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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

EGOISM AND NARCISSISM INTEGRATED: PRIMAL NARCISSISM IN HUMAN NATURE

BY

ROBERT EDWARD LAZAR

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled Egoism and Narcissism Integrated: Primal Narcissism in Human Nature submitted by Robert Edward Lazar in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

Co-Supervisor

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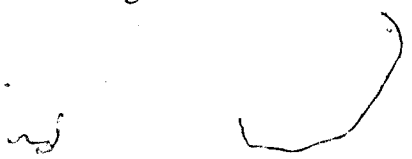
Date : Oct. 12, 1988

I dedicate this thesis to those people who mean the most to me.

To my mother -- perhaps the most unique and somewhat bizarre person that I know. And I love you for it.

To my father -- the strong silent one. Though not present in body your spirit is always felt.

And finally, to Michael -- my brother and best friend. I guess we're even now!



ABSTRACT

A recurrent theme in Western thought concerning human nature claims that people are essentially selfish. The psychology of narcissism and the philosophy of egoism are indicative of this. However, these views have been criticized for numerous reasons. This thesis has been undertaken to integrate aspects of the psychology of narcissism with aspects of the philosophy of egoism into a view of human nature, termed primal narcissism.

The psychology of narcissism deals with the phenomenon of apparent self-love. Psychoanalysts define narcissism as a libidinal self-cathexis, limiting the meaning of the term. They also treat narcissism as merely one among many psychological concepts. After considering formulations of the narcissism concept made by various scholars, beginning with Freud's seminal work and concluding with the views of Otto Kernberg and Heinz Kohut, it is maintained that psychologists underestimate the significance of narcissism. The primal narcissism conjecture regards narcissism as fundamental to human nature.

The philosophies of ethical and psychological egoism state that people should promote their own interests. Ethical egoism maintains that it is morally obligatory for people to promote their own interests, while psychological egoism states that people are motivated primarily by self-interest. These views emphasize logical, rational action maximizing utility, which neglects other aspects of human functioning, such as the nonrational. The primal narcissism conjecture encompasses these other facets of human activity.

The primal narcissism conjecture states that people are ultimately self-concerned. Various phenomena, ranging from aspects of human evolution to everyday expressions, are considered in support of this claim. A critical examination of altruism as a separate aspect of human nature is undertaken, and it is concluded that altruism is a byproduct of primal narcissism. Finally, implications of the primal narcissism conjecture and suggestions for further study are mentioned.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO EGOISM, NARCISSISM, AND THE PRIMAL NARCISSISM CONJECTURE

This thesis explores the philosophy of egoism, the psychology of narcissism, and their relationship to each other and to human nature. It presents a speculative account of the integration of egoism and narcissism as an aspect of human nature. The need for this thesis arises because egoism and narcissism are conceptually related, yet there is little discussion between egoist philosophers and psychologists who theorize about narcissism. Presently, philosophers debate the merits of the basic egoist position that people are, or should be, motivated by self-interest, while psychologists (especially in the psychodynamic tradition) seek to enhance our understanding of the phenomenon of narcissism. While fruitful advances have been made in the two disciplines, significant work has been hampered by the fact that philosophers and psychologists rarely share ideas and information.

In this thesis I argue that people are ultimately concerned with themselves. This view is akin to both egoism and narcissism, and integrates aspects of these latter views. This idea has been examined by few other scholars, presumably because those psychologists who discuss narcissism have traditionally remained segregated from those philosophers who deal with egoism, and, historically, the exchange of ideas between psychologists and philosophers has been minimal.

Certain fundamental questions arise when considering egoism and narcissism: What relationship, if any, exists between egoism and narcissism? What do they imply for human nature? I contend that by integrating aspects of egoism and narcissism the conclusion emerges that people are ultimately concerned

with themselves, and furthermore that this concern represents a fundamental aspect of human nature.

The Purpose of this Thesis

In this thesis I present a formulation of human nature, termed the primal narcissism conjecture, which states that people are ultimately concerned with themselves. It represents an integration of aspects of the psychology of narcissism, such as heightened self concern, with aspects of the philosophy of egoism, such as promoting self-interest, and while scholars in both psychology (e.g., Freud, 1916/1959a) and philosophy (e.g., Paterson, 1964) have suggested a connection between narcissism and egoism this connection has not been previously explicated. I have undertaken this thesis to render more explicit the egoism/narcissism connection by integrating aspects of them and to offer evidence in support of the primal narcissism conjecture. Due to the plurality of views concerning human nature, and recognizing that arguments for and against a view are predominantly philosophical and incapable of empirical verification or refutation, the primal narcissism conjecture should be considered a means of construing a facet of human nature rather than as a statement of fact.

The work presented in this thesis is significant for several reasons. It considers the relationship between egoism and narcissism. Furthermore, it presents a formulation about human nature resulting from the integration of egoism and narcissism. The development of new ideas about egoism, narcissism, and their relationship to each other should be stimulated in the process (e.g., previously undetected relationships, interpretations, or implications may arise). Basically, this thesis suggests a relationship not previously explicated between egoism and narcissism which leads to a way of understanding an important facet of human

nature.

It is now timely to overview the main ideas presented in the thesis and to supply that background information which is necessary to understand some of the ideas presented in the following chapters. First, however, it should be noted that this thesis deals predominantly with theory, and for this reason it is worthwhile to briefly consider the purpose of theory and criteria for evaluating it.

