of argument. This situation leaves the provisional use of rules as the most plausible method. While moral educators need not accept the claim that children are not open to reasons, rational argumentation is clearly not sufficient in early childhood education.

Emotional Training Methods

The education of emotions is perhaps most central to virtue education. Indeed many of the other proposed methods or practices feed into the goal of fostering virtuous emotion. Since Aristotle placed the affective or sentimental element of human experience at the center of his definition of virtue, contemporary virtue educators often focus on this sentimental education as the core of virtue education (see Carr & Steutel, 1999; Steutel & Spiecker, 2004). Affective education is also, as noted above, a key element of virtue education even at the youngest, least rationally developed ages. Addressing one's emotional framework is thought to underlay all subsequent virtue education (Kristjánsson, 2005) because a failure to desire the virtuous undercuts much of the process articulated by both Aristotle and modern day virtue educators.

Discussion of the education of emotion can be found in Steutel and Spiecker (2004) and Kristjánsson (2000, 2005). Steutel and Spiecker (2004) argue that this process is best envisioned as taking place through a tutor, who might be a parent or some other kind of educator. The tutor provides good role modeling and will issue reinforcement stimuli in the form of his reactions to the child's behaviour. This language of praise and blame is referred to as "epideictic rhetoric" (Garrison, 2003, p. 221). If the tutor meaningfully strives to portray virtuous states of affect the child will strive to emulate him, will learn to act in similar ways and, if she develops an affective attachment to virtue, will learn to embody virtue independently of the tutor's approving reactions. In plain language the child at first does virtuous-looking actions because she is socially reinforced and because she naturally emulates her adult tutor. This pattern of action and emulation eventually develops virtuous dispositions in the child and the tutor's role diminishes over time.

Kristjánsson (2005) points out that Aristotle's suggestions in this area tend to be rather similar to modern day behaviour modification strategies, many of which teachers already engage in. Kristjánsson suggests that the educator should carefully select games and stories that give children opportunities to do and feel the right things so that they may cultivate the related dispositions. As an example he notes that:

> Asking an overly docile and phlegmatic child to act out the role of a properly angry person in a game, for instance, may work wonders in classroom practice; it may help children to work up steam and to channel their own anger more productively in the future. (Kristjánsson, 2005, p. 687).

In short the practice of education of the emotions revolves around having children engage in virtuous-looking action or emulation so that over time they become disposed to the given emotions and thus the next stages of more reflective and deliberative virtue education may occur. These emotions become the data, in a sense, for future reflection and *phronesis* to work upon.

The experience of anger the child in the above example gains could help that child understand anger better in the future. He might, for example, learn something about the things that tend to make people angry. Such knowledge, along with experience of the resultant feelings, can encourage that student to reflect on the ways in which his feelings and thoughts interact. Within this process Aristotelian virtue educators are called to help students struggle against emotional extremes and to cultivate the virtuous, rational mean appropriate to each situation (Kristjánsson, 2005).

Role Modeling

Carr explains that the only way to see the importance and desirability of virtues is to see them at work in the lives of the people around us, adding “the fundamental moral virtues cannot be learned in any context of socialization or education apart from the example of those parents, teachers and friends who are able to exhibit to some degree how they work for the good in human life” (1991, p. 9). If the virtues are portrayed merely as a form of rule following, or if they are reduced to the requirements of classroom management (as Kohlberg, 1966, argued they were) there is little hope that the intrinsic value of the virtues will be clear to students. The goodness produced by the virtues must be shown in order for students to recognize their desirability.

This process is said to require a certain degree of friendship and positive valuing between the role model and the student (see Sherman, 1999). As a student comes to respect and admire a teacher, for example, that teacher's attempts at exhibiting the virtues become viewed by the student as worthy of emulation. Within this method the character of the educator is of great importance. "In order to understand fully the implications for good or ill of living in this way rather than that… young people require evidence of consistency and commitment on the part of those who publicly assert that this way is better" (Carr, 1993, p. 205). Although a virtue educator need not be fully virtuous she ought to display a serious commitment to aspire to such a state (Carr, 1991, p. 10).

Practice and Habituation

Watching persons for whom virtue is important, and being encouraged to feel that virtue is important, is only a beginning. In order to be habitually virtuous the student requires consistent practice doing virtuous things. This practice is important for two reasons: first because one cannot become virtuous without doing virtuous acts; and, second because one cannot develop the *phronesis* required to be virtuous without having a background of experience. As Carr (1991) explains, "only when children know something in practice of what courage, self-control, fairness and honesty are, are they in a position to understand or to cast a critical eye over particular human social or moral codes and practices" (p. 264).

The moral educational implications of the first point are clear. Children need opportunities to practice doing virtuous-looking things so that they may become habituated in them and eventually learn to reflect and reason about them. It is here that virtue educators often cite the famous analogy whereby Aristotle likens the developing of virtue to learning a craft, explaining that one needs to do something to learn it (see Steutel & Spiecker, 2004; *NE*, 1103a32-b2). This requirement means that didactic lessons based on lectures (as it is contended NECE activists rely upon) cannot suffice (Curren, 1999). Such methods are useful only partially, and only at the stage wherein students have already gained a foundation of virtuous sentiments and dispositions and are ready to more philosophically reflect on ethical theory (Robenstine, 1998). Games, activities and other situations that allow students opportunities to practice good actions are therefore indispensable.

Examples and Case Studies

One of the key ways to foster *phronesis* in the classroom is through case studies or examples (McDonough, 1992; Sherman, 1999). Since *phronesis* is defined by its relationship to actual, practical experience, the examples used in such education must be "complex, detailed, and rich" (McDonough, 1992, p. 88). They should not be restricted to extreme hypothetical situations but rather should draw on experience closer to the reality experienced by students (Robenstine, 1998). As such examples are authored or selected educators must pay close attention to the cultural or ethnic issues that might effect how students interact with the given example because research indicates there are differences of interpretation between students of different ethnicities (Bock, 2006). One of the richest sources of examples is to be found in the fine arts, where a great deal of attention is paid to the complex nature of emotional and moral experience. The arts are a point of focus for Carr (see 2004, 2005; Carr & Davis 2007) and have been discussed by others as well (see Verbeke, 1990).

Relevance to the Material Good Lacuna

Virtue education provides a fundamentally more comprehensive approach to moral education than either cognitive developmentalism or care theory. The attention given to matters of emotion, habit and practical judgment (phronesis) are, in particular, valuable resources for a moral education regarding material goods. Without addressing how students feel, behave, and practically think, such an education would address only a small fraction of the material good lacuna.

Given that Aristotle, and the contemporary virtue educationalists noted above, examined these elements of moral education in detail one finds in virtue education a wealth of valuable insight that may contribute positively to moral education regarding material goods. Missing from this contribution, though, is a direct application of such valuable insight to this specific topic.

This omission can be traced back to the roots of virtue education in *Nicomachean Ethics*. There Aristotle accepts that certain worldly conditions and resources are necessary in order for one to flourish (1099b). One requires certain resources, Aristotle argues, in order to do good deeds.

Poverty and ugliness, for example, were seen by Aristotle as impediments to personal flourishing. As a result of this belief one finds in Aristotle a basic acceptance of vulnerability to material goods. If one is born without such goods there are serious limitations to that person's character growth quite apart from any action that person may take.

Since this fundamental assumption lies at the root of virtue education this paradigm has not been used as the basis for a sustained analysis of the ethical role of material goods. The connection between material dependency and vice, for example, is left largely unexplored in virtue educational literature. Such literature frequently discusses what one ought to do with the resources one has (many note generosity as a virtue, for example)(see Carr, 1991; Dent, 1999), but these conversations typically presuppose the possession and importance of such resources.

This lacuna is difficult to fill with the resources provided by Aristotelian virtue ethics. Certain virtues, such as magnificence (*NE,* 1107b15-20), categorically require certain resources. At the same time, both Aristotle and his modern virtue educational interpreters are chiefly concerned with providing an account of the practice of the many virtues, not an account of the habits of belief that underlie them. As such, questions of material good – like, *why should I judge this car to be a good thing?* – are substantially underexamined.

Touchstones for a Moral Education Regarding Material Goods

From this review of moral educational thought a number of important touchstones have emerged that will be helpful in discussing the extent of the contribution neo-Stoic thought can make to moral education regarding the material good lacuna. I will now conclude this chapter by summarizing these points. I will return to these ideas in chapter four as I outline my conception of a neo-Stoic moral education.

1. Critical Reflective and Deliberative Capacities

As Kohlberg rightly argued, a moral education of any kind is not complete without attention to the ways in which agents come to think in ways that allow them to better examine the ethical issues with which they are faced. Although Kohlberg's emphasis on this capacity came at the expense of other valuable aspects of moral education (such as habit) this myopia is avoidable. A moral education regarding material goods might include attention to the process whereby students come to reason more intelligently about material goods.

2. Just Communities

As discussed in the first chapter one important element of the failure of moral educationalists to address material goods is the fact that this void has been filled by public consumer culture. As such a moral educational response to this issue could profitably include attention to the capacity of students to engage in their critical reflection publicly. This process requires precisely the sort of deliberative capacity Kohlberg identifies in his Just Community proposals. A moral education regarding material goods could include opportunities for students to collectively engage with the issues at hand.

3. Other- and Self-regarding Frameworks

Since one's view of material goods is highly relevant to one's flourishing, approaches (like Kohlberg's or Noddings') that deal only with one's actions towards others have thus been shown to be insufficient. The comprehensiveness of virtue education is, in this case, an instructive example. A moral education regarding material goods might thus address those aspects of ethical life that deal with others as well as those that deal with oneself.

4. Comprehensive Attention to Habit, Emotion and Practical Judgment

One's views of material goods play a role in day-to-day life. Countless seemingly non-ethical decisions (like deciding how to spend money) are informed by the role one envisions for material goods in personal flourishing. As such the habits, emotions, and practical reasoning one engages in while making such decisions are of real importance. A moral education regarding material goods might thus provide this sort of comprehensive scope.

5. Fostering Caring Relations

Noddings is ultimately correct in arguing that schools are better and more educative places when teachers foster close, caring relationships with students. In the case of material good education, specifically, this familiarity plays an important role. Since this topic deals with student views of flourishing, personal knowledge and comfort is required between teachers and students. A moral education regarding material goods could provide for this sort of relationship.

6. Ordinary Conversation

Much as she is correct in arguing for caring relationships so too is Noddings correct in advancing ordinary conversation. If one follows Callan, and accepts this understanding as valuable insight apart from Noddings assertion that truth be subservient to relationship, one finds a valuable addition to these touchstones. An education regarding material goods could, in order to advance the necessary reasoning skills, involve a commitment to take students' ideas and arguments seriously.

Conclusion

I have discussed the three dominant paradigms of moral education and the contributions these paradigms are poised to make to the material good lacuna. In each case, although it was found that the paradigm had important insight to offer, no direct resources for addressing the material good lacuna were present. The valuable, relevant insight from each paradigm was noted and compiled in a series of touchstones for moral education regarding material goods. These touchstones will be used to gauge the extent of neo-Stoicism's contribution to the material good lacuna.

CHAPTER 3 AN INTRODUCTION TO STOICISM

This chapter will provide an account of Stoicism that focuses on those aspects of Stoic philosophy relevant to the material good lacuna. As I conduct this review there will be many levels of complexity and detail that will be set aside, or briefly noted, without full explication. The proposed project is a study of educational philosophy and Stoicism as they impact student views of material goods, not a study of Stoic philosophy alone. As such several distinctions and debates have been left unaddressed in favour of a more focused examination.

I will begin with a brief discussion of the primary sources for classical Stoic philosophy. [13] I will then move into a series of discussions outlining key elements of classical Stoic thought with an emphasis on those elements that contribute to discussion of Stoic ethics: cosmology and worldview; reasoning and decision-making; indifferents and selection; virtue and virtuous actions; emotional psychology; the Stoic and others; and the medical analogy. I will conclude the chapter with a discussion of the evaluation, revision and partial adoption common in contemporary scholarship on neo-Stoicism. This examination will serve as background for the neo-Stoic framework I will construct in chapter four.

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[13] In-text citation of the classical Stoic sources will provide the author's name and the abbreviated names of the text. Cicero's *De Officiis*, for example, will be cited as (Cicero, *De Off.*).

The Stoic Sources

The beliefs of the ancient Greek Stoics – such as Zeno, Cleanthes and Chrysippus – are not easy to ascertain because their original works are nearly entirely lost (Sherman, 2002). As a result of this loss modern neo-Stoic philosophy draws primarily from late Roman sources, which are more moderate than their Greek predecessors.[14] Chief among these sources are Epictetus, Seneca, Cicero, and Marcus Aurelius (Brennan, 2005). Epictetus is widely recognized for providing insight on the practical application of Stoicism, but is also widely noted as having added little to Stoic thought itself (see Brennan, 2005; Cooper, 2005; Holowchak, 2004; Sherman, 2005). His position is, relative to the other Roman Stoics, strongly orthodox. In light of these limitations, this study will focus on Seneca, Cicero and Marcus Aurelius. In this study I have engaged in a literature review of these sources drawn from translations of Roman Stoic texts in the *Loeb Classical Library* collection. I have also drawn on a variety of contemporary sources on neo-Stoicism — especially Martha Nussbaum (1994, 1997, 1999, 2003), Tad Brennan (2005), Mark Holowchak (2004, 2006, 2007), and Nancy Sherman (2002, 2005, 2006).

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[14] The Roman Stoics make frequent reference to the ancient Greek Stoics, both to draw supporting arguments for their own form of Stoicism and to distance themselves from some of their predecessors' more dubious arguments. Much of what is known about the difference between these two periods of Stoicism comes from these Roman Stoic sources.

These texts present a wide spectrum of Stoic thought that involves several important disagreements. For this reason this document will make an important distinction between classical Stoicism and contemporary neo-Stoicism. When I make reference to the classical Stoics, or classical Stoicism, I am referring to the work of the ancient Stoics as represented by Cicero, Seneca and Marcus Aurelius. I will sometimes make more specific reference to the ancient Greek or Roman Stoics, but these references will always be clearly identified. When I make reference to the neo-Stoics I am referring to contemporary scholarship on Stoicism as represented by the work of Nussbaum, Brennan, Holowchak and Sherman. More general references to (undifferentiated) Stoicism are meant to invoke the Stoic tradition in both its classical and contemporary forms.

It is also worth noting that the references made in this document to the classical Stoics do not denote static or unproblematic transmission of ancient wisdom to the present. As will be shown in this chapter, this school of philosophy has changed in important ways as Stoic ideas passed from era to era and culture to culture. Many of the “primary source” citations given in this document are themselves the product of at least two previous translations (ancient Greek to Latin and finally English). These levels of mediation and interpretation are important to recognize, but they do not threaten the project at hand. I seek not to portray an accurate picture of classical Stoicism, but rather to draw insight from the rich tradition that the classical and neo-Stoics provide.

The Stoic Cosmology and Worldview

It is perhaps best to begin by saying that the classical Stoics, like Aristotle, believed that humans wish to be happy and that this happiness (conceived as flourishing) is the ultimate end or *telos* of all human activity (Brennan, 2005). This happiness is to be found in acting according to *nature* (Seneca, *De Vita*, 3.3), which is an important technical term in the classical Stoic system. Its meaning is often ambiguous, though, and is best defined in at least two ways. First to behave according to nature is to behave according to one's nature as a member of the human species (Brennan, 2005)(as in Cicero, 1994, *De Fin.*, 3.68). One can learn about what it is to be and act like a human by comparing humans to other species (Cooper, 2003), and by examining what humans do and how they live. One common example in the classical Stoic texts is the unique human tendency to live in, and support, complex social and political groups (see Cicero, 2001a, *De Off.*, 1.12; Seneca, 1998c, *De Ira,* 2.31.8). Cicero (*De Fin.*) discusses this element of human life directly, arguing that "since we see that man is designed by nature to safeguard and protect his fellows, it follows from this natural disposition, that the Wise Man should desire to engage in politics and government" (3.68). Nussbaum (1994) is quick to point out, though, that *nature* is much more than an empirical concept for the classical Stoics. It is also deeply normative because it represents the state of human flourishing (as in Cicero, *De Off.*, 3.13). To follow nature is to flourish.

This second key meaning of *nature* is the more cosmological aspect because living according to nature also means living according to the nature of the entire cosmos. Humans hold a unique place in the universe, according to the classical Stoics, because they are the only beings who are not entirely directed by the operations of natural law and who can, therefore, consciously direct their own thoughts (Cooper, 2003).[15] To live according to this role is to live in accordance with the conscious reason with which humans are bestowed.

The proper exercise of reasoning entails learning to discern what is in accordance with nature and what is not (Cicero, *De Off.*, 3.31). The classical Stoics believed that natural law structured the universe in a certain way and that all things happen within this system of laws and could not be any other way. As Seneca (1998d, *De Prov.*) explains, "Fate guides us, and it was settled at the first hour of birth what length of time remains for each. Cause is linked with cause, and all public and private issues are directed by a long sequence of events" (5.7). It falls to humans, then, to learn how to live in harmony with this reality and to not allow one's feelings and dispositions to be built in opposition to it. Such an opposition, on this view, precisely is vice because it is contrary to the natural order. It is also the source of pain and frustration in human life. Complaining about one's fortunes is unproductive, frustrating

[15] For discussion of animals' relative inability to choose see Seneca (*Ep.*, 124.8-13).

and vicious, for example, because such behaviour resists the natural ordering of the world (Marcus, 1999, *Meditations*, 5.8; Seneca, *Marcia*, 12.1).

In this way, living according to *nature* is the goal or *telos* of the classical Stoic system. Although this concept is formulated in different ways in different texts (see Brennan, 2005, p. 137) and the anthropological and cosmological aspects of the term are ambiguously related (see Holowchak, 2006, p. 99), it is clear that the classical Stoics were essentially talking about living in accordance with the world as it is and not as one might wish it were. They were seeking to swim *with* the current, to use Seneca's (2000, *Ep.*, 122.19) characterization. As will be discussed shortly this fundamental position deeply influenced the classical Stoic view of how one ought to view, and reason about, material goods.

Reasoning and Decision-Making

First it is important to recognize that when the classical Stoics, like many ancient Greeks and Romans, referred to *reasoning* they were not referring to the technical or strictly logical process often connoted by the contemporary English term (Cooper, 2003). Rather, their notion of reasoning involves the knowledge gained from experience, practical discernment and the more formal processes of logic (Cooper, 2003). The ideas and concepts gained from experience provide material with which to reason (Cooper, 2003), practical discernment provides the capacity to use one's reasoning within one's lived context (Seneca, *Ep.,* 94.45), and logic helps to us to make sound judgments (Marcus, *Meditations*, 8.13).

Nussbaum (1994, p. 349) explains that the Roman Stoics (in contrast to the ancient Greek Stoics), in particular, remind us that these capacities and practices are valuable because they make an important contribution to living. We ought not to view something like logic as merely an intellectual game to be played, but rather as an important instrument in a flourishing life. Cicero, playing the critic of Stoicism in the fourth book of *De Finibus*, writes, "I should have thought that to be worthy of philosophy and of ourselves, particularly when the subject of our inquiry is the Supreme Good, the argument ought to amend our lives, purposes and wills, not just correct our terminology" (4.52).

Humans, as distinctly and fundamentally rational beings (Seneca, *Ep.,* 8-10), have the unique opportunity to respond to their environment with their own thoughts and evaluative judgments. The process of this judging begins with *phantasiai* (plural), which is translated as either *appearance* (as in Nussbaum, 1994; Sherman, 2005) or *impression* (as in Brennan, 2005). I will use *impression*. "Most impressions arise from our senses, or from our memory of sensory episodes–seeing out the window... or closing my eyes and remembering what I saw. But there are also non-sensory impressions, like the impression that two is an even number…" (Brennan, 2005, p. 52). Impressions are, crucially, not merely sensory experiences or memories, they may also be paired with something like propositional content (Brennan, 2005, Nussbaum, 1994). This propositional content deals with some sort of claim about how the world is.