The Purpose of Theory

The word "theory" can be defined in various ways. Basically, a theory is a collection of generalizations used to explain some phenomenon (Rozeboom, 1970). R. M. Thomas (1985) provides a concise definition of theory as "an explanation of how the facts fit together" (p. 4), where facts are observations or measurements. This suggests that a theory is used to facilitate understanding of something. This understanding occurs because a theory proposes which facts are most significant for understanding a phenomenon and describes the relationships among the facts (R. M. Thomas, 1985).

A theory may be evaluated in several ways. Rozeboom (1970) and R. M. Thomas (1985) maintain that a good theory satisfies certain criteria: (a) it is clear (understandable) and consistent (does not contradict itself); (b) it accurately reflects the facts (e.g., it does not overgeneralize); (c) it draws meaningful assertions about the subject matter, and derivations are based on logical deduction; (d) it is capable of verification by observation, but is also falsifiable or disconfirmable (i.e., it can, in principle, be proven false); (e) it is "economical" in that it requires few unproven assumptions and uses simple mechanisms to explain all phenomena considered; (f) it stimulates new research and the development of new ideas; and, (g) it is self-satisfying (i.e., it just "sounds right"). Many of these criteria are used when

critiquing the theories considered in the thesis.

Overview of the Thesis

The thesis begins with a discussion of psychodynamic interpretations of the narcissism phenomenon. The term "narcissism" is derived from the myth of Narcissus. It is worthwhile to consider this myth and outline some of its elements.

The Myth of Narcissus

Narcissus was the son of Liriope, whom the river god Cephisus had raped. Many young men and women sought Narcissus's love because he was so beautiful, but he was so cold that no one touched his heart. One day the nymph Echo saw him and fell in love with him, but she too was spurned. Thus rejected she fled into the woods to hide her shamed face. Though rejected by Narcissus her love for him grew stronger, until one day she died of shame alone in a cave, existing today as we know her.

Thus had Narcissus mocked many nymphs and young men. Finally, one of these scorned youth prayed to the goddess Nemesis that Narcissus should love himself but not gain the thing he loves. In answer to the youth's prayer Nemesis arranged that one day Narcissus should come across a clear pool of water that nobody came to and lie down to rest. Attempting to quench his thirst he was smitten by the sight of a beautiful form in the water, a form which he thought was substance but was really shadow.

Narcissus could not stop gazing at his reflection, and he thought it cruel that this form which he loved, and which seemed to love him back, eluded his embrace. Narcissus was so consumed with love for his own reflection that he would not leave the pond even to eat, and so slowly he pined away until finally he died. When others came to bury him they found no body, but in its place was a flower

which now bears his name (Schwartz-Salant, 1982).

This is the myth of Narcissus briefly presented. Elements of the myth include self-adoration, the rejection of others, the significance of mirroring and one's reflection, slow death through self-infatuation, the specialness of the individual, the forced union of the parents, and the inability to attain what is so near and desired. Of these elements, however, most scholars focus on self-absorption, thus producing the popular view of narcissism as self-love.

The Narcissism Chapter

The survey of psychodynamic views on narcissism begins with Freud's work on the topic as he was the first theorist to systematically and extensively deal with the phenomenon. While work had been done on narcissism before Freud this work is not pertinent to the thesis and has been omitted. (Ellis [1927] traces the many uses of the narcissism term from mythology to psychoanalysis.) Freud interprets the narcissism phenomenon psychoanalytically and conceives of narcissism as both a natural phase of phylogenesis and ontogenesis and as a pathological manifestation of libidinal cathexis. That is, Freud discusses narcissism at several different levels. He regards it as a natural part of human evolution in which our prehistoric ancestors displayed narcissism globally, as an inherent phase in the development of the individual, and as a retraction of an external libidinal cathexis back onto the individual's own ego, as observed in schizophrenics for example. In support of these views Freud draws upon evidence from various sources, ranging from psychopathology to mature sexuality. However, Freud is highly criticized for his view of narcissism and the evidence supporting it. Thus, many scholars have reformulated the narcissism concept, and a consideration of some of these scholars follows.

Jung, Adler, and Horney discuss narcissism to varying degrees. While Jung does not consider narcissism very much he does discuss a similar character structure in the archetypal realm. Adler's view of the masculine protest gave Freud the impetus for formulating the narcissism concept, and while Adler focuses on the exclusion of others rather than the apparent self-love of the narcissist Horney emphasizes narcissism as a neurotic complement of normal development. The work of these scholars is briefly considered for two reasons. First, to trace the evolution of the narcissism concept in psychodynamic theory from Freud to present analysts. Second, to expand our knowledge of the original Freudian view by illuminating different aspects of the narcissism phenomenon.

Otto Kernberg and Heinz Kohut are perhaps the most prominent theorists on narcissism in contemporary literature. Kernberg's theory of narcissism is discussed first since his formulations are psychodynamically more orthodox than Kohut's. Basically, Kernberg conceives of both a normal and pathological form of narcissism, encompassing experiences ranging from self-esteem to the classical narcissistic personality. His view differs from Freud's regarding the development of narcissism, and in many respects it improves upon Freud's formulation. Kohut, on the other hand, redefines the narcissism term itself by elucidating an alternative conceptual scheme to classical theory. He also views narcissism as a positive force contributing to psychic health and adaptation, and his view, like Kernberg's, is an improvement on Freud's. Additionally, while Kohut delineates a psychodynamic theory of narcissism he also formulates a theory of personality in which narcissism is considered a positive ingredient of human nature. For this reason Kohut is considered last in the chapter since the primal narcissism conjecture similarly represents a formulation in which narcissism is fundamental to human nature.

The Egoism Chapter

Unlike the chapter on narcissism, the egoism chapter presents various views of egoism by type of egoism rather than by theorist. That is, different sections of the chapter do not correspond to different theorists but to different types of egoistic philosophy. Specifically, a distinction is made between psychological and ethical egoism. Ethical egoism is the view that, morally speaking, people ought to promote their own interests and not the interests of others. Psychological egoism, on the other hand, is a view of human nature and motivation which states that people are actually like this. The discussion of ethical egoism is further divided into various formulations of this basic egoistic philosophy. There are three versions of ethical egoism: (a) individual egoism, which states that one ought to pursue one's own interests and others ought to sacrifice their interests for one's own; (b) universal egoism, which states that one ought to perform an action if it is in one's overall self-interest; and, (c) rule-egoism, which applies to the adoption of rules rather than to particular acts, and which basically states that adopting certain social rules is in everybody's best interests.

Before presenting ethical and psychological egoism, however, a historical overview of egoistic philosophy is provided as this may help in understanding current formulations on the subject. Egoistic philosophy has its roots in Thomas Hobbes's "selfish hypothesis," which asserts that humans act for their own good. Bishop Joseph Butler was the first philosopher to extensively analyze self-love, self-interest, and their relationship to benevolence, and for this reason his ideas are summarized. David Hume is the last philosopher considered, and he argues, contrary to the egoistic doctrine, that benevolence is not reducible to self-interest.

After discussing ethical and psychological egoism consideration is given to

ethical objectivism, a variant of ethical egoism developed by Ayn Rand, since it has elicited considerable discussion in the philosophical community. Ethical objectivism emphasizes rationality and proclaims that people must act for their own rational self-interest. This implies that human beings are ends in themselves and not the means to the ends of others, and hence one should not sacrifice oneself for others or sacrifice others for oneself. Finally, Rand maintains that people should live for their own happiness, and this is accomplished by rationally pursuing life serving values.

The egoism versus altruism controversy, studied in ethical terms, is the final topic discussed in the egoism chapter. This is because altruism is essentially the antithesis of egoism, and the egoistic position would be strengthened by demonstrating the weakness of the altruism claim. Furthermore, the primal narcissism conjecture is very similar to psychological egoism, and the altruism claim threatens the primal narcissism conjecture as well as egoistic philosophy. In particular, the essence of the primal narcissism position is that people are fundamentally narcissistic, and altruism is derivative of this. As Ellis observed back in 1927, "every creature is originally oriented in a Narcissistic direction. Thus Narcissism becomes the source of altruistic feelings: I love you because you give me pleasure" (p. 141). The criticisms of altruism levied by egoistic philosophers and the reinterpretations of altruistic behavior in egoistic terms suggest that altruism is not a unique aspect of human nature.

In sum, then, this chapter is significant for several reasons. First, the philosophy of egoism elucidated in it is integrated with the psychology of narcissism. Second, the resulting view (primal narcissism) is akin to psychological egoism. And third, the altruism claim is challenged on ethical grounds and it is

concluded that altruism is not distinct from egoism.

The Primal Narcissism Chapter

In this chapter the primal narcissism conjecture is defined and explicated. It is claimed that primal narcissism falls near the selfishness end of a continuum which runs from selfishness to altruism. Various phenomena suggesting the existence of primal narcissism are presented in support of the primal narcissism claim. These phenomena range from a consideration of aspects of human evolution to common expressions such as "look out for number one." Particular emphasis is placed upon the discrepancy between overt and covert societal messages. Specifically, it is claimed that while we are socialized overtly to obey an altruistic ethic our primal narcissism is covertly encouraged and condoned.

Once an understanding of primal narcissism has been gained the primal narcissism conjecture is related to the various psychological formulations of narcissism considered in chapter two. Basically, the psychological definition of narcissism as a libidinal cathexis is distinct from the primal narcissism conjecture, which does not deal with libidinal cathexes. Also, psychologists minimize the importance of narcissism by regarding it as merely one psychological concept, whereas the primal narcissism formulation regards narcissism as an important aspect of human nature.

A discussion of the similarities and differences between the philosophy of egoism, considered in chapter three, and the primal narcissism conjecture suggests that the two are much alike except that egoistic philosophy emphasizes logical, rational action while the primal narcissism view encompasses the nonlogical and nonrational. The primal narcissism conjecture is distinct from egoism because it includes the nonlogical and suggests that people may behave in a certain way

simply because it "feels good" to do so.

The primal narcissism conjecture represents an idea which transcends the main "forces" in psychology (viz., psychodynamic, behavioral, humanistic/existential). Major representatives of these forces are considered and it is claimed that they all imply primal narcissism as fundamental to human nature.

The chapter concludes with a consideration of popular literature dealing with our "culture of narcissism." This literature corroborates my claim that while primal narcissism is fundamental to human nature, the incidence of narcissism nevertheless appears to be increasing because contemporary society condones its expression (by emphasizing materialism and individualism).

Chapter Five: Altruism and Primal Narcissism

A thorough consideration of the altruism claim is made in this chapter. Definitions of altruism made by scholars in various fields are presented; they have in common that altruism involves a concern for others over and above a concern for oneself. Altruism is then considered from a developmental perspective and related to levels of cognitive and moral reasoning. Finally, sociobiological accounts of altruism, biological models of altruism, and behavioral evidence adduced to support the claim that altruism is a unique aspect of human nature are discussed, and it is concluded that this information is insufficient to warrant viewing altruism as an aspect of human nature independent of primal narcissism.