These claims might involve evaluative judgments regarding the desirability or goodness of an object or state of affairs. For example, when I have the impression that there is fresh popcorn at the movie theatre I am concurrently being presented with an evaluation that the popcorn either is or is not desirable. One could say that I have the impression that there is desirable popcorn at the concession. I do not first see the popcorn and then think about whether it is desirable; I am presented with an evaluation in the original experience. If I accept the evaluation that there is in fact desirable popcorn at the concession I will then be provided with the motivation to obtain it because “to assent is, in a sense, to endorse an appearance and its practical import for behavior” (Sherman, 2005, p. 9). One feels the need to retaliate against another, for example, after one accepts the impression that one has been mistreated and that it is right to respond in a certain way (Seneca, *De Ira*, 2.1.4-5). Evaluations like this one were believed by the classical Stoics to be amenable to evaluation as either true or false (Brennan, 2005). One might, for example, be mistaken in concluding that mistreatment has occurred.

It is this judgment – the judgment of whether to accept a perception and its paired evaluation – that forms what Brennan (2005) calls the “linchpin” (p. 52) of Stoic ethical philosophy. Humans can choose whether to accept or reject an impression, as well as to suspend their decision. To accept an impression and its propositional content is to *assent*. Brennan (2005) explains:

> When we assent to an impression, we swing the whole weight of our actions and beliefs behind it, like jumping to grab a rope that will rescue us from a balcony. From there out, unless we reconsider it, we will act as though that impression is solid and reliable, and will make plans based on it. (p. 59)

The way in which one goes about choosing which impressions to assent to is central to Stoic ethics. The difference between the virtuous agent (which the classical Stoics called the Sage) and the vicious one lies in the former's ability to consistently judge impressions correctly and in the latter's incapacity to do so. The intemperate person is intemperate because of a pattern of assent that pathologically attributes to alcohol a powerful relative value. The Stoically minded agent, in contrast, comes to pay close attention to the process through which he or she assents to impressions, carefully developing critical reflective habits regarding the attribution of value to the objects of judgment (for example see Seneca, *De Ira*, 3.36.1). In the absence of such habits one is liable to be "carried incontinently away by sense-impressions" (Marcus, *Meditations*, 5.36) and is thereby vulnerable to making false judgments in instances where appearances are misleading (Sorabji, 1999). What makes a judgment true or false, on Stoic grounds, will be discussed in the following section.

For the time being it will suffice to say that Stoic ethical life is focused on coming to true belief, where true belief is “an assent to a true impression” (Brennan, 2005, p. 60). The agent aspiring to virtue (the *progressor* in contemporary Stoic terms) seeks to form epistemological dispositions that lead to true belief (Cicero, *De Fin.*, 3.20). One key method involves learning to recognize that not all appearances are accurate. The progressor must, for example, recognize that one cannot pursue anything with certainty. One might always be prevented from doing something that appears likely to succeed and so one ought to believe that “my enterprise will be successful unless something interferes” (Seneca, 2001f, *De Tran.*, 13.2-3) and not assent to the false impression that success is certain.

When we develop poor epistemological habits we dispose ourselves to false assent and this disposition becomes a sign of poor or weak character. Our character, on this understanding, is the sum of all our habits or dispositions of assent (what one might call *epistemological dispositions)* and so if we permit ourselves to entrench habits and beliefs that dispose us to foolish assent we have, in effect, succumbed to a “disease” (Cicero, 1996, *Tusc. Disp.*, 3.24-25) of character. Such disease involves disposing oneself to hasty assent or assent for the wrong reasons (Løkke, 2007). To return to the concession example, if I believe the popcorn is good without thinking about it I have committed the first sort of mistake, while if I believe it is good merely because it is on sale today I have committed the second kind of mistake.

It is important to note that once an agent has assented to an impression dealing with a possible action that action must necessarily follow. If I assent to the impression that the popcorn would be good for me right now I will act to obtain it. If an action does not follow I have not actually assented in the strict Stoic sense. I may have rejected the impression, for example, by thinking that the popcorn would be enjoyable, but too expensive, and hence not desirable when all things are considered. When I do assent to an impression about a possible action, this assent forms an *impulse*, which is the mental act leading to an outward action (Brennan, 2005, p. 86; Cooper, 2003). On the Stoic understanding this impulse itself is considered an act regardless of whether the outward act is actually successfully carried out (Cicero, *De Fin.*, 3.32). I have acted to buy the popcorn regardless of whether or not I was actually able to do so.

In all the classical Stoics identified three sorts of impulses: emotions, *eupatheiai* or right passions, and selections (Brennan, 2005). Emotions, and their ethical counterpart *eupatheiai*, will be discussed in the upcoming section on Stoic emotional psychology. Selections will be discussed in the follow section on Stoic *indifferents*.

Indifferents and Selection

Stoicism holds that only virtue is good and only vice is bad (Seneca, *De Vita*, 16.1-3). Anything aside from virtue and vice is thus neither good nor bad. The classical Stoics called these other things *indifferents* (Cicero, *De Fin.,* 3.25). This category refers to objects like food or personal wealth as well as states like health or pleasure (for examples see Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.,* 74.17). At a superficial level the classical Stoic doctrine of indifferents is implausible and is likely to be dismissed rather quickly by all but the most curious readers. After all surely one's own health, for example, is good. Upon closer reading, though, it becomes clear that the initial skepticism such arguments meet is at least partly the result of a serious gap between the way in which the classical Stoics used the terms translated as *good* and *indifferent* and the way in which a modern English reader is likely to interpret them.[16]

First when the classical Stoics said that something is *good* they were referring to things that are necessary for one's own personal flourishing (Brennan, 2005, p. 35) and not things that are merely desirable (as the modern term does). When asked if I would like to go to a film I might, as a modern English speaker, respond by saying "that would be good." In this case I am merely saying that the proposed activity is something I would enjoy or find desirable to do. In the more technical virtue ethical sense, however, going to see the latest film would likely not contribute to my flourishing and thus would not truly be *good*. So when the classical Stoics said that only virtue and vice are good and bad, and that all other things are indifferents, they were expressly not saying that nothing else is worthy of pursuit or

[16] Seneca (*De Ben.*, 2.35.2-3) notes that the Stoic use of terms was irregular even in his time.

protection. They clearly distinguished between things that one may pursue and things that are amenable to classification as good or bad. Things like wealth or food are certainly worthy of pursuit in many circumstances, but they are not categorically good in the sense of being absolutely required for personal flourishing. This technical point is critical to understanding Stoic ethics because this ethical system builds very heavily upon attributions of value – namely the distinction between what is good and bad and what is ethically neutral.

The question of what contributes to flourishing also leads to the Stoic concept of ethical truth. A *true* impression is an impression that contains an accurate assessment of a particular object. In order to be accurate such an assessment must reflect the contribution that object makes to personal flourishing. This contribution is determined by examining the extent to which, all things considered, the object in question is good or preferred. To believe that a car, for example, is central to human flourishing is *false* on Stoic grounds because the car does not centrally contribute to virtue (it does not further one's rational living). A *true* impression of a car might involve the assessment that, although the car does not contribute to virtue, it is a natural convenience for a member of this society to use and hence may be pursued within reasonable bounds. Both truth and falsity are established via reference to flourishing. Ethical truth just is the real value of something to flourishing as demonstrated by rational argumentation.

Stoic reasoning is also crucially about properly understanding the limits of one's agency (Sherman, 2006). The classical Stoics believed that natural law dictates (or fates,[17] to use the Stoic term) all things that occur in the world (Seneca, *De Prov.*, 5.7). In plain terms everything is the result of some antecedent cause that an agent cannot dictate. As a result to view anything outside of your own virtue as good makes you deeply vulnerable to causal mechanisms outside of your own power.

For example many moderns seem to believe that wealth is good. The classical Stoics, however, argued that this judgment is foolish (and therefore vicious)(see Seneca, 2001b, *Helviam*, 10.9-10). To assent to the impression that wealth is good is to accept that wealth is required for one's flourishing – a belief that leaves one's virtue in the hands of external forces outside of one's control. The stock market is apt to crash, and one could be left frustrated and pained. The Sage would not make such a foolish assent, they argued, and hence is insulated by this better understanding.[18]

This argument does not mean, however, that a Stoic would never pursue wealth. The category of indifferents is crucially divided into two

[17] To fate, in Stoic terms, is akin to predestination.
[18] Seneca (*Helviam*, 9-10) uses the story of a wealthy Roman to illustrate this point. The man's riches eventually shrunk from a fantastical amount to a merely great amount. Unaware of how one could live with merely great wealth he killed himself. Seneca concludes the story by pointing out that it was his views about wealth that killed this man, as a poor person would certainly not commit suicide at having been given the fortune about which this man ended his life.

subcategories. These subcategories are variably translated as either promoted and rejected (as in Cicero, *De Fin.*, 3.52) or preferred and dispreferred (as in Seneca, 2001h, *Ep.*, 74.17). Brennan (2005) explains:

> The Sage has observed the natural course of events over a long period of time, has seen which actions are characteristic of which animals, and on the basis of their [sic] observations has concluded that it is natural that humans should try to feed themselves, try to avoid injury, even try to marry and raise families. (p. 39)

In this way the classical Stoics divided things that are natural to pursue or avoid from those things that are truly good and bad. Of course one would protect one's family and do certain things to earn or amass wealth. Such behaviour is typically natural. The only *good* to be found, in strict terms, is the "orderly thinking and deciding that occur in the assiduous pursuit" (Cooper, 2003, p. 24) of these indifferents. The philosopher may pursue wealth, for example, "but it will have been wrested from no man, nor will it be stained with another's blood – wealth acquired without harm to any man, without base dealing" (Seneca, 2001g, *De Vita.*, 23.1).

In particular one must pursue promoted indifferents with the full knowledge and understanding that they may be denied by fate. I act to earn money but something may occur that impoverishes me. To be virtuous is to understand this reality in a way that prevents me from becoming irrationally attached to outcomes I cannot control. Seneca, who was himself wealthy, responded to this point in saying ""if [my] riches slip away, they will take from me nothing but themselves, while if they leave you, you will be dumbfounded, and you will feel that you have been robbed of your real self; in my eyes riches have a certain place, in yours they have the highest… I own my riches, yours own you" (*De Vita.*, 22.5).

This point brings us to one of the three types of impulses, namely selections or disselections (Brennan, 2005). The Sage uses his or her knowledge of which indifferents may be preferred in which circumstances to either pursue (select) or avoid (disselect) those indifferents (Brennan, 2005). To explicate this point let us return to the example of going to a film. Let us say that a hypothetical agent is asked to a film by another person in the interest of going on a date. If this agent is a Stoic Sage he or she would know that humans are social creatures that often form close relationships (both platonic and romantic) with other humans, and that in North America (our hypothetical context) such relationships are often advanced by engaging in social activities like watching a film at a public theatre. It might thus be entirely rational, and hence natural and healthy, to accept this invitation and assent to the proposed film activity as a preferred indifferent so long as this activity did not interfere with some other indifferent that is properly judged to be more preferable (such as caring for a sick child). Crucially, the Sage knows that although this activity may be preferable and hence worthy of pursuit, it is not good and hence is not worth becoming fundamentally attached to. Since it is not good, it is also worthy only of conditional pursuit. It would be irrational, for example, to be truly frustrated if the film were cancelled because its occurrence was never yours to dictate in the first place. Similarly to pursue this activity at the expense of an important obligation (the sick child) would be irrational and therefore vicious.

To say that the film is a "good idea," as our agent might say, is true in the casual sense of the term, and the classical Stoics do not object to this meaning (see Stempsey, 2004). What they object to is the judgment that such things are more deeply good in the sense of their being required for personal flourishing. One must resist this judgment and rationally select the most appropriate action.

Virtue and Virtuous Actions

Much like Aristotle the classical Stoics identified a series of virtues – "prudence, justice, courage, and self-control" (Holowchak, 2004, p. 210)(Seneca, *Ben.*, 4.8.3)[19] – that they argued are intrinsically good. As my discussion thus far has shown, however, to think that these virtues may be developed independently, or to think that they are separate in practical use, is misleading. The classical Stoics viewed all of these virtues as essentially depending upon right reasoning regarding what truly is good and what truly is preferable or promoted (Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.*, 4.34). Disposing oneself to assent wisely in these matters is to exercise virtue. I am virtuous, then, when

[19] Seneca also includes honesty in this passage.

I assent only to those impressions that are clearly true and vicious when I fail to.

Clearly the standard established by this definition of virtue is exceptionally high. It is nothing less than consistently accurate judgment and action (Seneca, *Ep.,* 120.10). As a result of this position the classical Stoics come to two related arguments that have caused this school significant difficulty in discussions of virtue and virtuous living: their position on the possibility of virtuous agents, and their position on the state of vicious agents. I will now deal with each of these arguments in turn.

First the classical Stoics refer to the virtuous agent as the Sage. Sages are extremely rare, with Seneca claiming that one comes about "like a phoenix, only once in five hundred years" (*Ep.*, 42.1). Since the Sage possesses an unshakably accurate disposition to assent, all actions Sages choose to take are virtuous. Brennan explains, "shopping for groceries, brushing their teeth, going for a walk– [all originate] from the same virtuous state of their soul, and every one is a virtuous act" (Brennan, 2005, p. 37). Thus, to qualify as a Sage one must have developed a totally coherent and accurate system of dispositions to assent that is guaranteed never to lead one to false judgment. A single faulty assent means one is not a Sage, no matter how seemingly minor the impression under consideration. Thus for the purposes of moral educational work the category of the Sage is of limited, largely theoretical value. Indeed in Seneca's own moral educational work[20] he repeatedly avoided dwelling on the character of the Sage in favour of a more realistic and practical image of an imperfect person seeking virtue (*Ep*., 5.4-5, 42.1).

The more relevant category clearly is the one that includes such imperfect persons. Since virtue is nothing less than perfect dispositions to assent the classical Stoics labeled every such person vicious (Cicero, *De Fin.*, 3.48). Furthermore, since imperfect dispositions to assent (of any degree) necessarily cannot be depended upon, all vicious people are equally vicious (Seneca, *De Con.,* 13.5). All vicious people are the possessors of at least one fragile or misdirected disposition to assent. Since true sagacious knowledge (virtue) must be totally unshakable a single false judgment or weak faculty is sufficient to disqualify a person from sagehood. One faulty judgment may be used to support or justify others and so even one such mistake threatens one's understanding of the world. As a result all vicious people function merely on their opinion – their imperfect judgment of what is good and what is preferred. This picture of the vicious agent is, however, more nuanced than is immediately apparent.

Much as they divided indifferents into the preferred and disprefered (or promoted and demoted) so too did the classical Stoics divide the actions and

[20] Much of Seneca's directly moral educational writing is contained in letters to friends and family members about how to advance their growth toward virtue, or deal with particular problems like death.

characters of vicious people. Although they clearly believed that all people who fail to attain sagehood are equally vicious they did not mean that such people are all ethically equal. They did recognize that, among the vicious, there are *progressors* (Brennan, 2005). Progressors are still vicious but they are making a kind of noteworthy ethical progress (see Ciciero, *De Off.*, 3.17). These agents still do not engage in virtuous acts but they do engage in ethically praiseworthy acts called *befitting* (Brennan, 2005) or *appropriate* (Cicero, *De Fin.*, 3.58) acts.[21] The difference between a befitting and an unbefitting act lies in the possibility, in the befitting, for rational justification (Cicero, *De Fin.*, 3.58).

The example of attending a film with a friend or partner models this process well. If the agent set about examining this situation on Stoic lines – asking if this action reflects a reasonable assessment of the preferential status of the indifferents in question – he or she might come to a decision that is befitting and hence would represent progress toward virtue. Although the classical Stoics would still not label befitting actions done by progressors as strictly virtuous actions, befitting actions are morally praiseworthy actions and hence are virtuous in the more common sense of the term.

[21] I will use *befitting*.

Stoic Emotional Psychology

Most fundamentally the classical Stoics argued that emotions are a kind of judgment – in their terms a kind of impulse (the result of an assent) (Brennan, 2005). Because emotions result from particular kinds of assent, and assents are judgments made by an agent, the classical Stoics believed that emotions are essentially judgments that one could decide to change, thereby changing how one experiences the emotion (Seneca, *De Ira*, 2.2.2).

Although this position might seem odd to a modern reader it was a fairly orthodox one in ancient Greece (Mordini, 1997). Socrates, Plato and Aristotle all accepted the proposition that emotions are to some degree the result of a person's judgment about external things (Nussbaum, 1994). The classical Stoics merely seem to have taken this position further than their contemporaries did, articulating a fairly robust emotional psychology that some argue has only recently been rediscovered by modern cognitive psychologists (Sherman, 2002).

Although contemporary scholars in this area (such as Brennan and Nussbaum) often use the English term *emotion*, they do so with a more specific meaning in mind than is communicated by the normal use of the term. The term *emotion* in a classical Stoic context is primarily used to denote the affective states of vicious people (non-Sages or progressors)(as in Cicero, *De Off.*, 1.69). Such states result from impulses that falsely ascribe powerful value to things that are outside of one's control and as such are merely "frivolous opinions" (Cicero, *De Fin.*, 3.35). If I believe that a new car, for example, is a good thing, I will experience an emotion about that car because of this judgment.

Although this view of emotion is an ancient one, Nussbaum points out that rooting emotions in attributions of value also accords fairly closely to the modern understanding. She explains:

> Coffee cups and paper clips are rarely reasons for grief, because we don't care which one we use. There is a readily renewable supply and all alike serve the function for which we value them. If we try to imagine a case where the loss of a coffee cup would be an occasion for grief, we find ourselves imagining a case in which the particular item is endowed by the owner with a historical or sentimental value that makes it a unique particular. This suggests that the removal of the sense of particularity and specialness, in big things as well as small, might contribute to the eradication of fear, anger, and even love. (Nussbaum, 1994, p. 371)

The key element of an emotional impulse, as Nussbaum shows, is the attribution of value. As Brennan (2005) explains, this judgment carries with it a kind of expectation that the thing being valued can be had, and the feelings one experiences as a result of this judgment stem from one's success or failure to do so. I feel joy if I can obtain the car and frustration or disappointment if I cannot. Both emotions stem from the same attribution of value and consequent expectation of obtaining it. In Stoic terms, fortune "promises" many things that lead one astray (Seneca, *Marciam, 10.4*; *De Tran.*, 13.2-3).

From this basis the classical Stoics identify four categories of emotions: lust, delight, fear, and distress (Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.*, 4.11). All four deal with the attribution of value (or disvalue) to something external. Lust and fear deal with future externals while delight and distress (pleasure and pain, in common English usage) deal with current or present ones. If I want to buy the car I feel lust; if I obtain it or fail to I feel delight or distress. If I have the car I am naturally afraid it will be stolen or damaged and I thus experience fear. It is strictly impossible, on this understanding, to value or disvalue something and not feel anything about it. To value is, in Stoic terms, the same thing as feeling something about it (Nussbaum, 1994). As Marcus (*Meditations*) explains, "If thou regardest anything not in thine own choice as good or evil for thyself, it is inevitable that, on the incidence of such an evil or the miscarriage of such a good, thou shouldst upbraid the Gods, aye, and hate men as the actual or supposed cause of the one or the other" (6.41). If an agent attributes value or disvalue both pleasant and unpleasant emotions necessarily and inseparably follow. One cannot experience delight without the accordant vulnerability to fear or distress. The moment I purchase the car may be one of delight but that valuation is necessarily going to expose me to the risk of fear and distress because I have already made the judgment that can cause those emotions. All that is left is for external circumstance to change and such circumstances are not mine to control.

Emotions are thus necessarily difficult to control (Seneca, *Ep.*, 85.8-9). They are based on the valuation of things that are themselves outside of our control. As Seneca (*Ep.*) explains, “the means of arousing [emotions] lie outside our own power. They will accordingly increase in proportion as the causes by which they are stirred up are greater or less” (85.11). As our emotions pull us in different directions we are drawn towards indifferent things and are thus hindered from engaging in befitting deeds.