If altruism is derivative of primal narcissism (a view consistent with the primal narcissism conjecture), then ways of interpreting "altruistic" actions which are compatible with the primal narcissism conjecture must be considered. Three possibilities are suggested in the last chapter: people behave altruistically to "feel good," or because they think that their actions will be reciprocated, or because they

wish to relieve their own inner feeling of distress at seeing another person in need of help.

In the process of explicating the relationship between altruism and the primal narcissism conjecture it is noted that determining the force to altruism is of a "semiphilosophical" nature, and "semiphilosophical" arguments supporting the primal narcissism view are presented. (The term "semiphilosophical," taken from Hoffman [1981], means that questions concerning human nature will likely never be answered completely by reference to data but will remain somewhat speculative.)

Following this consideration of altruism some implications of the primal narcissism conjecture are discussed. These implications range from the analysis of group behavior to causes of psychopathology. It is emphasized that the primal narcissism view is "semiphilosophical" (i.e., no experimental evidence bears directly on it and it asks the primal question "what is human nature?", which is incapable of being answered definitively), and hence the conjecture is incapable of being proved or refuted. The chapter concludes with some suggestions for further work on the topic of primal narcissism.

CHAPTER 2

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF NARCISSISM

The term "narcissism" refers to a psychological phenomenon in which an individual's functioning is characterized by heightened self-concern, just as the myth of Narcissus, from which the term is derived, involves an individual who falls in love with his own reflection. This chapter deals with psychodynamic interpretations of this phenomenon.

The myth of Narcissus encompasses many aspects of self-infatuation, such as self-adoration, the exclusion of others, and the significance of mirroring and one's reflection. Most writers focus on the absorption in oneself, thus leading to the popular conception of narcissism as self-love.

Our survey of views about narcissism begins with Freud's original work on the subject. Freud was the first theorist to systematically develop a view of narcissism. He regards it as both a stage of normal development (primary narcissism) and as a retraction of libido from external objects back onto the ego (secondary narcissism). Freud adduces much evidence to support his view of narcissism, but he is highly criticized for this evidence and for the view itself. For this reason a number of individuals have elaborated on Freud's thesis, and a consideration of some of these individuals follows.

Heinz Kohut and Otto Kernberg are prominent writers on the topic of narcissism in contemporary literature. Before their work is discussed a consideration of Carl Jung's, Alfred Adler's, and Karen Horney's contributions to narcissism theory is presented in order to determine the impact of Freud's work on his contemporaries, and to trace the evolution of the concept from Freud to present

analysts. When we study Kernberg's work we find that he stresses narcissism as psychopathology and he elaborates a theory which improves on Freud's original work in some respects.

The final view of narcissism considered is Kohut's. Kohut elucidates a theory of personality in which narcissism plays a central role. Additionally, Kohut emphasizes the positive value of narcissism, setting himself apart from more orthodox writers.

Freud's Theory of Narcissism

Freud was the first theorist to fully develop the concept of narcissism in psychodynamic theory. Delineating Freud's view of narcissism is problematic since he uses the term in several ways. Thus, while narcissism is a major theoretical contribution of Freud's it is ill defined and confusing (B. E. Moore, 1975; Murray, 1964). This may be because Freud made no attempt to integrate the narcissism concept with later concepts, or to revise his views about narcissism when his theoretical outlook changed (B. E. Moore, 1975), or because "Freud the clinician" would not succumb to "Freud the theoretician" and sacrifice astute clinical observations for neat and tidy theory (Balint, 1960). For whatever reasons, delineating Freud's ideas on narcissism is problematic and different writers hold conflicting interpretations of his work. For example, while Loewenstein (1977) maintains that Freud uses the term pejoratively, Dyrud (1983) contends that Freud regards primary narcissism as the basis of self-esteem, thus endowing narcissism with a positive connotation (Ansbacher, 1985).

It must also be mentioned that Freud simultaneously held three conflicting views about the nature of the infant's relation with the environment, only one being primary narcissism (the others being primary autoerotism and primary object love).

(For a complete account of this see Balint [1960].) Therefore, what follows is the clearest interpretation that I can make of Freud's view of narcissism, but it is not the only interpretation.

The Narcissism Theory

Freud was fond of dichotomies. When developing the narcissism concept he differentiated between sexual instincts, rooted in human biology and responsible mainly for perpetuation of the species, and ego instincts, concerned primarily with self-preservation and gratification. According to Freud (1917/1981), justification for distinguishing between the two instincts " . . . is implied in the sexual life as a distinct activity of the individual" (p. 461). However, Freud later notes (p. 463) that sexuality is one means the individual uses to attain satisfaction--but obtaining satisfaction is an ego instinct! It follows that the separation of instincts into the sexual and ego may not be justifiable (i.e., sexual and ego instincts may be confluent). This is exemplified in sexual intercourse, which is not only the means for perpetuating the species but is also pleasurable, that is ego syntonic.

Freud uses this differentiation of instincts as the basis for distinguishing between ego libido and object libido, which is a distinction of paramount importance in Freud's theory of narcissism. Freud (1914/1959b) states that "the differentiation of the libido into that which is proper to the ego and that which attaches itself to objects is a necessary extension of an original hypothesis which discriminated between ego-instincts and sexual instincts" (p. 35). Since the validity of polarizing the instincts into the sexual and ego is questionable (as noted above), and since the distinction between ego and object libido is based on this differentiation, one must then question the validity of distinguishing ego libido from object libido when considering Freud's view of narcissism.

Freud borrows the word "narcissism" from Paul Näcke and Havelock Ellis who use it clinically to refer to a form of sexual perversion in which the individual treats the body as a sexual object. Under Freud's control the term initially came to mean many things since he would use it to help explain such diverse phenomena as homosexual perversion, self-love in children, erogeneity, autoerotism, hypochondriasis, and organ inferiority (B. E. Moore, 1975). However, Freud settled on a developmental view of narcissism in Totem and Taboo. In this book Freud traces back the development of libidinal trends in individuals. He contends that from the beginning the separate components of the sexual instincts work independently to find satisfaction in the subject's own body. This stage of autoerotism is followed by one in which " . . . the hitherto isolated sexual instincts have already come together into a single whole and have also found an object. But this object is not an external one, extraneous to the subject, but it is his own ego, which has been constituted at about this same time" (Freud, 1913/1950, p.88). This is the stage of narcissism and it is followed by a final stage of object choice.

Freud expands on this view in his paper "On Narcissism: An Introduction." Here he notes that features of the narcissistic attitude, as revealed by psychoanalytic observation, can be found in many individuals, suggesting that "a disposition of the libido which must be described as narcissistic . . . might claim a place in the regular sexual development of human beings" (Freud, 1914/1959b, p. 30), and hence narcissism would be " . . . the libidinal complement to the egoism of the instinct of self-preservation" (p. 31).

The narcissism discussed so far is termed primary by Freud to distinguish it from a secondary form. In particular, Freud observes that the megalomania characteristic of children is not seen in adults, presumably because people learn that

to receive satisfaction consideration must be accorded to others. Thus, children learn to cathect an external object, usually the mother or primary caregiver. This is the stage of object choice. However, the libido cathecting an external object may be retracted and used to cathect the subject's own ego, in much the same way as an amoeba extends and retracts its pseudopodia. This retraction of preexisting object libido cathects the individual's ego ideal, a mental institution representing all good aspects of oneself and external objects, and is called secondary narcissism. Thus, the individual begins in a state of primary autoerotism, which is followed successively by primary narcissism and object choice (alongside of which exists secondary narcissism).

Evidence for the Narcissism Theory

The evidence upon which Freud bases his notion of narcissism has been highly criticized. Basically, Freud (1914/1959b) finds support for his narcissism theory in studies of schizophrenia, primitive people, organic disease and hypochondria, sleep, love between the sexes, and the attitude of parents to their children.

Freud observes that the two fundamental characteristics of schizophrenic patients are (a) their megalomania and (b) their withdrawal of interest from the external world. He reasons that the libido withdrawn from external objects in schizophrenics is directed to the subject's own ego, giving rise to megalomania and the state of narcissism. However, he also notes that the megalomania is an exaggeration of an earlier state in childhood in which the child feels omnipotent (since all needs are quickly attended to by the parents) and hence the narcissism arising from the retraction of libidinal cathexes from external objects is of a secondary form " . . . superimposed upon a primary one that is obscured by

manifold influences" (Freud, 1914/1959b, p. 32), though Freud does not specify these influences. Thus, schizophrenics only evidence secondary narcissism, which Freud postulates is superimposed on a primary one, without giving direct evidence for the latter.

Freud argues in Totem and Taboo that there is a parallel between ontogenetic and phylogenetic development. He utilizes this notion to contend that our conception of primitive people as being characterized by megalomania, and in particular by "... an over-estimation of the power of wishes and mental processes, the 'omnipotence of thoughts', a belief in the magical virtue of words, and [by] a method of dealing with the outer world - the art of 'magic' - which appears to be a logical application of these grandiose premises" (Freud, 1914/1959b, p. 32), finds an analogy in the development of a child today. Hence, Freud concludes that a stage of primary narcissism must exist, and so he conceives "... of an original libidinal cathexis of the ego, part of which cathexis is later yielded up to objects, but which fundamentally persists and is related to the object cathexes" (Freud, 1914/1959b, p. 33).

Organic disease and hypochondria have similar manifestations, Freud believes, because the person suffering from either condition relinquishes interest in things of the outside world not concerning his of her suffering, and simultaneously concentrates interest and libido on the organ engaging attention. Hence, both the hypochondriac and the diseased person withdraw libidinal interest from love objects. In terms of the libido theory Freud (1914/1959b) suggests that "the sick man withdraws his libidinal cathexes back upon his own ego, and sends them forth again when he recovers" (p. 39) such that he ceases to love when he suffers.

A similar type of evidence supporting secondary narcissism is offered by

Freud in his analysis of sleep. He argues that "the condition of sleep, like illness, implies a narcissistic withdrawal of the libido away from its attachments back to the subject's own person" (Freud, 1914/1959b, p. 40). Thus, Freud regards these diverse phenomena as evidence of narcissism.

With respect to love between the sexes, Freud contends that originally the person has two sexual objects, namely him- or herself and the woman who is the caregiver, and so postulates a primary narcissism in everybody. Specifically, he states that persons whose libidinal development has been disturbed, such as "perverts and homosexuals," take their own selves instead of their mothers as models for their choice of love objects. This type of object choice is termed narcissistic, and Freud (1914/1959b) believes that "this observation provides us with our strongest motive for regarding the hypothesis of narcissism as a necessary one" (p. 45). However, he later states that "the disturbances to which the original narcissism of the child is exposed, the reactions with which he seeks to protect himself from them, [and] the paths into which he is thereby forced . . . " (p. 49) have not been studied but have been left aside to await future exploration.