Emotions, since they result from false judgments, are restricted to non-Sages. Sages, in classical Stoic terms, experience no emotions (Cicero, *De Fin.*, 3.35). Rather, the affective framework of the Sage is characterized by ethically praiseworthy affective states called *eupatheiai* (Brennan, 2005, p. 97)(as in Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.*, 4.14).[22] The fundamental difference between the *eupatheiai* of the Sage and the emotions of the non-Sage is that *eupatheiai* are impulses that attribute goodness and badness to virtue and not vulnerable external things (Nussbaum, 2003). The Sage is thus not emotionless, in common terms, but rather is characterized by “putting emotions in their proper place” (Stempsey, 2004, p. 464).

Eupatheiai are arranged in three categories that correspond to three of the four categories of emotions: joy, precaution and wish. Wish and precaution are the virtuous equivalents of desire and fear, though they refer

[22] The Loeb translation of *Tusculan Disputations* translates *eupatheiai* as “equable states.”

to rational propensities to reach out for, or avoid, things without erroneously believing something about their value. Joy refers to the attainment of something good, much as the common meaning of joy does, with the exception that since only virtue is good *eupathic* joy refers only to virtue. Since the Sage is virtuous, and thereby has no vice, there is no *eupatheiai* for distress because distress refers to a present bad of some kind (and only vice is bad)(Brennan, 2005, p. 98).

Since the fundamental difference between these two types of affective states (*eupatheiai* and emotions) is the truth or falsehood of the value they attribute, ethical progress is to be found in replacing one's emotional impulses with more rational selections. As opposed to believing that my future car would be a good thing I should rationally select the sort of vehicle that would enable me to carry out my social roles and duties and at the same time not reflect an irrational attachment to the car as a good thing. I may, for example, be tempted to buy a vehicle that is especially expensive for the sole purpose of impressing onlookers as I drove down the street. If I do not require such a vehicle to continue my work, support my family's activities, or advance some other preferred indifferent, it would be irrational to dedicate a substantial portion of my resources to it because I would be compromising other activities that are clearly more natural (in the Stoic normative sense). Additionally if I bought the vehicle for the purpose of feeling joy at obtaining it I would dispose myself to the fear of losing it and an irrational emotional drive to protect it. I would feel for the car because of my overvaluation of its significance to my flourishing. Learning to choose on the rational grounds of Stoic selection, as opposed to emotional grounds (where the car essentially lures me with promises of happiness), is the key to ethical progress.[23]

If I were a Sage I would feel *eupathic* joy in making the most virtuous (natural) decision. Purchasing a practical, modest vehicle might result in a feeling of such joy. This joy would have as its object, though, not the car itself but the fact that my decision had pursued virtuous ends (giving my family a way to access grocery stores, for example). Such joy, to the classical Stoics, is immune to the assaults of fortune because it is detached from them. It is thus through the process of replacing vulnerable emotions with such rationally sound and stable eupatheiai that the Sage grows above fortune like a mountain above the clouds (Seneca, *Ep.*, 111.2-3).

This picture, though, still leaves the Sage in a fairly implausible state. Surely, one could say, even the virtuous would feel something directed at the actual car. The answer is that the Sage does feel something but does not judge

[23] The detail provided by this example sheds important light on the iPod example provided in the opening chapter. Since iPods are now often used as social media devices (and not merely as music players) any argument regarding their ethical status has become more complex. Like the example of the car it is plausible to argue that such devices are now necessary to fulfil one's social roles. Since, on Stoic grounds, social connection is importantly natural it is plausible to argue that these devices have, in fact, become more preferable as they have become more commonly utilized as social networking tools. This is not to say, however, that they have thereby become any less indifferent. To believe that one must have such a product in order to flourish is to mistake the social tool for the act of socially relating itself. Being deprived of such a tool would certainly make such relations more difficult but it does not categorically prevent them.

this experience in a way that makes it a true emotion (in Stoic terms). Seneca (*De Ira*, 2.3.2) notably identified certain bodily reactions to impressions such as tears or altered breathing that are said to occur before one has an opportunity to judge the impression. "Shocking" pictures are, for example, capable of producing a reaction prior to rational assent (*De Ira*, 2.2.5-6). In recognition of this observation Seneca (*De Ira)* referred to such affective reactions as "preliminary to passions" (2.2.5-6). Contemporary scholarship on Stoicism refers to such feelings as *preliminary passions* (Byers, 2003, p. 435).

The addition of preliminary passions clearly increases the plausibility of the classical Stoic position. No person could reasonably propose that a virtuous agent would feel only *voluntary* sexual arousal, for example. It is quite plausible, though, to suggest that a virtuous agent is able to rationally control him or herself in a way that rejects the significance of that initial impression and thereby limits the resulting emotions. This distinction could, in casual terms, be the difference between mere arousal and fully experienced lust.

Such moderating additions and interpretations are commonly identified in the Roman Stoic texts, with Seneca's discussion of losing a loved one being perhaps the clearest example. An orthodox Greek Stoic would deny that such a person was a *good* and would thereby deny them the value attribution that leads to the usual grief. Seneca (*Marciam*, 7.1; 2001d, *Polybium*, 18.5-6), however, argued that grief is a normal response to the loss of someone close to you and that it is more plausible to merely restrain grief than to extirpate it.

Seneca (*Polybium*) retains, however, the argument that entirely giving in to grief is unproductive (2.1). He suggests that one should seek to directly address grief in an effort to overcome it and regain composure (*Marciam*, 8.3). In his consolatory letters to Polybius and Marcia he recognizes the legitimacy of their grief at losing loved ones and proceeds to offer a softened Stoic argument that grief has a natural and acceptable period in which to flare up but adds that one is better off rationally addressing these feelings and moving on. To Polybius, for example, he explains that nature merely loans people to us and that one day we all need to repay this loan (*Polybium*, 10.5-6). One should use this knowledge to prepare oneself for loss. Take comfort in your family, Seneca (*Polybium*, 12.1-2) implores, because a wise man knows that our time is limited and precious.

The Stoic and Others

One important misconception about classical Stoicism holds that it is myopically individualistic and unconcerned with social reform or the plight of others (see Mordini 1997; Fiala, 2003). Much like the other reductive or otherwise superficial characterizations this image is quickly problematized when the full depth of classical Stoic thought and terminology is properly explicated. In this section I will discuss the classical Stoic position on one's relationship to others and to society at large. Although there are a number of important points that will fall under this heading I will focus on cosmopolitanism and the concept of *oikeiôsis*.

It is first important to point out that not only were the classical Stoics often politically active (especially the Roman Stoics) but also that this activity is very much consistent with Stoic philosophy itself (Lachs, 2005). Indeed the primary sources reviewed for this study included countless references to the ways in which one ought to contribute to society. Cicero (*De Fin.*, 3.68),[24] for example, argued not only that Sages take part in politics but also that one should contribute to the "general good" through activities like displaying common kindness (*De Off.*, 1.22) and teaching (*De Off.*, 1.151). Since humans are naturally social the supporting of human communities was thought by the classical Stoics to be praiseworthy. Indeed, Cicero (*De Off.*, 3.21) argued that one should choose death or poverty before wronging one's community.

The classical Stoics were also concerned about the state of public opinion and the influence such belief has on individual ethical progress. The problem, on these grounds, is that public life is often plagued by objectionable opinions about ethical value. As a result,

> …we come to think that the clearest insight into the meaning of nature has been gained by the men who have made up their minds that there is no higher ambition for a human being, nothing more desirable, nothing

[24] Seneca (2001e) notes that Zeno held a similar position in *De Otio*, 3.2.

> more excellent than civil office, military command and popular glory… and in their quest for the true honor which alone is the object of nature's search, they find themselves where all is vanity, and strain to win no lofty image of virtue, but a shadowy phantom of glory. (Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.*, 3.3)

The example provided by the vicious is also discussed by Seneca (*Ep*., 7.2) who warned that such people can, through their behaviour, make vice look attractive. Events like gladiatorial games that celebrate vice must therefore be studiously avoided (*Ep*.. 7.3-4), especially by the young during their formative years (*Ep*., 7.5-6). One should not shut oneself out from society, but it is important to learn to take part in one's community in befitting ways (*Ep*., 18.4). To return to the modern example of purchasing a car it is no secret that modern advertising and commercialism has led many to superficially desire things they cannot afford (an irrational judgment about the relative value of indifferents). As a result of such dubious social practices the classical Stoics are said to view social convention as a kind of dangerous influence. When the society supplies one with answers the individual often ceases to search for them, and since critical belief is required for virtue this apathy works against the flourishing of all persons in the society.

The classical Stoics regularly take this sort of broad ethical view. They repeatedly emphasize that one ought to consider the entire human race in one's ethical decision-making. Cicero (*De Fin.*) explained that "just as the laws set the safety of all above the safety of individuals, so a good, wise and law abiding man, conscious of his duty to the state, studies the advantage of all more than that of himself or of any single individual" (3.64). It is here that the classical Stoics make a particularly valuable contribution that, unlike many other Stoic contributions, is actually rather widely recognized. This contribution is the Stoic concept of cosmopolitanism.

Building on earlier work by Diogenes the Cynic, the classical Stoics "developed the idea of cross-cultural study and world citizenship… in their own morally and philosophically rigorous way, making the concept of the 'world citizen,'… a centerpiece of their educational program" (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 58). Indeed, Nussbaum (1997) argues that "no theme is deeper in Stoicism than the damage done by faction and local allegiances to the political life of a group" (p. 60). Rather it was thought that one is always a member of two communities: the universal community of reason (as in Marcus, *Mediations*, 2.16, 4.4), and the local community of social connections.[25] A good person will manage to live in light of the obligations one holds to both communities. Indeed, one important measure of ethical progress within Stoicism is the extent to which the needs of other persons,

[25] This meaning of community is perhaps best seen in classical Stoic discussions of particular cultural issues. Cicero's discussion of how one ought to view and behave at the dinner parties Romans of his stature frequented is a good example (see 2001b, *De Sen.*, 13.45), as is Seneca's aforementioned references to the gladiatorial games (*Ep*. 7.3-4).

from the locally to the globally related, are considered alongside one's own. This progress is defined by the process of *oikeiôsis*.

Oikeiôsis

Oikeiôsis is a difficult term to translate and define.[26] Castelo (1996), for example, defines it as a "sense of affinity" (p. 292). Brennan's (2005, p. 154) more comprehensive analysis, though, concludes that the various proposed translations (appropriation, affinity, familiarization) should be jettisoned in favour of the original Greek. He explains that "what it means to take something to be *oikeion* is that one treats it as an object of concern" (Brennan, 2005, p. 158). One's capacity to reason is the paradigm case for *oikeiôsis* because it is one's reason that is truly good (see Cicero, *De Fin., 17)*.

When we apply the concept of *oikeiôsis* to others, as Stoics do, we arrive at an interesting ethical relationship. Brennan (2005) explains that when one takes another to be *oikeion*, "I am emphatically not being asked to transcend my partiality toward those I conceive of as my own, but rather to expand the extension of that concept" (p. 163). One is, in effect, being called to extend one's partiality to others (Cicero, *De Fin*., 3.64). In this sense, Brennan explains, the Stoic learns to treat the needs and interests of others as one's own needs and interests. Using the example of food he explains, "…when I combine my knowledge that the food is indifferent, with my enlarged sense

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[26] Although it is clear that the Roman Stoics often discuss *oikeiôsis* (as in Cicero*, De Fin.*, 3.16-22) they often avoid using the original Greek term.

that all other people are *oikeion* to me, then I can come to be moved by their need for food just as directly as I am moved by my own need for food" (Brennan, 2005, p. 165). Sherman (2002, p. 96) describes this process rather vividly as the process of learning not just to walk in another's shoes, but to walk in another's shoes as another.

It is here that one comes across what is perhaps the most widely discussed model of the social aspect of classical Stoic ethics, Hierocles' concentric circles model (see Brennan, 2005; Holowchak, 2007; Nussbaum, 1994; Sherman, 2002, 2006). Using a series of concentric circles Hierocles modeled the various levels of relation humans experience from the immediate family all the way to the global community. It is incumbent upon each agent to learn to take each layer of these relations as *oikeion*, starting with the most immediate and working toward the global community (Sherman, 2002). It is relatively easy to learn to take the members of one's family as *oikeion* but one must work very hard over time to do the same with persons who first appear as strangers or foreigners. In this way the Stoic ethical system emphasizes a perspective unbounded by the limitations of nation or culture. The process of learning to pull these circles toward the center (to treat others as closer to oneself) is also the process whereby one becomes an ethical cosmopolitan citizen.

In summary, then, the true Stoic position on one's relations to others is not the reductive caricature of the utterly indifferent and uninvolved recluse invoked by some contemporary representations (see Card, 2003). It is, rather, a radically universalist, egalitarian and social ethical system. Although there is certainly an emphasis on individual self-mastery this emphasis is not exclusive of social responsibility and concern. Indeed the two are intimately bound.

The Medical Analogy as Pedagogy

The classical Stoics discussed their teaching under the guiding analogy that education is a form of therapy. This analogy, referred to as the medical analogy, is most fully explicated (in contemporary philosophy) in the work of Nussbaum (see especially 1994). Use of this approach can also be seen throughout the classical Stoic texts with Seneca's consolatory letters being the most direct examples (see Seneca, *Helviam*; *Marciam*; *Polybius*). Explicit discussion of Stoic philosophy as therapy is similarly common. Seneca's advice in *De Ira* was meant to "heal" (3.39.1) anger and he elsewhere likened discussing difficult emotional matters to re-opening a wound that has improperly healed (2001c, *Maricam,* 1.8). Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations* is an account of disorders of the soul that includes suggestions for various forms of "treatment" (4.74). In each case the suggested therapy involved philosophical argumentation and teaching. Philosophy, to the classical Stoics, literally was medicine for the soul (Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.*, 3.6).

This view holds that the teacher is a kind of physician (Seneca, *De Ira*, 1.6.2). This analogous relationship is important, Nussbaum (1994) explains, because "the medical analogy is not simply a decorative metaphor; it is an important tool both of discovery and justification," (p. 14) adding "there is in this period broad and deep agreement that the central motivation for philosophizing is the urgency of human suffering…" (p. 15). The medical analogy is, thus, fundamentally practical (Nussbaum, 1994, p. 21). Its chief goal is to improve the lives of students. In Seneca's letter to Marcia, for example, he openly discussed "curing" her grief (1.7-8) and provided a series of suggested practices to help her overcome her pain.

This improvement comes about by addressing the student's "psychical" health (Holowchak, 2007, p. 172). Since the human with the healthiest psyche is the most virtuous one, Stoicism can been seen as a kind of virtue therapy. Since virtue is a form of embodied understanding this therapy is centrally cognitive. As a result modern commentators sometimes refer to Stoic lessons as "tonics" (Sherman, 2002, p. 85) or "curatives" (Holowchak, 2007, p. 168).

These treatments are defined by three key characteristics (Nussbaum, 1994, p. 46). First they have a practical goal in the sense that they seek to foster health in the student (as in Seneca, *Marciam*). Second they take the student's personal desires into account. Third they address the specific context and problems of the student in question.[27] They are, in effect, tailored

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[27] In the case of points two and three Seneca's (*De Tran.*) letter to Serenus provides an excellent example. The letter begins with Serenus providing an account of the ethical faults he sees within himself that worry him along with an explanation of the situations in which he sees these faults manifested.

to each person's experiences and issues. In addition the student must exercise his or her own reasoning (Nussbaum, 1994) and so the classical Stoics regularly encourage students to learn to treat themselves (see Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.*, 3.6).

The need for this treatment results from a number of "disorders" (Seneca, *De Ira*, 3.1.2) the classical Stoics diagnosed via their ethical philosophy. They believed that people are typically afflicted with "persistent perversion of judgment" (Seneca, *Ep.*, 75.11) regarding the value of indifferents. Unethical (mistaken) beliefs will, over time, settle into diseases of the soul and become very difficult for a person to address (Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.*, 3.24-25).

The Stoics and Aristotelian Virtue Ethics

The comparison between classical Stoic and Aristotelian thought is important for several reasons. First since the two were active schools during overlapping periods their disagreements can shed important light on their respective contributions. Second and most importantly for the proposed study, the contemporary dominance of character/virtue education creates an important role for schools of virtue ethics that emerged in opposition to Aristotelian thought. This section will provide an introduction to the key

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Seneca then directly addresses these issues while likening them to problems experienced as one recovers from a serious disease.

similarities and differences between these two systems that will be relevant to the proposed study.

The most fundamental similarity between Stoic and Aristotelian thought is found in the classical Stoic use of the teleological framework contained in the opening book of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (2004) (Brennan, 2005, p. 28). The classical Stoics accepted the Aristotelian position that all actions are taken in pursuit of some given end (Marcus, *Meditations*, 5.16) and that happiness (flourishing) is the fundamental end of human activity (Seneca, *De Ira*, 2.6.2). Their argument for the place of reason as the human *telos*, for example, followed a similar line of argumentation to Aristotle's (see Seneca, *De Ira*, 2.6.2). This similarity is important but it appears to be the only point at which the classical Stoics have clearly drawn from Aristotle's work (Brennan, 2005, p. 27).

The classical Stoics diverged from Aristotle in arguing that virtue requires no external things (Seneca, *Helviam*, 5.1). Aristotle, on the other hand, clearly stated that virtuous action, and hence virtue and flourishing, requires certain external resources (*NE*, 1099a30). This disagreement has important implications. Since the Stoic doctrine of indifferents impacts the Stoic positions on emotional psychology and ethics this divergence means that the two schools come to substantially different pedagogical interventions. Stoic therapy is, after all, focused on making the right attributions of value. Aristotle, for example, would argue that a healthy person would fear death, while the classical Stoics would argue that fear (conceived as an irrational emotion) is itself unhealthy because death is outside of one's control and hence is an indifferent (Nussbaum, 1994, p. 94).

This point brings my discussion to another key difference: divergent views of emotional psychology (Nussbaum, 1994). Aristotle's definition of virtue, and his explication of the doctrine of the mean, leads the Aristotelian to moderate his or her passions in pursuit of the virtuous mean point (*NE*, 1107a1-10). The Aristotelian is called to moderate emotional states so that one experiences just the right extent of a given feeling. There is, for example, a level of anger appropriate to any given situation. Since the classical Stoics, on the other hand, believed that anger is a misleading and ungovernable emotion they urged to cure oneself of it to the greatest degree possible. Responding to the Aristotelian mean argument Seneca (*Ep.*) argued "this half-way ground is accordingly misleading and useless; it is to be regarded just as the declaration that we ought to be 'moderately' insane, or 'moderately' ill" (85.9). The classical Stoic solution is, as noted previously, to respond to irrational emotions like anger with a calm and rational *eupathic* response. Anger is naturally difficult to control, on this understanding, and so one must undercut its influence before one's ethical judgment is clouded by a drive for revenge or selfishness.

Evaluating Stoicism

One task of this study is to author a neo-Stoic framework for use in moral educational philosophy. In preparation for this task I will now introduce some of the key revisions that will be required of such a framework. Ultimately the classical Stoics propose a school of philosophy that carries with it numerous elements that appear implausible to the modern reader. This problem is addressed, to some extent, by the late Roman Stoics in their attempts to soften Stoicism for their contemporaries in Rome. As discussed previously, Seneca's allowance for certain kinds of grief provides an illustrative example. Like the Roman Stoics so too have contemporary philosophers of Stoicism found it necessary to engage in revisions that similarly soften the demands of Stoicism and provide additional plausibility to the classical Stoic position.

All of the contemporary authors I have identified and drawn upon (Brennan, Holowchak, Nussbaum and Sherman) argue for a form neo-Stoicism that provides a less severe approach and yet maintains key classical Stoic insight. This approach is in keeping with classical Stoic practice, Nussbaum (1994) notes, because the Roman Stoics themselves (especially Seneca) did much the same thing in their interpretations of Greek Stoic thought for their audience. Brennan (2005) similarly advises his readers to "scavenge" (p. 320) for the pieces of classical Stoicism that are valuable and applicable today.