Lastly, when considering the attitude of parents toward their children, Freud concedes that primary narcissism is an assumption not easily verified by direct observation. He also suggests, as indirect support for primary narcissism, that the fond attitude which parents display toward their children is actually a revival of the parents' own lost narcissism. In particular, he believes that the parents' feelings are characterized by over estimation, which he regards as a sure indication of narcissistic object choice, as evidenced by their ascribing to the child all manner of perfections while concurrently forgetting all of the child's shortcomings. As Freud (1914/1959b) states, "parental love, which is so touching and at bottom so childish,

is nothing but parental narcissism born again and, transformed though it may be into object love, it reveals its former character infallibly" (p. 49).

Now that we have discussed the fundamental aspects of Freud's theory of narcissism and the evidence upon which he bases his ideas, we may consider criticisms levied against Freud's view as such criticisms have led to reformulations of his original theory.

Critique of Freud

The first difficulty involves an internal contradiction in the theory itself. Before and during the time of writing the "On Narcissism" paper Freud regarded autoerotism as preceding narcissis However, in his Introductory Lectures, written a few years later, he explicitly states that autoerotism is n te developmental stage but rather " . . . the sexual activity of the na age of allocation of the libido" (Freud, 1917/1981, p.465). This does not reflect a change in his theoretical stance since he later endorses his initial view (Pulver, 1970).

Such contradictions are not rare in Freud's writings since he would frequently undergo a theoretical change without reanalyzing old concepts. This has been noted by Balint (1960) who observes that Freud simultaneously held three conflicting views about the nature of the infant's relationship with the environment. In fact, the primary autoerotism view not only conflicts with primary narcissism but explicitly contradicts it as this view argues that the sexual instincts take the mother's breast as a sexual object (recall that in primary narcissism the sexual instincts cathect the individual's own ego and not an external object). Thus, Freud's theory of narcissism contains several internal contradictions.

Another difficulty involves the distinction between narcissistic and object libido. B. E. Moore (1975) questions this distinction and notes that Freud's use of

the phrase "narcissistic libido" suggests a qualitative difference between it and object libido (i.e., narcissistic libido is not merely the attachment of cathexis to self rather an object), even though Freud argues against such qualitative differences.

Similarly, Balint (1960) notes the confusion generated when Freud simultaneously argues that (a) all libido is initially in the id and then cathects objects, and from these object cathexes the ego retracts libido (this implies that all narcissism is secondary as there is no initial ego cathexis); and (b) all libido is initially in the ego, thus creating primary narcissism. Furthermore, in The Ego and the Id Freud concludes that the ego develops gradually through a process of maturation, and hence its cathexis must develop at roughly the same rate. That is, the ego cathexis cannot be primary (Balint, 1960). This leaves the possibility of "id narcissism" as the primary state. However, narcissism, by definition, is a cathexis of the ego! Thus, there is another internal contradiction in Freud's theory of narcissism.

If primary narcissism implies a primal state in which the sexual instincts are aimed at discharge on the self through libidinal cathexis of the ego, we must wonder how " . . . psychic energy may be discharged during this state prior to the child's discovery of his own self and of the object world" (B. E. Moore, 1975, p. 252). That is, how can there be a primary narcissism (i.e., a cathexis of one's own ego) if self, encompassing id, ego, and superego, cannot be differentiated from world? Bing, McLaughlin, and Marburg (1959) suggest that "primary narcissism might be thought of as a primary state of energy distribution not truly narcissistic, since no sufficient ego structure exists for cathexis " (p. 24). Thus, the definition of primary narcissism as a libidinal cathexis of the ego can be questioned because there is no differentiated ego to cathect at this stage of development.

All of the clinical phenomena Freud considers in support of his narcissism theory are examples of secondary narcissism only (B. E. Moore, 1975). This is not surprising since "certain peculiar difficulties [which Freud does not specify] lie in the way of a direct study of [primary] narcissism" (Freud, 1914/1959b, p. 39). It seems that Freud infers the existence of primary narcissism reasoning that there must exist a primary form of narcissism in order for secondary narcissism to exist. As B. E. Moore (1975) states, "primary narcissism was therefore an assumption, avowedly based not on direct observation but on inference" (p. 252). For example, Freud argues that the state of sleep is characterized by a retraction of libido into the ego, which is akin to the state of the infant in the mother's womb. Yet the existence of primary narcissism is only implied in sleep as this state does not constitute prima facie evidence for primary narcissism, only for secondary narcissism.

There are also many specific problems with the evidence Freud adduces. First, Freud's contention that the megalomania and withdrawal of interest from external objects characteristic of schizophrenia is a counterpart of primary narcissism only receives support upon superficial observation of schizophrenic behavior (Balint, 1960). Balint argues instead that "the well-established clinical observation of schizophrenic withdrawal cannot be used as proof of a primary narcissistic state. It would, in fact, be more correct to say that the schizophrenic has a much closer tie with, and is much more dependent on, his environment than the so-called normal or neurotic" (p. 26). (A full account of this thesis is given by Laing [1983].)

Second, while there are parallels between ontogenetic and phylogenetic development, this does not constitute a priori justification for extrapolating from stages of species development to stages of individual development. That certain

parallels exist does not mean that individual and species development proceed in the same way, and hence it may not be valid to postulate a stage of ontogenesis which corresponds to a stage of phylogenesis, as Freud (1914/1959b) does when he argues that the stage of global narcissism characterizing our ancestors must have an analogy in the development of a child today.

Third, Freud's statement that the diseased individual withdraws interest from the environment may be countered by direct observation: Some ill people seek out activities which focus attention away from the ailment (e.g., watching television). Thus, Freud's statement in this regard must be questioned.

Fourth, Freud's statement that sleep is narcissistic because libido is withdrawn from external objects while sleeping overlooks the fact that external objects are re-created in fantasy and cathected there. That is, during sleep we dream of objects, such as parents and friends, which are outside of ourselves in everyday experience. So, external objects are not lost in sleep since libido is led back to th in fantasy.