First and foremost in this task it is important to identify those elements of classical Stoic thought not necessary to sustain a Stoic contribution to contemporary ethical life. The stark division the classical Stoics draw between the virtuous and the vicious, for example, has been argued to be unnecessary (see Cooper, 2005; Holowchak, 2007) and ultimately unhealthy (see Nussbaum, 2003). Harshly characterizing all those agents who fail to attain an exceptionally rare, if not impossible, level of ethical perfection is a clearly dubious practice of little possible value to moral educators.

The concept of the Sage is, itself, problematic. Even with the addition of the *eupatheiai* the emotional psychology of the Sage is still quite difficult to accept. A fuller account of these rational emotions may work to rectify this problem but the classical Stoics appear to have only partially developed this aspect of the Sage's life (Cooper, 2005). In any event this partially explicated model agent is both under-defined and idealistic.

Much the same is true of the radical position the classical Stoics took on emotions. It is now widely argued in neo-Stoic circles that some emotions are healthy parts of the human experience. Sherman (2005) defends the position that certain expressions of anger, for example, are appropriate. Nussbaum (1999) argues that, although the classical Stoics provide a valuable analysis of emotional psychology, their normative position of extirpating the emotions goes too far. The typical neo-Stoic response is to suggest that Stoicism can be used to build a kind of resilience or a capacity to regain control when emotions threaten personal well-being. Nussbaum (2003) contributes to this discussion significantly. She argues that emotions are, indeed, deeply connected to beliefs. This wisdom should not be lost. The relationship between beliefs and emotions is more complex, however, than the classical Stoics argued.

Emotions have a long history in our lives, Nussbaum (2003) explains. They reflect very old judgments and experiences as well as new ones and are built into a complex network of beliefs created over a lifetime. When one loses a loved one it may take a very long time to address and revise the network of beliefs and expectations that one has regarding such a person. This additional complexity expands the classical Stoic concept significantly and has been favourably judged by other neo-Stoics (see Sorabji, 1999). By conceiving of her grief as a result of an entrenched network of beliefs Nussbaum has explained how it is not as easy to change one's emotions as the classical Stoics suggest but she also shows that their fundamental argument about the centrality of belief to emotion is still plausible. Indeed this argument bears much similarity to the approach Seneca (*Maricam*) takes with Marcia's grief as he delicately respects her pain whilst attempting to draw her attention to reasons to move past it. It is this sort of revision that must be undertaken if a neo-Stoic moral educational approach is to be comprehensibly articulated to contemporary practitioners. Arguments like Nussbaum's reform the more implausible elements of classical Stoic thought into more compelling arguments while still preserving the unique insight the classics offer. I will return to this task of careful, softening revision in chapter four.

Conclusion

This chapter has introduced those aspects of classical Stoic philosophy relevant to this study while beginning to introduce certain key aspects of neo-Stoicism. I have introduced the classical Stoic worldview as well as the classical Stoic approach to reasoning, indifferents, virtue, emotional psychology and *oikeiôsis*. I have examined the medical analogy and the key differences between Stoic and Aristotelian virtue theory. I concluded this portion of the document by introducing neo-Stoicism. This work provides the basis for the more focused discussion of neo-Stoic education in the following chapter and I will refer to many of the theoretical points introduced here as I construct my own approach.

In summary this portion of the document has accomplished two main goals. First it has, along with the preceding chapter on the extant moral educational paradigms, established the uniqueness of the Stoic approach (which is, thus far, primarily represented by the classical school). Put simply, there is no paradigm currently under mainstream discussion in moral education that adopts the sort of perspective and reasoning that Stoicism does. Second this chapter has also established that this uniqueness comes with significant difficulty. The neo-Stoics canvassed in this chapter rightly conclude that important revisions must be made in order to soften classical Stoicism in ways that will allow its value to be harnessed.

CHAPTER 4 A MORAL EDUCATIONAL FRAMEWORK

I will begin this chapter by discussing the work that has been done on the subject of neo-Stoic education. After concluding this task I will introduce the neo-Stoic moral educational framework I have constructed to address the material good lacuna. In this section I will begin with a series of foundational principles for this framework, and will then move to further develop these ideas through a discussion of the pedagogical touchstones introduced earlier in this document.

What Has Been Done

Currently extant investigations of Stoic philosophy of education typically fall into two categories: investigations of neo-Stoic thought regarding education outside of K-12 systems (post-secondary and military education); and investigations of neo-Stoic cosmopolitanism (both within K-12 systems and in other areas). I will now briefly introduce each of these bodies of literature in order to clarify the specific need for further work.

Neo-Stoic Education Outside K-12 Systems

Neo-Stoic educational thought has been most comprehensively examined outside of mainstream educational philosophy. Its fullest discussion comes from philosophers writing about educational issues (and not from philosophers of education). Most important among these philosophers are Martha Nussbaum, Mark Holowchak and Nancy Sherman.

Martha Nussbaum provides the most expansive and sustained examination of neo-Stoic pedagogy currently available. This examination is primarily contained in *Cultivating humanity: A classical defense of reform in liberal education* (1997) and *Therapy of desire: Theory and practice in Hellenistic ethics* (1994). In *Cultivating humanity* Nussbaum (1997) makes a comprehensive argument for the reform of American post-secondary institutions using insight from the classics of liberal education in ancient Greece. One of the schools from which she draws heavily is Stoicism. *Therapy of desire* (1994), on the other hand, directly examines the practices of the Hellenists, including the classical Stoics. There is also valuable insight to be found in Nussbaum's (2003) *Upheavals of thought: The intelligence of emotions*, though this text is somewhat less comprehensive than the other two. It does, however, contain lengthy reference to Nussbaum's thought about her own emotional pains. This sustained example provides notable context and practical application to her discussions of Stoicism.

Nussbaum (1997) views Stoicism (among the Hellenistic schools) with particular sympathy. Ultimately, she views the classical Stoics as expanding and articulating a Socratic view of education (p. 28). The goal of such education "is to confront the passivity of the pupil, challenging the mind to take charge of its own thought" (p. 28). The pupil must learn to become his or her own teacher (Nussbaum, 1994, p. 345).

Nussbaum provides an account of the key characteristics of such education at several points in her writing. One such account can be found in

Cultivating humanity (1997, pp. 30-33), where she explains that the classical Stoic interpretation of Socratic education centers on several key themes. First such education must be universal. The classical Stoics, quite radically for their time, argued that women should be given such an education. Since they viewed philosophy as a practical guide to good living they believed all persons should be permitted an opportunity to practice it. Second such education should be contextually and personally appropriate. Because their approach centered so strongly on the complex, practical reasoning required to live well the teaching the classical Stoics prescribed similarly focused on addressing lessons to individual needs. Like all of classical Stoic philosophy this kind of teaching was associated with therapy. Since each patient requires particular treatment each student requires particular pedagogy.

The third key element is that such an education is "concerned with… different norms and traditions" (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 32). This process was intended to provide an opportunity both to learn from and feel closer to other cultures, and to provide an opportunity for rational scrutiny of one's own culture. This element is most strongly associated with the goal of fostering cosmopolitanism. As one learns more about others, and comes to view one's own traditions more critically, it thereby becomes easier to view others as *oikeion*. The fourth, and final, element is that textbooks and previous thinkers must not become uncritically viewed as authoritative. One must work to see what those ideas can do when one actively examines them and tests them to see what they mean in one's own life.

In *Therapy of Desire* (1994) Nussbaum identifies another series of important characteristics for such an education. First the classical Stoics (along with their Hellenistic contemporaries) go "well beyond Aristotle, and even beyond Socrates and Plato, in their fine-tuned attention to the interlocutor's concrete needs and motives for philosophizing. They design their procedures so as to engage those deepest motivations and speak to those needs." (p. 485). Second they approach philosophy in a practical fashion, emphasizing engagement with their readers and listeners on a level that they can understand. Third they delve further into the practical and contextual judgment Aristotle emphasized. Fourth they recognize "that existing desires, intuitions, and preferences are socially formed and far from totally reliable" (p. 488). Fifth, and finally, they appear to be the first Western school of philosophy to examine and respond to unconscious thought.

These two sets of characteristics introduce several of the key points of emphasis Nussbaum envisions for a neo-Stoic philosophy of moral education. The analysis Nussbaum provides is primarily of value to the proposed study, however, when it examines Stoic thought on pedagogy, and not necessarily when it discusses the contemporary educational implications of such thought. Her analysis is directed at post-secondary institutions. She is, essentially, discussing the moral education of the university student. This emphasis creates a notable gap between Nussbaum's research and the field of moral education. Moral educators, from whose perspective this study is constructed, typically discuss primary and secondary (K-12) schooling. This pedagogical environment includes a much broader and deeper mandate than is present in post-secondary institutions. The moral educational practices of primary or even secondary school teachers would seem, for good reason, unacceptably paternalistic in post-secondary environments. As a result, Nussbaum's pedagogical analysis leaves many important moral educational issues unaddressed. Moral development during the K-12 years is not the subject of significant attention in her work.

Nussbaum provides a landmark series of examinations of Stoic philosophy and offers many important insights into neo-Stoic education. Additional work is required, though, in ascertaining precisely what this insight means for moral educators working in primary and secondary schools. Much the same is true of the second source I will discuss, Mark Holowchak. Holowchak, too, provides valuable insight into neo-Stoic education and similarly directs his analysis at the post-secondary level. His account of neo-Stoic recommendations, though, appears more readily transferred to younger levels of schooling.

Although Holowchak has written about Stoic philosophy in other respects (see 2004, 2006) his main contribution to discussion of neo-Stoic moral education comes from a 2007 article, *Education as training for life: Stoic teachers as physicians for the soul*. In this piece Holowchak follows an argument rather similar to Nussbaum's, including strong emphasis on both the medical analogy and the goal of practical rational autonomy. His discussion of neo-Stoic education focuses on several features, “education as self-knowing, the need of logical and critical thinking for informed decision-making, learning as preparation for life, and knowledge for integration in private, local, and global affairs” (p. 167). He also shares Nussbaum’s view of a close, guiding relationship between teachers and students, clearly stating that neo-Stoic education is not to be undertaken as a program of mass dissemination. He argues that such education is a combination of education in critical reasoning, epistemology, and Stoic maxims. The end product is an agent who makes the right assents, consequently acting and living virtuously. Like Nussbaum he discusses this education as a personally pleasurable experience, with one learning to insulate oneself from the painful influence of external events.

To this end Holowchak provides a series of *curatives* that, in pedagogical terms, are best categorized as a mixture of learning objectives and suggested activities. I have summarized these curatives in tables 2 and 3. Loosely phrased as learning objectives, Holowchak’s points range from the uncontroversial to the radical. Taking a daily inventory of one’s moral behaviour, for example, is likely to be broadly acceptable to moral educators because journaling activities of this sort are already widely utilized in schools. The ethical appraisal of thoughts, on the other hand, is both more technical and more controversial. At the same time, however, this list seems much more closely directed to a moral educational audience than

Nussbaum's. Indeed, Holowchak's piece appears in an educational philosophy journal (*Educational Philosophy and Theory*). He makes brief comments about what sort of character teachers must have, as well as the nature of early habituation (both common issues in moral educational literature).

Once again, though, this discussion is ultimately directed at a post-secondary audience and not a K-12 moral educational audience. As such there is little to directly address the key problems of the K-12 school's moral educational context (such as the student theft discussed in the iPod example). Holowchak's analysis of neo-Stoicism is deeply valuable and so are several of his observations about neo-Stoic education. Additional work that connects this insight to the K-12 context is, however, required.

Table 2
Holowchak's Epistemological Curatives

Curative	Explanation
Test impressions	Students should be able to critically test impressions and avoid hasty assent.
See things in their proper context	Students should be able to view issues in a wide perspective, taking into account such things as the perspectives of others, the full implications of particular beliefs or choices, etc.
Avoid evaluative judgments on indifferents	Students should be able to withhold value attributions from indifferents.
Follow nature	Students should be able to make progress towards living in accordance with nature by, for example, selecting preferred indifferents.
Wish to have what you do have	Students should learn to free themselves from constant desire for things they lack.
Form right self-judgment	Students should learn to "not concern themselves with satisfying the image others have of them, but with their own self-image" (p. 178). This process also includes making proper assessments about the limits of one's agency.
Practice silence	Students should practice through action, and should avoid prematurely speaking on matters they do not yet understand.

Note. Adapted from "Education as training for life: Stoic teachers as physicians of the soul," by M. A. Holowchak, 2007, *Educational Philosophy and Theory, 41*(2), 166-184.

Table 3
Holowchak's Ethical Curatives

Curative	Explanation
Use-disuse	Students should practice exercising their mental capacities while attempting to weaken bad habits by avoiding them.
Flee from strong impressions	Students should avoid forming overly strong impressions. All judgments should be open to critical revision.
Live authentically	Students should be able to live in accordance with their ethical pronouncements.
Prepare for the future	Students should learn to fully understand that the future might bring changes one does not wish for.
Winnow one's thoughts	Students should learn to view their thoughts as ethically appraisable.
Be patient	Students should exercise patience in their progression towards virtue.
Treat each day as the last day	Students should approach worthwhile activities as if their time to complete them were limited.
Take daily inventory	Students should reflect on a daily basis about the day's moral progress.

Note. Adapted from "Education as training for life: Stoic teachers as physicians of the soul," by M. A. Holowchak, 2007, *Educational Philosophy and Theory, 41*(2), 166-184.

Sherman's neo-Stoic writing is a similarly mixed blessing because it is sometimes aimed at military moral educational audiences (Sherman, 2005). She has written, for example, on issues related to torture (2006), and decorum (2005). Her writing is clearly also read in mainstream educational circles, however, with one of her book chapters appearing in a collection on character education (Sherman, 2002). Her main contribution to the issues dealt with in this study, however, comes from her 2005 book *Stoic warriors: The ancient philosophy behind the military mind*.

This text, while noticeably less technical than other texts discussed here (notably Brennan, 2005; Nussbaum, 1994, 1997), contributes to understanding of neo-Stoic educational thought. First Sherman illustrates a number of important elements of Stoic ethics that are often overlooked in other literature on Stoicism. She provides, for example, extensive analysis of the importance of outward comportment and demeanor both for students and teachers. Such behaviour is, on the Stoic understanding, indicative of respect and self-control.

Sherman's (2005) discussion provides a helpful picture of the comprehensive nature of Stoic ethical life. In addition to her discussion of comportment and demeanor she also introduces and evaluates the classical Stoic positions on grief, anger, fear, resilience, community, and care for one's body. Her discussion is, like Nussbaum's, critical but sympathetic. She argues, for example, that the classical Stoics provide an account of community that seems insufficient when compared to the Aristotelian account. She hastens to add, though, that the classical Stoics do contribute to discussion of community through their doctrine of cosmopolitanism. When discussing grief she steps back from the more radical elements of classical Stoic emotional therapy but also introduces (building on Cicero's work) a moderate approach to addressing grief that focuses on controlling the manifestations of grief rather than seeking to extirpate the feeling entirely.

These three sources (Nussbaum, Holowchak and Sherman) comprise the most valuable contemporary scholarly work that comprehensively examines neo-Stoic moral educational thought. Although none of these three authors directly addresses the issues prominent in the paradigms of moral education each contributes valuable pedagogical insight. This insight is rare because philosophers of education do not typically engage with Stoic literature.

Neo-Stoicism in Mainstream Moral Education

Direct, thorough examination of Stoic thought is very rare in mainstream educational journals. A 2009 search for "stoic" in *The Journal of Philosophy of Education*, *The Yearbook of the Philosophy of Education Society*, and *The Journal of Moral Education* returned no articles that focused on Stoicism as their primary concern. It is possible to periodically locate an article that briefly introduces a Stoic position (as in Kristjánsson, 2005), but substantial development of Stoic positions is exceptionally difficult to find.

One notable area in which the Stoicism is, at least secondarily, discussed is that of cosmopolitan education. The cosmopolitan ideal (sometimes referred to as world citizenship) has become part of the Western tradition. Although it has a long history, extending through Kant to the classical Stoics, I will focus on Nussbaum's (1994) neo-Stoic discussion in *Cultivating humanit*y. When one looks for discussion of Stoic thought in mainstream education this line of influence is the primary one. Direct citation of the classical Stoics in this area is accordingly rare because citations of the Stoic school often occur via neo-Stoic work such as Nussbaum's (see Gregoriou, 2003; Papastephanou, 2002). Although direct credit is not always given, this area of classical Stoic thought has not been marginalized in the same sense that classics Stoic ethics, in general, has. Its neo-Stoic development, in Nussbaum's work and in the work of the educational philosophers who comment on it, is expansive. This study does not seek to provide further development of this subsection of the field.

This review did yield one article, however, that examined neo-Stoic ethics from the perspective of an educator. Recently published in a new journal (*Ethics and Education*), Groenendijk and de Ruyter (2009) discuss the value of neo-Stoic education as an art of living through the lens of Seneca's writing. Groenendijk and de Ruyter provide an introductory explanation of classical Stoic thought on several subjects (indifferents, the nature of virtue etc.) and conclude that neo-Stoic thought can indeed positively influence contemporary education, especially given recent trends toward narrow job preparation. Like Nussbaum, Holowchak, and Sherman, these authors only briefly address specific moral educational issues. They argue for the importance of good teacher role models, discuss the Stoic approach to philosophy as a way of life, and stress the Stoic symmetry between teacher and student (both are to learn from the other).

Once again, though, the conversation does not deeply connect to the debates, paradigms and concerns of the field of moral education. A fairly superficial citation is given to Nel Noddings, for example, but little is done to truly make neo-Stoicism part of the greater conversations of this field. Without discussing their arguments in light of relevant moral educational alternatives such work is of limited value.

A Neo-Stoic Moral Educational Framework

I will now move to the task of outlining the neo-Stoic framework that I argue will fill the lacuna identified in this document. I will begin by briefly summarizing several key differences between classical Stoicism and neo-Stoicism. Then, drawing on this insight, I will detail a series of foundational principles for the specific neo-Stoicism I propose. After explicating these points I will move to discuss this framework in light of the pedagogical touchstones introduced in chapter two. This framework will then be applied to two moral educational issues.

Neo-Stoicism

First the neo-Stoics do not adopt the strict form of the classical argument regarding indifferents. Even the less orthodox of the classical Stoics argued that virtue alone is required for happiness. Indifferents, on this understanding, play strictly no role in determining the state of personal flourishing. Family members were, for example, not viewed as goods.[28] The neo-Stoics take a starkly differing approach. Nussbaum's (2003) discussion of losing a family member clearly emphasizes the rending experience of losing a loved one. Holowchak (2006) similarly emphasizes the importance of friends to one's flourishing.

Second the neo-Stoics reject the classical Stoic vision of the utterly perfect Sage (see Nussbaum. 1994). The classical Stoic concept of an agent possessed of flawless judgment has been deemed unhealthy and therefore unhelpful in guiding ethical life. The neo-Stoics still strive for a kind of perfectionism, but it is not the all-or-nothing perfectionism of the Sage. It is not deemed reasonable, for example, to expect that virtuous agents purge themselves of all emotions.

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[28] A particularly striking example of this can be found in the Stoic use of the story of Stillbo (as in Seneca, *Ep.*, 9.18-19). After his family had been killed he remarked that he still had all his goods with him.

Third the neo-Stoics do not adopt the fatalism[29] of the classical Stoics, who believed that the causes of all events were set in motion long ago and are now bound to occur as fate dictates (as in Seneca, *De Prov.*, 5.7). While there is significant contemporary discussion of the nature of classical Stoic fatalism (as in Brennan, 2005), such positions do not play a justificatory role in neo-Stoic thought.

Foundational Principles

A Neo-Stoic Conception of the Good

The first, and most important, topic to be addressed in a moral educational framework based on Stoicism is the conception of the *good* that framework will draw upon. As the literature review given in chapter three indicates, the classical Stoics relied heavily on their radical conception of the good. Their position on indifferents, for example, is justified primarily on the grounds that the ultimate good for humans is virtue (perfected rationality) and precisely nothing else (as in Seneca, *De Vita*., 4.3).