Fifth, Freud believes that perverts and homosexuals are disturbed, that is not "normal," because they take themselves as love objects. He further believes that taking oneself as a love object is "normal" during the stage of primary narcissism (which, furthermore, Freud regards as a "normal" stage of development). Balint (1960) considers it strange that no "normal" type of person seems to "derive" from, or be associated with fixation at, this stage of development.

Sixth, Freud's belief that the overestimation which parents display toward their children is an indication of the parents' lost narcissism is questionable because such an attitude may characterize the relationship between adults and all children. For example, Freud (1914/1959b) claims that parents " . . . are inclined to suspend

in the child's favour the operation of all those cultural acquirements which their own narcissism has been forced to respect, and to renew in his person the claims for privileges which were long ago given up by themselves" (p. 48). While this may characterize the parent/child relationship it may also reflect the way adults relate to children in general. That is, adults may suspend cultural acquirements in the favor of all children, not just their own, because they know children will shortly have to abide by these acquirements, and hence they allow children to enjoy freedom while still possible. In addition, the fondness which Freud claims characterizes the attitude of parents to their children may not exist consistently in all parents (e.g., unwanted children often elicit resentment in a parent who may subsequently become a child abuser).

A potential problem with some of Freud's evidence is that it is based on pathology (viz., schizophrenia, homosexuality and perversion, and organic disease and hypochondria). This raises the question of whether or not hypotheses concerning normal development derived from pathological states are valid, which is based on the unsettled issue of whether pathological states are qualitatively different from so-called normal states, in which case it is invalid to extrapolate, or just quantitatively different, in which case extrapolation from one to the other is valid. If the debate is settled in favor of the former condition then much of Freud's evidence will be invalidated.

Another difficulty with Freud's theory of primary narcissism is that it has proved very difficult to fix the exact duration of the stage. Freud never specifies the timing of the stage, and subsequent authors describe it as occurring over a wide chronological period, from being exclusively interuterine to beginning as late as the second year of life (Pulver, 1970). Pulver believes that "this lack of agreement on

timing arises from uncertainty about the meaning of the concept of narcissism in terms of object relations" (p. 327). In other words, the direct observation of infants, which is currently the best means available for gathering data about infants, yields information not about the infant's investment of the self (which is the focus in Freud's theory of primary narcissism) but about the vicissitudes of object relationships (i.e., the infant's relationship with external objects), about which nothing is said in the delineation of primary narcissism. Similarly, Freud's narcissism theory may not do justice to the developmental complexities, including the vicissitudes of object relationships, inherent in this early period of life (Pulver, 1970; Stolorow, 1975).

Pulver (1970) mentions a related problem which arises from designating the early months of life as narcissistic, namely that "the designation has led to the application of the term narcissistic to many psychic phenomena occurring during this period which in fact have little or nothing to do with the vicissitudes of libidinal investment" (p. 328). It should not be surprising, then, that Freud's view of narcissism is incompatible with some current information about infants obtained from observational studies. For example, Freud's view that infants in the stage of primary narcissism focus primarily on their inner experiences, such as the rise and fall of tension, is countered by the current observation that infants interact with their environment from the start of life and do not focus primarily on inner experiences (Fast, 1985). Indeed, shortly after Freud introduced his narcissism concept Adler contended that the course of development can be so different between individuals that narcissism cannot be regarded as an innate component of development (Ansbacher, 1985).

In addition to these specific criticisms of Freud's narcissism concept, Pulver

(1970) notes that the validity of the theory upon which narcissism is founded has recently been questioned. Narcissism is grounded in drive theory with economic implications, and "if these aspects of psychoanalytic theory are ultimately found wanting, then this concept of narcissism must also be " (Pulver, 1970, p. 324). Hence, the questionable validity of the theoretical underpinning of narcissism may cause rejection of narcissism itself.

In sum, the evidence presented in this critique of Freud's work argues strongly that his theory of narcissism leaves much to be desired. However, because the theory has considerable explanatory power (Fast, 1985), in helping us to understand borderline conditions for example, which are presumably rooted in infantile narcissism (e.g., borderline characters experience others as self-extensions), and because, as B. E. Moore (1975) states, "it is a nuclear concept which became for Freud an organizing matrix for the construction of psychoanalytic theory, hence an integral part of the whole" (p. 272), it would be unwise to discard it. Significantly, many scholars have reformulated Freud's ideas about narcissism, and it is to a consideration of some of these individuals, and specifically those retaining the psychodynamic view, that we now turn.

Jung, Adler, and Horney on Narcissism

It is surprising that Freud's contemporaries discuss narcissism little given its importance in Freud's work. Nevertheless, Jung, Adler, and Horney address the topic, albeit in relatively little depth. While Kernberg and Kohut are perhaps the most popular current writers on the subject (their work is discussed shortly), it is worthwhile to consider these earlier scholars to assess the evolution of the concept in psychodynamic theory.

Jung's View

Jung refers to narcissism five times in his writings, and he regards it as pathological since this is how most psychoanalysts were using the term at the time (Gordon, 1980). Jung does not deal with narcissism because he never encountered it (Humbert, 1980). Specifically, Humbert (1980) contends that "narcissism is a phenomenon which strikes the observer who takes the outside viewpoint, and that Jung rarely did . . . . Jungian concepts are arrived at not from the standpoint of an observer, but are generated out of, and illuminated by, the confrontation with the unconscious" (pp. 241-242). While Jung infrequently utilizes the term narcissism per se, he discusses related ideas.