Fortunately it is not the goal of this study to advance the teaching of this conception as correct. As noted previously the goal of this study is to advance the teaching of neo-Stoicism as one valuable perspective, among others, with

[29] The classical Stoic position on fate is sometimes also referred to as "hard determinism."

which to equip students when discussing moral education regarding material goods. Much as schools introduce students to different approaches to religious or economic life, so too do they introduce students to different ways of considering ethical life. Neo-Stoicism could be one such perspective quite apart from its radical heritage.

There is a precedent for this sort of approach within classical Stoicism. From Seneca forward there has been a clear willingness to use the classical Stoic view of goods for explanatory or theoretical purposes while jettisoning its more radical implications in favour of ethical therapies more in line with common experience. Seneca's letter to Marcia (*Marciam*) – intended to assuage her grief at losing a loved one – clearly focuses on improving Marcia's life, rather than providing an accurate application of this element of classical Stoic philosophy. Seneca does not seek to convince Marcia that her loved one was never good, but rather to help her live through her pain.

Rather than seeking to justify a clearly radical view it is far more productive and compelling to use this element of classical Stoic thought as a piece of theoretical insight to be drawn upon in ways that suit the context in question. As I will discuss in the following sections, valuable and compelling neo-Stoic analysis can be undertaken in the two examples I will address without relying upon a strict application of the classical Stoic conception of the good.

As noted previously this neo-Stoic position is explicated strongly in Nussbaum's (2003) approach to dealing with grief. Reflecting on her own experience she provides a neo-Stoic analysis that informs her feelings and draws only partially on the classical Stoic conception of the good. Rather than denying that her loved one was, in fact, good, she instead focuses her attention on the way in which her valuations have built this person into her cognitive life.

> …we must consider the place of the grief propositions in my whole cognitive organization. When I receive the knowledge of my mother's death, the wrenching character of that knowledge comes in part from the fact that it violently tears the fabric of hope, planning, and expectation that I have built up around her all my life. But when the knowledge of her death has been with me for a long time, I reorganize my other beliefs about the present and future to accord with it. (Nussbaum, 2003, p. 80)

In this excerpt Nussbaum is describing a neo-Stoic approach to addressing emotional trauma. The emphasis on the implications of valuation for emotions regarding the future ("hope, planning, and expectation") draws heavily on the classical Stoic philosophy of emotion. As she comes to think about the role of her mother in her life differently – namely recognizing her mother's finitude – she comes to address and grow out of her grief. The justification for such an approach, notably, does not trace back to the truth status of the classical Stoic view of goods, but rather to the capacity of neo-Stoic analysis to aid one in constructing a happy, flourishing life. Nussbaum does not accept that her mother was good, in the sense of being required for her flourishing, but she does recognize the important, highly preferable, role she played in her life.

This distinction must be managed delicately. One point of contrast between the Aristotelian and Stoic traditions has always been the Stoic insistence that the good includes nothing aside from perfected reason while the Aristotelians accepted a role for certain worldly goods (see Cicero, *De Fin., 3.41*). Should one interpret neo-Stoicism loosely, and accept the importance of certain worldly goods for flourishing, it could be argued that one has essentially adopted a Stoically tinted form of Aristotelianism.[30]

This objection can be safely avoided by emphasizing two points. First neither the neo-Stoics nor the classical Stoics included the sorts of worldly goods Aristotle did. Money, for example, was thought by Aristotle to be necessary for the virtue of liberality (*NE*, 1119b). Neither the classical nor neo-Stoics identify such a virtue. Second those worldly goods the neo-Stoics do emphasize as especially preferable relate primarily to humanity's social

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[30] Something like this objection is discussed in Holowchak (2006) with respect to the circumstances under which suicide is justified in Stoic thought. Since grief is the product of a valuation of something (or someone) that is now lost the Stoic Sage would not experience it. To accept a certain degree of grief is to accept a concordant degree of value.

nature. It is no coincidence, for instance, that Nussbaum (2003) chooses losing a family member as an example. Losing friends or family members is more fully recognized by neo-Stoics as a significantly different experience from losing something like money (Holowchak, 2006). Neo-Stoicism thus provides a more compelling version of the Stoic good than classical Stoicism, whilst also maintaining the important distinction between Stoicism and Aristotelianism.

The neo-Stoic approach taken by Nussbaum thus forms the basis for the first two key principles of my neo-Stoic approach. First this approach should draw on the classical Stoic conception of the good only for the purpose of explaining the theoretical core of classical Stoicism, and not for the purpose of constructing moral educational interventions. Moral educational interventions within this framework should draw, rather, upon the neo-Stoic vision as discussed by Nussbaum. Second this approach should be presented to students as being justified by its potential capacity to improve ethical reflection and thereby personal flourishing.[31] In other words, in presenting this perspective it is important to encourage students to evaluate it on the basis of whether or not the suggestions and modes of analysis provided within it provide helpful tools for ethical living that are not to be found

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[31] I mean “flourishing” here in the broadly neo-Aristotelian sense that Carr (1991) means it – namely as the state of embodying those virtuous dispositions generally and cross-culturally recognized (such as courage).

elsewhere, and not on the basis of its comprehensive plausibility. None of the neo-Stoics reviewed for this study made such an argument and this study supports no such position.

1. This approach should draw on the neo-Stoic conception of the good.
2. This approach should be presented to students as being justified in its potential capacity, not duplicated by other approaches, to improve ethical reflection and thereby personal flourishing.

Eschewing Classical Stoic Perfectionism

As seen in the above discussion of grief, classical Stoicism makes heavy use of perfectionist ethical goals. The Sage – the virtuous agent in Stoic thought – is utterly and totally consistent in judgment (Seneca, *Ep*., 120) and is never unsettled by anything (Macus, *Meditations,* 7.69). Emotions, for example, are categorically not part of the Sage's experience. Presenting Stoicism in a way that encourages an expectation of this sort of achievement is a dubious moral educational practice. This concern is why, for example, Nussbaum (1994) concludes her examination by "abandoning the zeal for absolute perfection as inappropriate to the life of a finite being, [and] abandoning the thirst for punishment and self-punishment that so frequently accompanies that zeal" (p. 310).

What this neo-Stoic position amounts to, I argue, is a balance between the insightful elements of classical Stoic thought and the radical elements that I, following Nussbaum, find inappropriate for educational use. In general terms this position first involves accepting the Sage as a theoretical ideal rather than as a practical aspiration. Although the concept of a person totally undisturbed by any experience and unfailingly perfect in all thought is theoretically useful, such a person does not exist and students should not be taught to expect such achievement.

The rejection of the Sage as a practical model permits two useful changes. First a neo-Stoic moral education should focus not on the extirpation of emotions, as a classical Stoic might, but rather on the disposition to carefully consider the valuations that underlie emotions and to use this knowledge to reflect upon the emotions themselves.[32] Similarly a neo-Stoic moral education should focus on improving ethical judgment but should eschew the classical Stoic emphasis on rational perfection. The commonly referenced drowning metaphor (Cicero, *De Fin*., 3.48), whereby all progressing ethical agents are equally vicious, is an unhelpful educational standard whose fault was recognized even in antiquity (Cicero, *De Fin.,* 4.66). The classical Stoic argument is at its strongest when it focuses on how normal, accessible Stoic reflection and discipline make one's life happier and more ethically sound. Seneca's (*De Ira*, 3.36.1) suggestion that one end each

[32] I do not mean to imply that all emotions are generated by conscious thought. I use 'emotion' here in the Stoic sense, which is used to denote the category of feelings that are, in fact, caused by judgments. See chapter 3, *Stoic Emotional Psychology*.

day with a reflection on how one has made incremental progress (or regress) is an excellent example. If anger is a problem in a person's life that person should reflect each day on how the anger he felt emerged and how he responded to it, Seneca argues. This approach makes extensive use of the concept of the *progressor* (as in Brennan, 2005).

3. Classical Stoic perfectionism should be abandoned in favour of a neo-Stoic approach centered on progressors. This approach includes particular attention to growth towards reflective attitudes regarding valuation and emotion.

Abandoned Cosmology

Classical Stoic doctrine holds that all things are fated to be a certain way through an eternal chain of events and hence cannot be changed (Seneca, *De Prov.,* 5.7). This position raises difficult, and philosophically complex questions regarding how a Stoic agent might be morally responsible for acts already *fated* to occur (see Sakezles, 2007). This debate is outside the scope of this study, however, because this project is not concerned with justifying the entire scope of classical Stoic thought. The idea that one cannot dictate external events is, however, an important element of the neo-Stoic argument for the status of indifferents. One cannot truly control indifferents, it is argued, and so one ought to protect oneself from the possibility of fortune taking them away. This protection comes from viewing such things as indifferent to flourishing.

As noted above valuation is an important element of my neo-Stoic framework. To provide students with the intellectual resources to critically evaluate their dependence on certain indifferents is, however, not dependent upon acceptance of the full classical Stoic doctrine of fate. One clearly does not control all things in the world and so there will always be an important role for critical thought about those things outside of one's control. The classical Stoic position on eternal fate is ultimately unnecessary. The plain and widely accepted reality of the power of the external world over human life is sufficient. Although there is an important conversation to be had with students regarding the precise nature of human agency the complex classical Stoic version of compatibilism is likely too difficult to be satisfactorily discussed within the constraints of even the most focused of secondary courses.

4. The classical Stoic doctrine on fate should be abandoned in favour of a neo-Stoic version that emphasizes the often uncontrollable nature of external events.

Pedagogical Touchstones

Having introduced four foundational principles for my neo-Stoic framework I will now move to discuss the moral educational nature of this framework. I will engage in this discussion via a point-by-point explication following the pedagogical touchstones identified in chapter two. For each touchstone I will identify a neo-Stoic perspective on the moral educational element in question. This method will allow me to provide an account of the nature of the neo-Stoicism I envision that connects to several themes in moral educational philosophy.

1. Critical Reflective and Deliberative Capacities

As noted earlier in this document it is important for any moral educational paradigm to identify the sort of approach it takes to the role of rationality. Here neo-Stoicism has a strong contribution to make. As discussed throughout this study Stoicism focuses centrally on one's capacity to reason well, focusing especially on one's capacity to reason well about the attribution of ethical value. Is a particular thing truly good or bad, the Stoic asks. If it is neither, to what extent is it preferable under particular circumstances? The goal of this analysis, in concrete terms, is to build a life of joy and flourishing on stable and dependable grounds (Seneca, 2001a, *De Brev.*, 13.1-9).

Following the form of neo-Stoicism that I have outlined in the philosophical principles noted above I propose that these questions form the basis of a neo-Stoic account of reasoning in moral education – the central focus of which is the form of ethical analysis that I shall refer to here as *relevance-to-flourishing* reasoning. This form of reasoning is concerned with determining the value of those things with which and about which one must make moral and ethical decisions.

This sort of reasoning is employed throughout both the classical Stoic texts and the writings of modern day neo-Stoics. Again and again Stoic philosophers have faced problems common to the human condition and replied with an analysis that cuts directly to the beliefs that contribute to such problems. When Cicero (*De Sen.*) addressed the problems of old age, for example, he did so by refuting the belief that one's old age prevents meaningful activity by taking away things like bodily strength. This judgment (a valuation of bodily strength), he explained, merely leads one to ignore the befitting activities open to the aged (such as teaching)(Cicero, *De Sen.*, 9.28-29). When Seneca (*Helviam*) addressed his mother's grief over his exile he did so by examining the valuable things his mother thought he had lost, and by explaining that the truly important and valuable things are within his character and were thus taken with him. In both cases the central method is a form of reasoning focused on critical evaluation of ethical goods. Both men – though neither accepted the orthodox form of classical Stoicism – found comfort in critiquing the role of indifferents in their lives. They were both concerned with the relevance of particular things to their flourishing.

This process is, in part, the one Holowchak (2007) is describing in his discussion of Stoic curatives (see Tables 2 and 3). His suggestion to avoid hasty impressions and to test appearances is, for example, directly intended to foster the kind of accurate assent critical valuation requires. Similarly the suggestion to "flee from strong impressions" (Holowchak, 2007, p. 179) and be more reflective about one's beliefs is merely a restating of the injunctions Cicero and Seneca frequently made.

The justification for continuing such methods of analysis is provided not by adoption of the classical Stoic view of goods but by one's experience of their exercise. Vice, Cicero (*Tusc. Disp.*, 5.14-16) rightly argues, is an internal state of conflict and frustration. One need not be an orthodox Stoic to accept that lusting after wealth or indulging in fits of anger can be a difficult and unpleasant experience. Stoic insight is valuable, both the classical and neo-Stoics argue, because it helps to address these sources of distress. Stoic analysis is about understanding yourself better (Seneca, *De Ira*, 3.10.1-4) and coming to diagnose what it is about your life that stops you from flourishing and feeling deep and stable joy (Seneca, *Ep.*, 6.1). By using one's reasoning, and by paying close attention to every clue as to the nature of one's character (Cicero, *De Off.*, 1.145-146), it becomes possible to examine and strengthen the deepest, most truly valuable aspects of one's character. The most valuable mineral veins, Seneca (*Ep.*, 23.5) metaphorically points out, are not found near the surface.

What this reasoning looks like in a contemporary moral educational setting will be discussed in the two examples that will be the topic of the following chapter. For the time being, though, it is important to summarize this first pedagogical point. A neo-Stoic moral education regarding material goods should focus on guiding action and emotion via critical analysis of the significance of external goods. This approach should include an opportunity to examine such issues from the perspective of the doctrine of indifferents, but such analysis does not require the adoption of a strict classical Stoic perspective on the status of external goods. As the neo-Stoics show, interesting and informative analysis is possible without acceptance of the full classical Stoic doctrine. Asking critical questions about how one views certain goods is in itself an ethically worthwhile enterprise that can contribute to personal flourishing.

2. Just Communities

At the most basic level a neo-Stoic account of public deliberation in schools will be based upon the fundamentally social nature of humans. As Cicero (*De Fin.*) explains "we are by nature fitted to form unions, societies and states" (3.63). We are members of a single universal human body (Seneca, *Ep.*, 95.51; Marcus, *Meditations*, 2.1) in which we all have an important role to play (as limbs do). Humans, in other words, are naturally interdependent and are thus virtuous when they contribute to the health of the communities formed by this interdependency. Indeed, Marcus (*Meditations*) described social obligation as "the leading feature in the constitution of man" (7.55), and Cicero (*De Off.*, 1.160) viewed duties to human society as paramount. It is as if, Seneca (*De Vita.*) explains, one is in a large crowd of persons. One cannot fall without tripping or pushing against another (1.4). This interdependency extends to the realm of character, where the surrounding community exerts an important influence on individual belief through public opinion (Seneca, *Ep.*, 7.5-6) and modeling (Seneca, *Ep.,* 7.2). Others falsely give the appearance that certain vices and beliefs make them happy and one is thereby challenged through their example to follow suit. In the school context, the use of recreational drugs is an appropriate example. Using various narcotics, an activity sometimes perceived to increase prestige among young peers, becomes seen by some as a worthwhile activity.

Interdependency also creates an important pedagogical need. Since neo-Stoic moral education is foundationally[33] cognitive, the often dubious ethical views of the public at large must be critically engaged. As Seneca (*De Vita*) explains,

> …nothing involves us in greater trouble than the fact that we adapt ourselves to common report in that belief that the best things are those that we have met with great approval, – the fact that, having so many to follow, we live after the rule, not of reason, but of imitation. The result of this is that people are piled high, one above another, as they rush to destruction. (1.3)

[33] I say "foundationally" here to reflect that the cognitive nature of Stoic teaching is centrally important to, but not exhaustive of, the Stoic approach.

Given this concern, and the emphasis on rational reflection present throughout Stoic thought, it is clear that a neo-Stoic moral education would focus in part on critical analysis of such popular belief and behaviour. Since the example of those around us provides an important influence on individual character, especially among the young (Seneca, *Ep.*, 7.5-6; Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.*, 3.3), this analysis should take place collectively among the members of school communities. In particular there must be opportunities for students and teachers to openly discuss and examine collective decisions and the beliefs and reasoning upon which they are based. This process might involve methods similar to those described by Kohlberg (1985) with respect to Just Community schools. Marcus (*Meditations*), for example, argues a community must respond to violations of its codes by first asking how the person in question came to believe in ways that lead to inappropriate conduct. Reform of such belief, much as is the case in the discipline committees of Just Community schools, is a priority.

Public deliberation under this approach should include opportunities for students to exercise the relevance-to-flourishing reasoning described in the previous section. Topics of ethical concern should be discussed with, in part, a focus on deliberation as to the preferability of the various indifferents in question. Unlike any other contemporary approach to moral education, a neo-Stoic approach would include emphasis on the fundamental value of the objects or goals under discussion. The focus is, much like in personal reasoning, not to adopt a particular position but to come to a more critical perspective on the difficulties school communities face by examining ethical problems from a neo-Stoic perspective. One should, to paraphrase Seneca (*Ep.*, 18.4), live out one's role in the community as a critical participant.

3. Other- and Self-Regarding Frameworks

A neo-Stoic approach to moral education is, like virtue education, concerned both with other- and self-regarding ethical concerns. Since the focal point of this approach is the reasoning employed in ethical valuation, and since valuations play a role in how we treat both ourselves and others, analysis of both elements of ethical life is supported within the neo-Stoic approach.

The general neo-Stoic commitment to *other-regarding* concerns is furthered by specific commitments to the advancement of *oikeiôsis* and cosmopolitanism. These specific commitments inform my framework by providing an account of the development of an increasingly supportive and Stoic ethical community. As students engage in the ethical analysis proposed here opportunities will arise to discuss how one ought to balance the needs of others with one's own needs. Discussions regarding theft in a school, for example, provide excellent opportunities to critically examine the way in which one views the needs of others. The Stoic concept of *oikeiôsis*, with its emphasis on coming to view the needs of all humans (including one's own) as equal, provides a valuable resource in this regard. Marcus (*Meditations*, 6.41), for example, explains how the excessive valuing of indifferents works to separate one from other humans by setting those humans as adversaries in the quest to attain such indifferents. This discussion may also take place within the framework of the cosmopolitan vision (based upon mutual understanding) discussed in Nussbaum (see 1997).

The general neo-Stoic commitment to *self-regarding concerns*, seen in persistent emphasis on improving one's happiness through critical reflection, is the subject of a large body of both classical and neo-Stoic literature. Seneca's consolatory letters (as in *Helviam*, *Marciam*, and *Polybium*), his *Epistles*, and several of his book-length texts (such as *De Ira*) are surprisingly specific treatments of particular rational issues that lead to personal suffering. His treatment, as in *De Ira*, also examines the other-regarding concerns arising from mistaken belief. Cicero, while more theoretically motivated, frequently undertakes similarly direct analyses of self-regarding concerns (such as his treatment of grief and friendship in *De Amicitia*) that also extend to other-regarding issues.

To put this point in concrete form, whenever a Stoically minded agent is presented with an issue, such as the question of whether or not to exceed the speed limit in order to arrive at a film on time, both self- and other-regarding concerns can be dealt with within the basic form of the ethical analysis my neo-Stoicism proposes. The fundamental question in such an instance will always be what sort of understanding of the good a decision to speed (or not) would embody. To answer this question well is to fulfill the requirements of personal flourishing while at the same time appropriately serving the broader human community. The decision to speed, for instance, would have to be made against the clear ethical requirement to support public safety *and* the requirement to personally view entertainment in an appropriately rational light. To judge that it is appropriate to speed would be to erroneously judge that the film is of sufficient value to both risk public and personal safety and to risk frustration at the myriad variables that might intervene to prevent one from arriving on time. In other words, not only might you hurt someone by making this judgment, but you will also transform each obstacle between you and the film into an emotionally powerful force working against you personally. Each traffic light becomes a form of emotional disturbance; each slow driver an ignorant obstacle. By tracing both self- and other-regarding concerns to their underlying judgments a neo-Stoic moral education provides clear opportunities for both sorts of reflection.

4. Comprehensive Attention to Habit, Emotion and Practical Judgment

The ability of a neo-Stoic approach to address habit, emotion and practical judgment is one of this system's strengths. Virtue, on this understanding, is "divided into two parts – contemplation of truth, and conduct" (Seneca, *Ep.*, 94.45), with emotion falling under the heading of conduct.[34] A virtuous life, on this understanding, is fostered through careful study and the consequent application of such study to one's habits of life. One must exercise reflective analysis until this approach to living settles into a persistent disposition to approach actions in a critically reflective and thus virtuous fashion (Seneca, *Ep.*, 20.1).

Much as is the case in virtue education more broadly, providing students with opportunities to practice virtuous habits is important. Teachers should, for example, make a serious effort to prevent children from indulging in angry behaviour because such behaviour reinforces the disposition to respond to problems with anger (Seneca, *De Ira*, 2.21.5). Should students be left to habituate themselves into false belief (that anger is an acceptable way to respond to requests to share, for example), such beliefs become settled into ethical "disorders" of the sort Cicero (*Tusc. Disp.*, 4.32-45) warned against. Anger becomes more and more a part of the way the child is accustomed to dealing with difficulties and the bond between the child and other persons is weakened until the child's feelings pass "at last into cruelty" (Seneca, *De Ira*, 2.5.3). This position is similar to the standard virtue educational approach drawn from Aristotle (see Kristjánsson, 2005) with one notable exception. The neo-Stoic approach I advance rejects the

[34] Since judgments are acts in Stoic ethics, and since emotions are judgments, emotions are considered an element of personal conduct. It is important here to recall that *emotion* is being used to denote only the voluntary affective states the classical Stoics associate with vice (such as anger).

dominant Aristotelian position that passions like anger are to be fostered to certain limited degrees. Anger, on this understanding, is categorically pernicious.

In neo-Stoicism the moral educator is provided with a clear line of analysis regarding issues in any of the three related domains of habit, emotion and judgment. Furthermore the neo-Stoic approaches to habit and emotion are not addendums to the neo-Stoic theory of judgment but are, rather, substantively connected elements of the theoretical core of this virtue theory. One practices good judgment so as to form virtuous habits, and such habits promote peaceful and virtuous emotions. All three of these aspects (habit, emotion and judgment) are important within this framework.

5. Fostering Caring Relations

One element of the appeal of care theory is its vision of deep, mutually fulfilling relationships between agents. Although it would appear, on the surface, that a neo-Stoic approach would be incompatible with such intimacy the explication provided in this document has established precisely the opposite to be the case. Neo-Stoicism does indeed provide an account of a similarly caring relationship between the teacher and student (and between students) and this account is closely tied to its philosophically rich concept of rationality.

The form of caring neo-Stoic relationship that I envision is based upon two elements: *oikeiôsis* and forgiving judgment. The first, *oikeiôsis*, has already been discussed at several points in this study and so I will restrict myself here to a few more specific comments. In Stoicism one cares for others chiefly through taking their needs as equally compelling to yours. This relation is, to use Cicero's (Cicero, *De Off.*, 3.26) formulation, a kind of alignment of the interests of all individuals. Contrary to the stereotype of the utterly detached stoic, this understanding prominently includes strong feelings of friendship (Seneca, *De Tran.*, 7.3), love (Seneca, *De Ira*, 2.31.8), and goodwill (Seneca, 1989, *De Ben.*, 1.5.2).

Within a school this process could take the form of fairly common experiences. Activities like volunteering in poverty relief programs are already practiced and such activities could take place within a neo-Stoic approach in much the same manner. The rational justification for such approaches would be undertaken with an understanding of the unity of humanity advocated by the neo-Stoics, but such a justification is not entirely novel to contemporary schools. This approach becomes far more novel among the extant paradigms, however, when one moves to *forgiving judgment*.

Under care theory, Noddings (2002) argues that a caring teacher responds to student misdeeds with confirmation, namely by attributing to student misbehaviour the "best possible motive consonant with reality" (p. 20). "I know you wished to protect yourself from the teasing of the other students, but fighting is wrong" a teacher could say, thereby confirming the supposedly noble aspect of the belligerent student's decision to engage in fighting whilst also indicating that the student's chosen response was inappropriate. This manifestation of caring is starkly different from a neo-Stoic caring response because it leaves the fundamental ethical judgment out of the discussion (namely the students' assent to the offence[35]).

A neo-Stoic, in contrast, would engage in *forgiving judgment*. This approach would manifest the teacher's caring by avoiding personal judgment on the offender while instead seeking to ascertain how the student had been led astray by mistaken belief. The student may, for example, have fought because he believed the insult to be a grave injury. In response the teacher could explain to the student that teasing, in actuality, betrays only frustration and anger in the bully. The victim, thereby, should not fight the bully but should learn to view the bully's behaviour as an indication of a pain or frustration that requires compassionate treatment. This approach accords with the common understanding of bullying, which often focuses on the character of the bully while teaching the victims to ignore taunts for rational reasons.[36]

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[35] To assent to an offence is, in Stoic terms, to accept that the offence is indeed an injury to you and to consequently be offended by it. One could, in Stoic theory, deny that the offence is an injury and thereby ignore it.
[36] Speaking anecdotally most children appear to be familiar with the (partially) Stoic thinking behind the axiom "sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me."

Marcus (*Meditations*), for example, recommends that one should respond to misdeeds first by asking what sort of belief underlies the given action (7.26). One should be forgiving, he argues, because either one suffers from the same misconception (in which case one should not judge harshly) or one does not (in which case one should be able to show forgiveness). He focuses on ignorance as the root of misdeeds (7.22) and thus sees compassionate education as the most appropriate response.

In this way a neo-Stoically-minded teacher would generally eschew punishment. The experience of vice is understood within this system as a natural disincentive (Seneca, *Ep.*, 42.2). To live a frustrating and categorically unfulfilled life is its own punishment. Blame (Marcus, *Meditations*, 8.17) and punishing intervention (Seneca, 1998a, *De Clem*., 1.14.1) are thus persistently and frequently rejected in favour of teaching and intellectual correction (for examples see Marcus, *Meditations*, 8.17, 9.42, 11.18).

This forgiving approach is a result of two important premises. First that the ignorant are bound to behave viciously in light of their ignorance (Marcus, *Meditation*, 7.22; Seneca, 1998b, *De Const.*, 12.3-13.3). Having learned vicious beliefs from the public at large, and because beliefs lead to assents and actions, the vicious cannot but behave viciously until given the opportunity to learn otherwise. Because such beliefs are generally adopted from others all agents struggle with such problems, and thus one cames to the second premise I wish to highlight here: that all humans are imperfect and that anger or resentment of others merely reinforces a vice in oneself (Marcus, *Meditations*, 4.26, 6.27).

6. Ordinary Conversation

My neo-Stoic approach involves a form of dialogic relation with goals similar to those present in Noddings' (1994) *ordinary conversation*. It is, however, clearly distinct from Noddings' asymmetrical approach. Most fundamentally it draws on the Stoic vision of a symmetrical pedagogical relationship in which the teacher aids the student in an exploration of his or her own internal condition with the goal of fostering independent capacity for self-reflection (Nussbaum 1994, p. 328-329). This relation is not fostered in a hierarchical fashion, as in the *carer* to *cared-for* relation Noddings describes, but rather as two sick persons "lying ill in the same hospital" (Seneca, *Ep*., 27.1). The goal, to further follow the medical analogy, is to help the student learn to treat him or herself. Reliance on authoritative texts or teachers is to be avoided (Seneca, *Ep.*, 33.10), and the teacher is to engage on the level of the student in a form of mutual self-reflection (Nussbaum, 1994). This approach often involves reminding the student of various issues or pointing out the dubious nature of certain beliefs or practices (Seneca, *Ep.*, 94.55-56). Both the teacher and student make important demands on the other (Seneca, *De Ben.*, 2.18.1) and the student is left to adopt what elements of the teacher's advice work in his or her life (as in Seneca, *De Tran.*, 2.5[37]).

Much like in Noddings' conception the input of the student is central and must be respected in order for the approach to succeed in fostering ethical growth. This reason is why, for example, Seneca's letters often involve notable portions of self-description and analysis on the part of his students (see especially Serenus' account in Seneca, *De Tran.*, 1, or Groenendijk & de Ruyter's (2009) discussion of the personal nature of Seneca's conversations with Lucilius). Without an open dialogue of this sort the teacher cannot meaningfully intervene with appropriate advice or intervention because the valuations that form the basis for the Stoic pathologies are accessible only through a delicate and intimate psychological interaction (Nussbaum, 1994, p. 328). As Marcus (*Meditations*, 8.61) indicates one ought to enter into the ruling reason of others and should permit others to do the same. To reject or disregard certain admissions or opinions in the student, as the "cute" or otherwise underdeveloped thoughts of a non-philosopher, would be to shut the door to such interaction. Reason and speech are the primary bond

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[37] In this passage Seneca informs Serenus that he should pick and choose what he likes from Seneca's advice. It should be noted, though, that Serenus is a particularly advanced student (Seneca, *De Tran.*, 2.2) and is thus prepared for greater intellectual independence than might be the case with younger pupils.

between humans (Cicero, *De Off.*, 1.51) and so to disregard the opinions of another is to separate oneself from that other.

Deep and meaningful neo-Stoic interlocution requires a remarkable level of personal friendship. The boundless range of conversation between good friends is held up as a particularly valuable asset (Cicero, *De Am.*, 6.22). Within such close relations one may express important virtues (*De Am.*, 13-14) and may issue the sort of forgiving admonition (*De Am.*, 24.88-89) I have discussed above. To improve one's life it is important to search for very small clues leading to one's weaknesses of character (Seneca, *De Ira*, 3.10.1-4), and such clues are only visible to oneself and one's close acquaintances. Taking the intimate conversations between Seneca and Lucilius as a model, a neo-Stoic moral education would seek to foster such open dialogue.

Summary of Framework

I began this framework by identifying four foundational principles that I argued are central to constructing a plausible neo-Stoic approach to moral education. First I argued such an approach should draw on the neo-Stoic conception of the good. Second I argued that neo-Stoicism should be presented to students as being justified in its capacity to improve ethical reflection and personal flourishing. My third foundational principle held that classical Stoic perfectionism should be abandoned in favour of a neo-Stoic approach centered on progressors. I argued that this approach should include particular attention to growth towards reflective attitudes regarding valuation and emotion. Fourth and finally I argued that the classical Stoic doctrine on fate should be abandoned in favour of a neo-Stoic version that emphasizes the often-uncontrollable nature of external events.

From these four principles I moved to identify six pedagogical touchstones. First I identified critical reflective and deliberative capacities. A neo-Stoic moral educational approach would focus on what I refer to as relevance-to-flourishing reasoning. This reasoning would deal, in large part, with relative valuation of external goods. Second I identified a neo-Stoic approach to Just Communities. Here I emphasized the necessary interdependency of human communities. I argued that meaningful public deliberation and critical engagement with popular belief is a necessary element of a neo-Stoic approach. My third touchstone dealt with the other- and self-regarding elements of ethical life. The emphasis in this case was on *oikeiôsis*, cosmopolitanism and personal flourishing. Neo-Stoicism, I argued, addresses all three of these aspects in great depth. Fourth I discussed habit, emotion and practical judgment. Neo-Stoicism, I explained, examines these elements of ethical life in an interconnected and comprehensive fashion. Fifth I discussed the fostering of caring relations. It was argued that a caring neo-Stoic would practice forgiving judgment. Sixth and finally I introduced a neo-Stoic version of ordinary conversation built upon the fundamental belief that all agents struggle with their ethical lives and, consequently, that open and mutually respectful dialogue must be a centerpiece of moral education.

CHAPTER 5 CASE STUDIES

This chapter will examine two moral educational issues that arise from the material good lacuna: consumer education and environmental education.[38] In each instance I will begin with a brief discussion of the specific background to the given issue. I will then discuss the contribution my neo-Stoic framework can make to each issue. As I introduce some of the more specific contributions of the proposed framework I wish to note an important balance that must be kept. The following analysis reflects the goal of articulating a vision of neo-Stoic moral education that is both sufficiently broad as to be acceptable to moral educationalists and also sufficiently specific as to be distinct from general virtue education.

Background to Consumer Education Case Study

As discussed in the opening chapter there is an important and deepening concern with the scope and extent of consumerism in the lives of the young. The disposition students have to consume and the ways in which they reflect, or fail to reflect, upon such dispositions is of critical moral importance. Lacking thorough engagement with the material good lacuna the extant paradigms of moral education fail to address this crucial aspect of moral life in a satisfactorily direct fashion.

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[38] I say that each arises from the material good lacuna because each importantly deals with the relative valuations made of material goods (such as consumer products or the environment).

This lack of attention to issues of consumption is, as discussed in chapter one's iPod example, deeply concerning. As the free market becomes the organizing paradigm for more and more human activities, from school choice to the provision of health care, *consumption* accounts for an increasing number of daily actions both regarding others and oneself. Despite this large and growing significance a September, 2010 search for "consumer" in the *Journal of Moral Education* and the *Journal of Philosophy of Education* returned no focused analyses of consumer moral education.[39]

The dominant form of consumer education exists largely outside of the realm of philosophical journals of moral education. It focuses not on the extant paradigms of moral education but on "teaching people about their rights, about efficient money and resource management, how to use their voice to protect their interests and complain if there are problems" (McGregor, 2008, p. 547). Consumer education is, in other words, about being an effective participant in the market and not personal flourishing in light of that market. The values advanced by the expansion of the free market are largely left aside. Although non-expansive character educators have noted the dangerous implications of the consumer mentality for children (see

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[39] Cain (2005) provides the only result that explicitly mentions consumerism. He makes a brief remark about how commercialism in children's books threatens the value of literature. The focus of the article is on Aristotelian moral development and reading, however.

El-Bassiouny, Taher & Abou-Aish, 2008) their responses have not offered the kind of rigorous philosophical account sought in this study.

One does find the beginning of such an account in Hudd (2005). Hudd makes several observations that serve as an important entry point to the analysis I will provide later in this chapter. First she notes an important disconnect between general societal values and conventional moral educational goals. She explains that "our reward systems, particularly within education, are oriented primarily to individual accomplishment, not humanitarianism. Thus, it seems contemporary character education programs that emphasize consideration of peer and community needs defy our cultural norms" (Hudd, 2005, p. 31). This individual accomplishment focus can be seen, she points out, in the token reward systems common in character education programs.

Hudd's discussion leads one to conclude that consumer moral education is critical of extant social values and norms. The lessons of the market that continually press children to deploy their economic power (Sutherland & Thompson, 2001) must be critically engaged in order to satisfactorily prepare students to live within the market in an ethically praiseworthy fashion. This observation, however, is far from revelatory. What is far more interesting about Hudd's discussion is the way in which she concludes it.

Late in her article Hudd discusses her own moral educational work with American students doing charity work in Nicaragua. She quotes one student as saying “while I was there, I realized… the people of Nicaragua may not have anything, but they have everything,” (p. 34). After reviewing several such comments Hudd argues that the spirit of “I got more than I gave” was prevalent. Her students had seen something of immense value in the people they were attempting to help that could not be materially represented.[40]

Hudd’s article ends without fully explicating what these comments might mean. She makes general reference to “rising above” (p. 35) consumer culture but does not pursue this avenue of analysis. The ideas these students were hinting at are worth fuller consideration, though, because they appear to have been approaching a key concern of this study and a key element of the material good lacuna. What Hudd’s students were seeing is a different philosophical approach to material living that resulted in the American and Nicaraguan students having fundamentally different experiences of material consumption. Having consumed more, and having been bombarded with messages instructing them to continue to do so, it is reasonable to suggest that many of the American students were unfamiliar with approaches to living that did not rely on such extensive consumption. Hudd’s students

[40] My use of this statement here is not meant to downplay material poverty. I am interested, in this instance, more in what the American students realized they were lacking rather than the serious but tangential question of material poverty in Nicaragua.

reported “receiving” a different view of life that enabled them to pursue joy differently when they returned home. They had, in effect, altered their psychological experience by adopting a different philosophical perspective on consumption.

The psychological literature on consumption fits rather closely with this line of argumentation. Starting in approximately 1990 (see d’Astous, Maltais & Roberge, 1990) psychologists began to examine the possibility that adolescents are developing compulsive dispositions to consume with pernicious psychological effects. At that time significant links were found between compulsive consumption and envy, guilt, lack of generosity and low self-esteem (d’Astous, Maltais, Roberge, 1990). This research has continued and compulsive buying has become a topic of consideration in the early years of the new century.

Most relevant to this study is the way in which this body of research discusses the psychological effects of shopping. Hollander and Allen (2006), for example, hypothesize that future classification of compulsive buying might label such behaviour an “impulse control disorder” (p. 1670). The problem, according to such classification, is that shopping sometimes becomes a form of self-medication for negative emotional states (Clark & Calleja, 2008). People shop to experience a momentary burst of good feeling only to feel guilty shortly thereafter – thus necessitating more shopping. As a result of this compulsion such buyers spend more than is reasonable, resulting in negative consequences for their material wellbeing (having little money left for important regular costs like bills, for example)(Clark & Calleja, 2008). This disorder is said to have a typical onset in the late teens or early twenties (Koran, Faber, Aboujaoude, Large & Serpe, 2006; Black & Carver, 2007).

What is interesting about this empirical work is that it begins to address the very same questions of consumption that the classical and neo-Stoics raise. Indeed, as mentioned in chapter one, the primary method of treatment for compulsive buying is cognitive behaviour therapy (Black & Carver, 2007) – a method whose roots trace back to Stoicism itself (Wright, Basco & Thase, 2006). Two observations from this literature are relevant to this study. First it is clear that in both the limited moral educational literature on consumption and in the empirical literature on compulsive buying that cognitive solutions hold widespread support. Both empirical psychologists and character educators subscribe to the belief that personal betterment can take place when young people are encouraged to critically view their dispositions to value material goods.

Second it is also clear that my neo-Stoic approach matches quite closely with the problems identified in the literature on compulsive buying. Particularly important is the observation that compulsive buyers purchase things because they want to be happier, only to find that they experience a fleeting moment of satisfaction followed by guilt and negative consequences.

This empirical description fits closely with the neo-Stoic philosophical psychology discussed in this study. Both give important attention to erroneous belief about the personal effect of accumulating consumer goods.

This concurrence does not mean neo-Stoic moral education is empirically supported. It is not a goal of this study to support or even investigate a claim regarding such support. What this research does indicate, particularly when taken alongside Hudd's (2005), is that although Stoicism is clearly not a significant part of consumer moral education, scholars in both psychology and moral education are clearly looking for answers to the sorts of questions my neo-Stoic framework relates to. The problem that critical forms of consumer education seek to address is, on its most fundamental level, the problem of uncritical material valuation Stoicism has long sought to address. Hidden within the literature on both consumer education and compulsive buying is a search for ways to address the large and growing role of consumption in personal views of flourishing. It is precisely this issue that the neo-Stoic moral education I propose addresses. Indeed, as Groenendijk & De Ruyter (2009) identify, there has never been a more critical time for a neo-Stoic consumer moral education:

> At the time of writing we are witnessing another crisis of the capitalist economic system. The recession means a loss of self-esteem for those who have defined their values and happiness in terms of possession and consumption and who have lost their job [sic] and financial

> means… We can learn from Seneca that it is important to guard oneself against those setbacks; he teaches us that we can only become happy if we understand that nothing – no 'things' – other than the virtues are of overriding significance in our lives. (p. 89)

Applying the Framework to Consumer Education

Critical Reflective and Deliberative Capacities

A neo-Stoic consumer moral education would develop relevance-to-flourishing reasoning in students and would encourage them to employ it in critical reflection regarding key issues in their lives as consumers. This approach would involve two central activities. First it would involve engaging students in ethical reflection regarding decisions to purchase, or not purchase, particular consumer goods. The classical Stoics show that each decision, no matter how seemingly innocuous (Cicero, *De Off.*, 1.145-146), should be the subject of conscious reflection. This reflection should recognize the beliefs that personal decisions are based upon and the implications of those beliefs for other possible actions. Returning to the example of iPods one could, for example, teach students to reflect upon the importance of such devices vis-à-vis other important products a family needs to survive. The officer's ("iPod Loyalists," 2008) report that students pressure their parents to buy iPods at the expense of important food staples indicates a clear opportunity to engage in this sort of activity. While current consumer education efforts aim to, for example, inform students about their rights

(McGregor, 2008) a neo-Stoic version would aim to inform critical ethical reflection on their actions. The teacher is, in this case, persistently asking what sort of implications each decision has for other activities and what sort of valuation those decisions are based upon. To what extent, one could ask, does purchasing particular goods facilitate or prevent befitting activities? What valuing do such actions indicate?

This kind of reflection leads to the second key activity. Reflection on particular decisions to consume must also be tied to wider reflections regarding personal flourishing. This consideration is important on two levels. First students should be able to tie their individual decisions to an overall vision of their lives (be it neo-Stoic or otherwise)(Marcus, *Meditations*, 2.16). The decision to buy an iPod should be the subject of enough ethical reflection and instruction that the student could provide an ethical justification of that decision in light of a broader view of what they find to be justifiably important in the world.

Second this broad reflection on flourishing must also take place with respect to the visions of flourishing students are bombarded with in their social lives (through advertising and popular culture, for example). Teachers already use class time to examine advertisements (Alberta Learning, 2003) and a neo-Stoic approach could aid this enterprise greatly. This approach would focus on leading students to articulate the embedded arguments about flourishing found in popular messages and the effect of such visions in their lives. “Do advertisements for cosmetics companies promote a vision of humanity you agree with,” the teacher could ask, “and how do you feel when you attempt to pursue it or see others attempt to?” Much as Seneca (Seneca, *De Tran.*, 1) and Serenus jointly reflected on Serenus’ difficulty in extricating himself from jealousy for the possessions of others, so too could moral educators and students engage in such reflection.

Just Communities

The sort of reflective reasoning described above must also take place within a collective forum and regarding collective interests. This element of neo-Stoic moral education should focus on how the school community meets its actual, extant, material needs. Within such a community students would be provided with opportunities both to practice critical public deliberation and, crucially, to experience the result of such deliberation in their daily lives.

This activity could take place within the issue of sponsorship arrangements. Schools often accept scoreboards for gym facilities, for example, from soft drink companies. Because the stakes are immediate for students – the presence or absence of a scoreboard is a readily observable consequence – this issue provides an excellent opportunity to engage in serious consumer moral education. Student deliberation regarding the possible implications of this decision, if paired with meaningful agency for those students, has notable educative potential.

This deliberation should be based on two sets of questions. First what sort of price is the school paying by permitting a soft drink company to place a branded scoreboard in the gym? In other words what sort of influence does such an advertisement promote and is this influence worth the price the school is paying? Second how does this particular decision impact the scope of the school's other actions? Does it, for example, undermine befitting efforts to reduce childhood obesity?

By focusing the attention of the student body on questions of relative ethical value and the scope of action left by certain decisions a neo-Stoic approach would provide important attention to the deceptively difficult ethical decisions a school is faced with in meeting its material needs. Beyond simply encouraging critical reflection on such issues this approach would draw students into a more fundamental discussion about the value of the goods in question and the effect that the attribution of such value has on possible future actions. If we accept the scoreboard, the teacher could ask, what view of our community's flourishing are we advancing?

Other and Self-Regarding Frameworks

Although much of the ethical content of a neo-Stoic moral education derives from the given approach to reasoning about flourishing several comments about the specific other- and self-regarding elements are worth making here. Within the context of consumer education my neo-Stoic approach would distinguish two levels of other-regarding concerns. First are the social implications of ones actions in the immediate, local community. Here it is important to draw attention to the implications of decisions to consume (or not) on the school community itself. Engaging students in critical discussion regarding the act of buying brand name clothing, for example, has the potential to be significantly educative. Students should be able to identify and interrogate the motivation behind their selecting of particular consumer goods. This thinking could include, for instance, critical evaluation of the common practice of achieving social status through the purchasing of particular brands.

This approach would, however, also deal with the wider implications of personal consumption. In light of the neo-Stoic emphasis on a cosmopolitan ethical perspective students must also be provided with opportunities to investigate the wider impact of their consumption. These opportunities could include conventional consumer activism, possibly including examination of fair trade practices (for example), but it would also involve a more fundamental sort of analysis. Following the neo-Stoic example students would be encouraged to question not only the current arrangement of trade practices but also the vision of human flourishing such trade is built upon. In other words, it is not just that one ought to purchase products like coffee in just ways but also that one must understand why and under what understanding that coffee should be purchased. What sort of vision of humanity's broader needs does fair trade promote? Does such an approach manifest a belief in the equality of all humans' needs? Does it reflect a valuation of certain products (such as coffee) over the good of human societies?

These sorts of questions lead naturally into the self-regarding concerns neo-Stoicism also emphasizes. Central to these concerns is a focus on self-diagnosis. Students should be able to reflect upon their experiences and identify those beliefs and valuations that cause frustration and vicious behaviour. A student caught stealing, for example, should be drawn into a conversation about the experience of valuing material goods rather than simply being punished or told such behaviour is unacceptable. Instances like this one, according to neo-Stoic understanding, are best interpreted as opportunities to help such a person investigate and critique his or her material desires.

Comprehensive Attention to Habit, Emotion and Practical Judgment

The neo-Stoic emphasis on judgment has been noted repeatedly in the preceding points and so I will restrict my comments here to habit and emotion. Much like in other virtue ethical accounts of moral education this approach seeks to foster in students habituated virtue capable of responding with wise ethical action in the most (seemingly) innocuous of situations. From a neo-Stoic perspective this process involves coming to view every decision to consume as an opportunity to wisely judge the relative value of the indifferents in question. Students should come to view each decision to consume as an ethically important one and should act based on considered judgments of the value of consumer goods.

The practice of this reflective approach to consumption is self-reinforcing. Whether students accept the classical or neo-Stoic doctrine of indifferents or not such attention would lead to increased awareness of some of the more pernicious implications of particular beliefs about consumption. Jealously desiring the latest premium fashion brand, for example, can be a painful experience for school aged children. Teaching students to name and critically examine the value system underlying this experience can be cathartic. Put another way, one must work to undermine the assumption that what you own seriously impacts who you are. To know that humans have always struggled with such feelings, and to hear the classical and neo-Stoic approach to dealing with them, can be a powerful experience.

Fostering Caring Relations

Drawing on a neo-Stoic perspective allows a moral educator to relate to students through a unique lens. Within the context of consumer education this involves relating to students in the sympathetic manner Seneca (*Ep.*, 27.1) identifies (namely as a person similarly afflicted by vice). This approach requires one view students as engaged in a struggle, much like oneself, to peel away the layers of public assumption and common vice that plague daily life. Gentle and forgiving reminders and probing questions are often needed to keep one's critical attention focused on coming to defensible, ethical actions.

On a specific level such interaction aims to break the cycle of unreflective habituation common to daily life and replace it with a more reflective disposition. This intervention requires a particularly high level of personal attention on the part of the teacher because drawing new attention to the myriad everyday decisions students engage in is time consuming. Such attention is required, however, for a neo-Stoic approach to succeed. Without attentive adult intervention students would be left to uncritically adopt the assumptions of the surrounding consumer culture. A strong neo-Stoic moral educationalist would intervene by challenging students to know why and how they interact with consumer goods in the way they do. Such an educator would also, equally crucially, foster an awareness of the implications of such decisions for personal flourishing (including the important emotional consequences of material attachment). The neo-Stoic vision of caring in consumer education, then, involves coming to share with students the struggles and frustrations of life as a consumer. It requires close attention and a patient, forgiving disposition. It involves knowing enough about students to point out unthinking habit and assumption and press the student to reflect upon the tacit and make salient the innocuous.

Ordinary Conversation

The relationship identified in the preceding section involves a strong emphasis on the symmetrical neo-Stoic interlocution I associated, in my pedagogical touchstones, with ordinary conversation. Teachers should draw on personal experiences and examples when engaging students in critical reflection and should connect the difficulties and frustration students experience to their own. Within the context of consumer education this engagement requires one take seriously the emergent views students develop with respect to personal consumption. Progress, under this approach, would be gained not through students' adopting of particular elements of neo-Stoic doctrine but by their coming to increasingly critical and deliberate belief. As such students need to be given extensive opportunities to articulate, defend, and revise these beliefs. Fortunately the everyday lives of contemporary students are filled with examples of consumer choice that can provide such opportunities. As such the teacher should be persistently attentive to such opportunities and should begin critical conversations with students as part of his daily life in the classroom. Teachers should not be engaged in the enterprise of criticizing students for flaunting expensive consumer electronics or clothing. They should, rather, take such opportunities as occasions for a more symmetrical sort of conversation about the things students value and the ways in which they interact with other people in light of those things.

This process might take place using various forms of journaling. Provided that the teacher responds with attention and detailed comments (numerical grading alone, for example, is unhelpful in this regard) such activities can be deeply valuable. Indeed, Seneca's own method provides a compelling example of what serious discussion between pupils and teachers could look like (Seneca, *De Tran.*, 1). In his thorough and humble response to his interlocutor's concerns he embodies a patient and attentive approach to analysis that provides both admonishing commentary on the belief system of the student and compassionate judgment that such difficulty is common and difficult to extricate oneself from.

Background to Environmental Education Case Study

Environmental education is a growing and deeply contentious field of educational scholarship. As such there are several important qualifications and clarifications that must be made before proceeding with my discussion of neo-Stoicism in environmental education. First my analysis of this topic makes the assumption that there is sufficient reason to believe that humanity faces a likely environmental problem. Although excellent summaries of the current, fragile state of the environment exist (see Goodland, 2005), this study will not speak to their empirical efficacy. This section of the study seeks to demonstrate that neo-Stoicism can contribute meaningfully to environmental education, not to demonstrate the validity or invalidity of the motivating premises of such education. The Tiblisi Conference (UNESCO, 1977), the basic "reference point" for environmental education (Bell, 2004, p. 42), proposed the need for educational intervention in environmental issues over thirty years ago and this basic need has since been widely accepted in environmental education.

This case study will avoid becoming entangled in the frequently ideological debates in environmental education (Sund & Wickman, 2008). Full treatment of such debates is outside of the scope of this project and, furthermore, my concerns regarding such debates are documented elsewhere (Burns & Norris, 2009). A brief comment regarding what exactly I seek to avoid is, however, worth making.

Environmental education is currently divided between those scholars who would seek to develop critical reflective and deliberative capacities regarding environmental issues and those who would seek to extend such education to include transmission of particular attitudes or beliefs (Bell, 2004; Jicking and Wals, 2008). The latter position, often referred to as the radical position (see Bell, 2004), is sometimes associated with transmission of particular metaphysical (see Bonnett, 2007) and economic (see González-Gaudiano, 1999) beliefs. Both sides, notably, maintain a stated commitment to critical thinking,[41] though it is clear that there is disagreement as to the

[41] The move to environmental education focused on critical thinking importantly takes place within a broad reaction against the traditional approach of merely providing rotely learned knowledge about the

extent to which that thinking should be informed by particular underlying premises. Bonnett (2007), for example, argues that environmental education should assume the position that the natural environment is "self-arising" (intrinsically valuable).

I will avoid this radical position and assume that the goal of environmental education relates to "creating the ability to critique and transcend social norms, patterns of behaviour, and lifestyles" (Jickling and Wals, 2008, p. 7). I do not take this position here in light of its superiority (though I do argue this point in Burns & Norris, 2009) but rather because it represents the basic level of agreement in environmental education. The radical position – that certain positive beliefs should be inculcated – seeks to teach both the above-mentioned critical reasoning and certain underlying premises (such as the intrinsic value thesis). As a result of its increased scope the radical view carries a higher burden of philosophical proof and such a debate exceeds the goals of this study. The more limited position I have assumed also accords with my emphasis on the use of neo-Stoicism as a method for improving critical reflection.

These debates are manifested in the terms employed in this field and, as such, the use and meaning of important terms like *sustainable development*

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environment. The failure of such approaches is widely recognized (see Barr, 2003; Blanchet-Cohen, 2008; Chawla & Flanders Cushing, 2007; Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002; Stevenson, 2007).

and *pro-environmental behaviour* are contested (see Smyth, 2006). In order to avoid the ideological implications of such terms I will define *environmental education* broadly as education that aims to foster ethically defensible, and critically arrived at, conduct with respect to the natural environment.

Within the environmental education literature this broad focus on critical thinking has led researchers to investigate a wide variety of possible influences on environmental decision making. The literature attempting to model such decision making is accordingly diverse and has produced a number of possible models (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002). One key element, commonly present across models (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002), is personal and societal values (see Barr, 2003). Here the conversation is about "resolving differences between what people need, what they want, and what their resource base can provide without jeopardising the future" (Smyth, 2006, p. 256).

It is dangerous to draw overly direct definitional links between fields because precisely what is meant by terms like *values* is not always entirely clear from a moral philosophical perspective. Phrased as Smyth (2006) does, however, it is clear that the sort of values under discussion have a great deal to do with the judgments of relative value that play such an important role within my neo-Stoic framework. Indeed, the further one delves into the environmental education literature the more it looks like a critical approach to ethical valuation is precisely what is being called for.

This ethical valuation relates to the capacity of individuals to adopt "a 'sustainable lifestyle' wherein considerations of the environmental impacts of personal consumption become part of day-to-day practices and decisions" (Hobson, 2003, p. 96). This line of thought brings my analysis back to the topic of personal consumption. This move is, to a large extent, a necessary one within environmental education. Although the largest share of a household's environmental impact derives from that household's share of major public services (such as the military, health care or transportations systems), the portion within the direct control of the household itself deals with elements commonly associated with shopping and personal consumption (such as one's recreation or clothing) (Spangenberg & Lorek, 2002).

The consequent focus on reducing "the environmental burden from consumption has… [become] an element of mainstream thinking" (Spangenberg & Lorek, 2002). Literature in marketing (see Tanner & Kast, 2003), education (Bell, 2004), and economics (Spangenberg & Lorek, 2002) has echoed this concern. This wide agreement on the need to address personal consumption coincides with an emphasis on the need to build a new, more environmentally aware public culture. As Tanner and Kast (2003) argue, "alterations in people's attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors may stimulate changes in the political and economic systems, which in turn might encourage lifestyle changes" (p. 895). One could, thereby, envision a situation in which changes in individual character across a wide subset of the population would permit changes in the large-scale public services that account for most of each household's environmental impact.

In this section I will focus on those aspects of consumption people engage in regularly (like shopping) that have important individual decision-making components. This form of consumption is referred to by sociologists as *conspicuous consumption* (Hobson, 2003). Conspicuous consumption is crucially important in environmental education because it focuses attention on the front line of each person's environmental consciousness – their day-to-day decisions regarding what is important enough to consume and to what extent it ought to be consumed given the impact such action has on the environment.

The body of literature in environmental education produces clues leading one to neo-Stoic thought in much the same way that the literature in the consumerism case study did (such as the Nicaragua student group). Perhaps most important among these clues is the persistent emphasis on the pedagogical necessity of "penetrat[ing] prevailing attitudes" (Smyth, 2006, p. 256). Unsustainable consumption practices have, unfortunately, become an important element of Western culture (as seen in shopping culture) and so it has become very difficult to seriously address environmental issues (Hobson, 2003).[42] Truly positive and transformative experiences of environmental education, it is argued, involve drawing these kinds of tacit or cultural assumptions into the realm of critical, conscious reflection (Hobson, 2003). This emphasis has long been an element of environmental educational thought. Laszlo (1978), writing over thirty years ago, summarized this position best:

> We suffer from a serious case of 'culture lag'… we squabble among ourselves to acquire or retain the privileges of bygone times. We cast about for innovating ways to satisfy obsolete values… We contemplate changing almost anything on this earth but ourselves. (Laszlo, 1978, p. 3)

This way of framing environmental issues – through an emphasis on the underlying structures of valuation and habit – is best articulated by Claxton (2005) in a book chapter discussing environmental education in business schools. Claxton makes three points that will set the stage for the contribution from neo-Stoicism I will shortly introduce. First Claxon constructs the problem, like many of the sources cited in the preceding pages,

[42] Hobson's (2003) argument in this regard focuses on the complex interplay between one's personal identity, cultural practices and consumption habits. Since consumption is tied so closely with these other aspects of daily life consumption behaviours can be highly resistant to change.

as a rational one that deals centrally with character.[43] Referring to unsustainable consumption patterns he argues, “a satisfactory solution is not going to be found in either technological innovation or in ecopolitical re-organisation, but in the liberation of individuals, in their millions, from the sway of an unconsciously self-destructive worldview” (p. 534).

Second Claxton recognizes that the question is not merely one of switching one uncritical and irresponsible view about the environment with another. Any educational intervention must contend with the complex network of habits and beliefs that define individual worldviews. In a notably neo-Stoic line of reasoning Claxton refers to “comfort addicts” and argues that “their view of the world embodies a nest of assumptions that link together identity, preference and material comfort in such a way that denial of preference is experienced as a mortal blow to personal efficacy, and discomfort is experienced as a threat to physical survival” (p. 536). When one holds a core belief that defines life according to certain patterns of consumption the drive to consume becomes a kind of imperative, even when other genuinely held beliefs about the environment point in a different direction.

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[43] He uses the term *psychological* to encompass assumptions and beliefs (p. 534). These elements fall under a Stoic understanding of *character* and so I use that term here.

In these two claims – that the issue is importantly rational and character-related and that personal belief and habit intersect in a network that underpins one's worldview – it becomes clear that Claxton seeks to draw attention to the very problems to which a neo-Stoic moral education directs educators. Indeed when one moves to his third point, his ameliorative suggestions, his position becomes almost explicitly neo-Stoic and virtue ethical. His first suggestion is that educational intervention should include positive experience of newly held values. In other words, if a student adopts a more critical or self-reflective view he or she should be given an opportunity to take some kind of action that reinforces the pleasant nature of the new value. One could imagine, for example, that a student newly concerned about pollution would find important reinforcement in being given an opportunity to take part in local green beautification projects. His second suggestion, inspired by Buddhist thought, is that one ought to practice mindfulness. Here Claxton encourages awareness of personal decisions and the network of assumptions and underlying beliefs upon which they are based.

In this way the extant literature on environmentalism leads one from concern about environmental degradation to a focus on opportunities for personal change, which in turn leads to a discussion of sustainable consumption patterns and personal character. This conversation, as was the case with consumption in general, can profitably lead (as Claxton shows) to neo-Stoicism. The details of the neo-Stoic contribution, which Claxton's work begins to hint at, is the topic of the following section.

Applying the Framework to Environmental Education

Critical Reflective and Deliberative Capacities

The environmental education literature I have canvassed here returned again and again to the need to draw one's consumption patterns into the sphere of deliberate and informed decision making. An informed decision to consume, it was argued, requires that an agent consider whether or not such a thing is important enough to warrant the likely cost it will exact on the environment. My neo-Stoic approach to reasoning focuses on precisely this activity – on drawing the often unthinking habits and assumptions of daily life into the light of rational reflection.

By engaging in this self-reflection students would be provided with opportunities to convert unthinking or otherwise insufficiently reflective practices into deliberate and critical choices. One excellent opportunity for such analysis is in student use of transportation (cars, buses etc.). Each student, in this context, could be instructed to create a schedule of the number of times in a regular week that she uses a vehicle (getting a ride to school from a parent, taking a bus, etc.). Each student could then list all of the reasons to use such transportation in each instance – "I take the bus on Tuesdays because I need to get home so I can watch my brother" for example. If provided with a rough model for calculating gasoline use and carbon produced students could then prepare a cost-benefit analysis in each instance.[44] The result would be an opportunity to foster a serious and informed discussion about relative value. Should you ask for a ride to school when you live four blocks away given the environmental cost that results from this choice? Do any circumstances, like the outside temperature, make the decision different? How do you use the time that getting a ride saves?

In addition to helping to motivate such questions, I have also discussed a number of specific contributions neo-Stoic philosophy can make to such analysis. One important contribution is the neo-Stoic critique of material convenience. Both classical and neo-Stoics texts frequently include warnings against becoming dependent upon material goods. Applied to the context of contemporary transportation use it is clear that important warnings can be discerned. First it would benefit students to become familiar with the philosophical psychology the neo-Stoics proposed in this regard. Their argument that one's decision to value something can lead to that thing becoming viewed as a necessary element of flourishing is, in this context, highly relevant. Students should be encouraged to ask why they value their access to buses or cars and how it is they view them as part of their lives. "Could they live without them?" it could be asked. The answers to these

[44] It is important to impress upon students the value of rigorous cost-benefit analysis. Determining the environmental impact of any given choice is inherently complex and pedagogical intervention should reflect this reality.

questions lead to the question of what sort of vision of human life such beliefs lead to. When you define the role of cars in your life as x, what sort of life are you imagining? Is that life worth the cost it currently exacts on the environment? Since emotions are related to one's beliefs, a neo-Stoic approach would also encourage students to attend closely to their feelings. What sort of frustration or difficulty do your beliefs cause you? How do you feel when the bus doesn't come and you need to walk to school anyway? How do you feel knowing decisions like yours cause damage to other cities or natural habitats?

The power of this sort of example is that it draws students' habits out of the tacit or unconsciously habitual sphere of their lives into a discussion in which fundamental sorts of neo-Stoic questions are being asked about concrete circumstances over which the students have agency. Neo-Stoicism provides important guidance as to how to frame these questions – and cogent forms of analysis to help solve them – but no definitive, context-free answer is possible. The goal is increasingly informed and deliberate employment of critical reason.

Just Communities

The sort of reasoning outlined in the previous section must also be consistently taken up in the public forums of the school's day-to-day life. As Kohlberg argued this goal requires that students be given a deliberative forum and meaningful decision-making power. One excellent opportunity for this activity to take place in a neo-Stoically inspired fashion is in collective analysis of the school's environmental impact. Students could, for example, collect data detailing the school's use of paper along with the consequent environmental impact (estimated cost in terms of forest cutting, perhaps). The students could then be challenged to account for this paper use. Where and how is this paper being consumed? Is this consumption an appropriate way to value and use paper, given the cost to the environment? How might such use be made more efficient or defensible?

If done as a large group project this sort of activity provides an important forum for students to transfer the reasoning they practice on an individual level to the collective problems and environmental impact of the school itself. As both Claxton's (2005) analysis and my neo-Stoic framework would suggest this sort of activity should take place within opportunities for immediate, observable action. Students should be able to see the result of their decision-making in their school life so that they may gain positive experiences of this exercise of virtue.[45]

The classical Stoics provided another important avenue for pedagogical intervention when they warned that students should be critically insulated from the pernicious influence of popular belief. In an environmental educational context this process could involve interrogating particular

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[45] In strict classical Stoic terms such actions would only reasonably aspire to be *befitting*.

cultural practices and drawing out their underlying valuations in much the same way as was suggested on an individual level. Neo-Stoic analysis of the eudaemonic messages built into car advertisements could, for example, promote important critical awareness of the disconnect between public consumption culture and the ethical demands that serious attention to the environmental crisis carries. If this activity is undertaken along the lines of Kohlberg's committee system (the deliberative fora of the Just Community approach) students can begin to build a collective form of empowerment vis-à-vis popular visions of personal flourishing. They can, in other words, begin to learn that their form of flourishing is theirs to author and that they can, through cooperation, structure elements of their environment in keeping with this vision.

Other- and Self-Regarding Frameworks

A neo-Stoic approach would also add attention to the implications of *oikeiôsis* for environmental learning. Here another set of important neo-Stoic questions would be asked. Perhaps most centrally such an approach to environmental education would ask if the student's (individual) and the school community's (collective) use of resources reflects a broad consideration of the needs of the surrounding community and the good of humanity in general. To what extent does the individual or school's use of resources reflect a myopic or parochial view of human interest? Does such use reflect the assumption of the preeminence of the needs of some over the needs of others? Does this judgment of relative need reflect a defensible judgment of the indifferents in question? This assessment of human interest could involve an intergenerational scope, as discussed in Bell (2004), along similar lines. In such a circumstance a neo-Stoic line of analysis might begin by asking if the school community's current use of resources reflects an equal valuing of both current and future generations' needs.

In addition to the requirements of *oikeiôsis* the neo-Stoic approach to environmental education would also involve very personal concerns. Here, again, Claxton (2005) hints at issues the discussed in neo-Stoic philosophical psychology. As noted previously the concept of comfort addiction Claxton discusses bears close resemblance to the my neo-Stoic analysis of erroneous valuation of material goods. Since many of the most obvious consequences of unsustainable consumption patterns are unlikely to be immediate for students themselves[46] it is important to make the consequences of such decisions clear. Teachers might, for example, work to bring the impact of personal comforts to the attention of students. Returning to the example of student use of transportation, a neo-Stoic approach would require that students be personally confronted with the consequences of that decision (in

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[46] Unlike the general discussion of consumption, where the psychological effects of overconsumption can be referred to immediately (such as sadness at failing to acquire a particular consumer good), the most important consequences of environmentally unsustainable consumption tend to be more global and long-term.

technical terms they must be shown the negative feedback from the environment). If students are shown the result of their personal decisions they then can be confronted with the different personal experiences that come from exercising virtue and vice in such circumstances. They ought to experience the positive affect and satisfaction that comes from making critical and informed choices about what to consume.

Comprehensive Attention to Habit, Emotion and Practical Judgment

The broad emphasis my neo-Stoic framework places on habit, emotion and judgment has been, in large part, discussed in the preceding sections. I will thus only highlight several key aspects of the preceding discussion here. First, and perhaps most importantly, the environmental issues taken up (either individually or collectively) must be drawn from aspects of students' experiences that are both relevant to their lives and within their agency. Although neo-Stoicism focuses very strongly on personal judgment this judgment is always to be placed in the service of one's flourishing – in the habitual and affective world one inhabits. This service is only possible when students can deploy their learning and analysis to issues pertinent to their lives. They can build virtuous, critical habits only when they are able to examine and act on a question that is within their normal scope of action. This requirement is why, for example, I chose the example of the transportation students use to get to school. For much, if not most, of their lives in school students may choose how to get to school (taking the bus versus using a bicycle, for example).

Helping students to practice environmentally defensible acts through their normal experience is important not just because it fosters virtuous habits but also because doing so permits those students to feel the affective consequences of their choices. The frustration that comes from uncritical overvaluation, along with the greater tranquility and satisfaction that comes from critical valuation, must be experienced in order for students to be motivated to pursue further efforts at befitting action. It is only through this sort of process of applied judgment in meaningful and real situations that the neo-Stoic emphasis on habitually strong assent and virtuous emotion can be met. In the environmental context, where consequences are often seen only in the long term, pedagogical efforts to draw such consequences into the immediate experience of students are critical.

I do not mean to indicate there is no role for neo-Stoic education inside the classroom itself. The myriad letters of the classical Stoics provide rich examples of formal critical analysis being undertaken with students, and this engagement is still relevant today. The neo-Stoically inspired teacher is called to help students cut through the haze of popular belief, unthinking habit and tacit assumption. Teachers must, for example, draw students' attention to the relationship between their beliefs and choices and consequent affective states. This attention involves, among other things, activities and assignments that provide opportunities for teachers and students to reflect upon and analyze their experiences together. Since environmental issues are often built atop myriad layers of complex public interactions this sort of formal analytical work is indispensible.

Fostering Caring Relations

Within the context of environmental education the neo-Stoic emphasis on forgiving judgment is particularly important. Since overconsumption and environmental degradation are intimately built into the structure of contemporary Western economy and culture it is necessarily the case that students will engage in practices that reflect unthinking or otherwise fallacious belief. The difficult balance the neo-Stoics speak of between being a critical member both of the universal community and one's local community is very much present.

Pedagogically this difficulty means educators must do at least three things. First it is important that students are not discouraged by overly perfectionist goals – particularly if such goals are paired with constant admonition. The recognition that environmentally defensible action is difficult, and that even environmental educators can be only partially successful in this regard, is an important element of a caring, forgiving relationship. The neo-Stoic emphasis on properly understanding the scope one's personal agency is deeply helpful in this regard.

The argument that only one's virtue is within personal control is a powerful one in environmental education. As a result of the culturally and economically embedded nature of the perceived environmental crisis it is clear that the sphere of individual agency is limited. To believe that one can, or must, have a large-scale impact is to invite frustration and discouragement. In order to encourage students to do everything in their power to change their own lives, and encourage others to do the same, a truly caring environmental educator would emphasize this limited agency. One should not encourage complacency or comfort in the face of serious challenges, but it is important to keep in mind that the ethical imperative to act is best construed in ways in which one can reasonably expect students to succeed. To encourage more perfectionist goals, as is sometimes the case both in classical Stoicism and contemporary environmental education, is to fail to appropriately care.

The third important point to be made here is that a neo-Stoic approach must treat the student as an end and not merely an instrument to environmental reform. Although my approach seeks to foster broad analysis (including the interests of all humans) this analysis is rooted in attention to personal flourishing. It is insufficient to argue that students should learn certain things so that they might somehow collectively solve the environmental crisis in the years to come. A neo-Stoic approach emphasizes the benefits of critically sound judgment both for personal flourishing and for wider civilizational problems. Considered judgment that makes defensible choices regarding relative value improves the life of the agent and allows that agent to more rationally and effectively contribute to the good of the wider human community. Neo-Stoic educators manifest care by taking the ethical quality of the student's life as the paramount concern, confident that by helping students become better judges of value they allow those students to become better citizens of the world.

Ordinary Conversation

There are two central elements to the neo-Stoic version of ordinary conversation in environmental education. First the teacher models environmentally defensible action and judgment through explanations and examples from her own experience. At the same time she investigates the experience and judgment of her students through extensive discussion and written reflection (such as journaling). This two-way process, modeled exceptionally well in Seneca's letters, provides the open dialogue that both students and teachers require to draw their habits and assumptions into the light of critical reflection.

When paired with probing questions and challenges to do better such activities can foster an open relationship that allows both parties to see their lives differently. This process is absolutely indispensible to neo-Stoic moral education and is particularly so in the environmental context. Since much of the work of environmental education is encapsulated by the process of making the environmental impact of personal choices clear, this kind of close attention and interlocution must take place in order for environmental education to be successful. Within this relationship the teacher must be willing both to make caring and forgiving suggestions for future growth and to accept such guidance herself.

This point brings me to a second central element – namely, that teachers must respect the students' proposals and formulations and avoid merely correcting them when they fail to resemble the teacher's own conclusions. The goal in this form of education is an increasing capacity and tendency to critically evaluate choices relevant to one's environmental impact in light of the relative value of the goods in question and one's possible scope of future action. In order for this sort of education to proceed students must be able to practice this reasoning in an environment in which that reasoning is taken as a serious candidate for truth, not a fallacious answer to a pre-determined question and answer set.

Conclusion

This chapter has introduced a neo-Stoic approach to two moral educational issues: consumer education and environmental education. In both cases student views of material goods were highly relevant. In both cases it was shown that this relevance created an important role for neo-Stoic philosophy. Although I have built each of these two analyses around six separate pedagogical touchstones my argument can be fairly summarized under two main points. First I have demonstrated that my neo-Stoic framework provides an approach to these two moral educational issues that focuses strongly on critical reflective and deliberative capacities whilst also attending to the full scope of the student's ethical experience. I have, in other words, spent much of this document discussing the ways in which neo-Stoicism encourages us to reflect and analyze but I have also drawn attention to the ways in which this emphasis is tied together with other facets of ethical life such as affect and habit.

This comprehensive analysis has yielded accounts of consumer and environmental education that seek to foster a form of moral education that would strongly encourage close attention to the basis for personal belief and the consequences for one's flourishing (in the broadest terms) that result from such belief. The differing contexts provide helpful clues about the situational issues that arise when one is applying neo-Stoic analysis. They are, however, built upon a very similar foundation. In both cases my neo-Stoic approach would seek to awaken students to the system of beliefs (both tacit and explicit) that underpin their worldview and actions. This awakening involves coming to view these beliefs as ethically salient. It also involves beginning the process of reflecting on them in a way that permits one to knowingly and critically choose and evaluate such beliefs in the future. Students would be called to understand the way in which relative valuations impact their lives and their experience of those lives.

The specific detail provided in this chapter also established a second key point. It was shown that my neo-Stoic approach provides a valuable set of resources for this form of moral education. I demonstrated in chapter two that although cognitive developmentalism and care theory both contributed meaningful insight this insight was of a limited and indirect nature. Virtue education provided a more comprehensive approach but failed to provide the direct resources these issues require. These limitations, I argued, created the material good lacuna. In this chapter I demonstrated that neo-Stoicism uniquely addresses this lacuna.

This chapter established that neo-Stoic virtue theory focuses on precisely the sort of ethical problems one faces in consumer and environmental education. It is possible to examine classical and neo-Stoic documents and find insight on the core issues I have categorized as falling within the material good lacuna. This insight is both comprehensive – ranging from Nussbaum's experience of her own grief to Cicero's theoretical comparisons with Aristotelianism – and surprisingly direct. From the classical sources to the contemporary neo-Stoics, this school has struggled to understand how to live in ways that foster virtue in a world filled with difficult material choices. The two cases I have analyzed here have shown that this insight is very much relevant today. When Seneca discusses his exile he is speaking about the very same problem one faces in environmental education. Namely, how should one view the relevance of material goods to one's life? Does one need certain conveniences to be happy? What sort of flourishing does one pursue when such objects decide one's happiness? In short, because consumer and environmental education are built upon the core question of ethical valuation it is clear that the proposed neo-Stoic framework has an important role to play. Kohlberg's justice theory, Noddings' care theory, and Aristotle's virtue theory all help one understand ethical life. None, however, is centrally concerned with critical valuation of this sort.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION

The two cases discussed in the previous chapter – consumer education and environmental education – provided two specific pedagogical contexts in which to discuss the contribution of neo-Stoicism to moral education regarding material goods. To reach these two cases, however, it was necessary to engage in a number of important preparatory tasks that framed the nature of this contribution. I began by examining the currently dominant moral educational paradigms, in chapters one and two, in light of their basic philosophical structure and their implications for moral education regarding material goods. In each case the approach in question, while valuable in several important respects, was found wanting in its discussion of material goods. In short none provided the philosophical resources to directly approach critical analysis of material goods in a satisfactory fashion. This is not to say, however, that these approaches were disregarded in this study. Rather, several compelling elements of cognitive developmentalism, care theory and virtue theory were used to produce a series of pedagogical touchstones that were later used to connect neo-Stoicism to certain important aspects of current moral educational thought.

I moved, in chapter three, to introduce Stoic philosophy – both in its classical form and its contemporary neo-Stoic form. In this chapter I provided an exploration of the philosophical resources the Stoic tradition offers, with particular attention to those resources relevant to the material good lacuna (such as the doctrine of indifferents). Although it was found that classical Stoicism provided relevant and valuable resources for the moral education under discussion, important limitations existed. This is the reason why chapter four began with a summary of contemporary neo-Stoic education and an exploration of the limitations and qualifications required to make such an education philosophically and pedagogically defensible. After identifying these points I moved to examine consumer education and environmental education in light of the vision of neo-Stoic moral education I had begun to articulate.

This analysis has examined the dominant paradigms of moral education, classical and neo-Stoicism, and consumer and environmental education. It has enabled me to construct an image of moral education and a proposal as to where Stoicism might profitably fit into its contemporary thought and practice. Although this document has been filled with conclusions regarding what might be learned from Stoic philosophy it is worth making two more fundamental concluding statements here.

First this study found that classical Stoicism is, indeed, often a harsh and overly perfectionist philosophy. This reality created the need to take up neo-Stoicism's various revisions. Teachers should not, it was argued, concern themselves with an all-or-nothing vision of sagacious virtue, for example. The proposals made in chapter five consequently do not appear overly radical –the critical journaling work proposed, for example, is particularly common

– but the reasoning and focus that defines each proposal is substantially novel. While a neo-Stoic moral education is built upon a view of the world not common in moral educational circles, it is possible to draw some of the value of that vision into a classroom in ways not entirely alien to students and teachers.

The second conclusion I wish to make arises from my investigations of Stoic thought but applies generally to moral educational philosophy. There are often two broad tasks that must be undertaken in order for a particular ethical theory or perspective to contribute to pedagogical practice. The first task is to take the philosophy itself and interpret it in a way that makes it intelligible to moral educationalists. In this case one seeks to connect the given philosophy to the discourses of moral education. Once this has been done the second broad task becomes possible. Namely, it becomes possible to build specific pedagogical interventions based on the newly introduced (or re-introduced) philosophical insight. This study primarily engages in the first task. I have sought, primarily, to draw Stoicism into the moral educational conversations currently taking place. This is why, for example, much of this document is spent connecting Stoicism to the currently dominant paradigms of moral education.

Chapter five sits somewhere between the two tasks I identify above. In order to demonstrate the value of neo-Stoic thought I applied it to two case studies. In the course of doing so I proposed a number of relatively specific pedagogical techniques. It is important to note that while these are not fully articulated lesson or unit plans, they *are* practical suggestions. The risk involved in issuing such suggestions is that the deep and complex detail of the philosophy under consideration might become inappropriately simplified. Assumptions and nuances invariably become subsumed into increasingly broad statements and much of the original insight is lost. Taken alone the proposals given in the latter sections of chapter five seem consequently simple and general. The greatest challenge for the moral education I propose is thereby not dealing with the more objectionable elements of classical Stoic philosophy – such problems can be circumvented with thoughtful neo-Stoicism – but rather in ensuring that the vision of Stoicism articulated to teachers encourages them to understand as much of the foundational philosophy as possible.

Although it might be tempting, for instance, to present elements of chapter five during an in-service for teachers this much is surely insufficient. As contemporary non-expansive character education shows it is far too easy to present a misleading summary of complex philosophy. Stoicism is a rich and complex philosophical system that, when critically understood and thoughtfully revised, can give teachers an opportunity to address education regarding material goods in a novel and cogent fashion. In order to take advantage of this opportunity, though, both of the broad tasks I note here must be undertaken. This project has done much of the work of connecting

Stoic philosophy to moral educational discourse (the first task) but a great deal needs to be done in order to produce pedagogical resources of sufficient specificity to be valuable to practicing educators themselves (the second task).

The production of direct pedagogical resources is an important direction for future research to pursue. This involves the production of resources in both a narrow sense (such as lesson plans) and in a broad sense (such as discussions of Stoicism at teacher conferences). Stoic thought could also be used to more fully critique contemporary character education. While I have avoided fully discussing such a critique in this document, a Stoic analysis of character educational thought could help to further teacher understanding of the limited nature of such programs. Pragmatically-minded analysis in a practitioner's magazine or journal would be especially valuable in this regard.

Future research could also further investigate the contribution of Stoicism to theoretical discourse in moral education. A more extensive neo-Stoic analysis of contemporary virtue educational thought, for example, could yield valuable insight that would not only invite further thought about Aristotelian virtue education but would also serve to expand the discourse around the constitution of personal character. Further development of the educational implications of particular Stoic concepts, such as *oikeiôsis*, would also produce valuable insight.

In addition to these conclusions I wish to make one final, more personal point. I had initially been drawn to Stoicism by its unflinching and uncompromising view of human agency. The image of internal fortitude advanced by Stoic writing can, at times, leave one with the hope of transcending the world itself. Classical Stoic prose is filled with metaphors and analogies that see the human spirit rise above world, like a towering mountain impervious to the assaults of the ages. The closer look at Stoicism that this study has afforded me has changed that image. Stoicism is indeed about human agency but not about the naïve aspiration to tower above fate but rather the ability of all persons to engage in the most important struggle a person can face – to find those things in the world truly worth valuing and protecting. Neo-Stoic education, on final analysis, must be about empowering people to dig deep into their worldview and knowingly choose those things in the world worth *feeling for*.

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