Jung describes a character structure which is similar to the narcissistic character disorder (Schwartz-Salant, 1982). There are, however, important differences between Jung and the psychoanalysts regarding this character structure, three of which will now be considered.

First, unlike the Freudians who believe that the narcissistic personality disorder results from difficulties encountered during the narcissistic phase of development, Jung contends that it can occur during any developmental phase.

Second, this character structure can form during any developmental phase because it results when the individual rejects the Self, and this rejection can occur at any time. The Self in Analytical thought is "the archetype of wholeness and the regulating center of the personality. It is experienced as a transpersonal power which transcends the ego, e.g., God" (Schwartz-Salant, 1982, p. 180) and as such it is an " . . . unconscious, organizing principle that collaborates with consciousness" (Humbert, 1980, p. 237). Thus, for Jung the narcissistic character disorder results when the individual deviates from the original innate developmental pattern.

Third, narcissism is a disorder which is not distinct from other nosological categories in terms of its presenting symptoms, but only with respect to the transference/countertransference processes involved. Thus, "the narcissistic character structure is found in personalities of widely varying quality. It can be dominant or an aspect of any psychological pattern . . . for the narcissistic character disorder does not correspond to any one archetypal pattern" (Schwartz-Salant, 1982, p. 26).

As suggested above, what distinguishes the Jungian from other psychodynamic views of narcissism is that for Jung "the narcissistic character structure is a pattern that is a link between the personal and the archetypal realms" (Schwartz-Salant, 1982, p. 26). That is, Jung relates narcissism to the collective unconscious and hence to religion, mythology, and legend. As Schwartz-Salant (1982) points out, "narcissism represents psychic life in transit to or from the archetypal world. And Jung's view of psychic reality is precisely concerned with this issue" (p. 106). This is evidenced by Jung in his alchemical studies in which he grapples with the issue of the relationship between spirit and matter, and in so doing describes the alchemical Mercurius who " . . . represents the archetypal analogue of the phenomenology known as narcissism" (Schwartz-Salant, 1982, p. 36). While we need not consider Jung's research on Mercurius, suffice it to say that "the similarity between the psychoanalytic concept of narcissism and the alchemical image of Mercurius is striking" (Schwartz-Salant, 1982, p. 36). Thus, the analogy between narcissism and Mercurius suggests an archetypal background for narcissism.

This venture into the Jungian consideration of narcissism demonstrates the extent of Analytical work expanding on the original Freudian view. Beside there

not being much Analytical work dealing with the topic, the work which exists suggests that Jungians have no views of narcissism other than those held by other theorists in the psychodynamic tradition, and instead focus on the relationship between the Analytical Self and the narcissism concept (e.g., Fordham, 1971; Gordon, 1980; Humbert, 1980).

In review, for Jung narcissism is predominantly pathological and moves from the personal to the transpersonal (e.g., from the personal unconscious to the collective unconscious, and from a developmental stage to an archetype). While this represents a fundamental change in theoretical orientation and extends our knowledge of narcissism to the spiritual, it does not help much in illuminating the essential structure of narcissism.

Adler's View

It is Adler's theory of the masculine protest which caused Freud to consider narcissism. Specifically, Adler's belief that the neurotic individual attempts to enhance self-esteem vis-à-vis an exaggerated masculine protest led Freud initially to focus on the individual (Ansbacher, 1985).

More importantly, Adler looks at narcissism from a more optimistic view of human nature and social relationships than does Freud. He does this by stressing that the crucial aspect of narcissistic phenomenology " . . . is not the self-love but the other end of the dimension, the exclusion of others" (Ansbacher, 1985, p. 205). This signifies a lack of social interest and represents a personality turned in on itself. Adler's significance for narcissism theory lies in the fact that he looks upon narcissism as the exclusion of others, and in this way furthers our knowledge of the essential structure of narcissism.

Horney's View

Horney's view of narcissism emphasizes abnormal self-idealization. In particular, Horney adopts a developmental view and contends that as the narcissist develops he or she compulsively reacts to basic anxiety by either moving toward, away from, or against the world, such that at any particular moment the narcissist is in only one of these modes of relating and has thus developed a rigid, inflexible connection with the surroundings. However, at some point in time, varying from one individual to another, the narcissist attempts to achieve a sense of unity by integrating these disparate modes of relating into an idealized self-image, which is created basically as a defensive maneuver (Rubins, 1983). This ideal self represents all that the person feels he or she could or should be, but it is impossible to actualize since it is only an abstraction (DeRosis, 1981). Nevertheless, the person identifies totally with this glorified self-image and actually becomes the imaginary, idealized self, maintained despite outside realities by the affect of pride. But beneath the facade lies the real self which wants to engage life on its terms and so combats the idealized self, thus creating the narcissistic neurotic conflict between authentic and inauthentic living, which is often why the person initially seeks help (DeRosis, 1981).

The elements of the idealized self include lofty standards, unwarranted pride, and stringent "shoulds" (the "tyranny of the shoulds") such that identification with any one of these creates the narcissistic condition. That is, for Horney "the pure concept of narcissism was defined as infatuation with one's imagined, idealized attributes of self" (Rubins, 1983, p. 11). Furthermore, narcissism " . . . involves the mastering of life through the creation of a totally admirable image that none can resist. A self-made construct becomes the irresistible object to 'love'" (DeRosis, 1981, p. 346). Horney's view of narcissism, like Freud's, is

developmental. However, Horney's view differs because it stresses narcissism as a purely pathological manifestation of abnormal development, and her emphasis shifts away from libidinal cathexes to the neurotic complement of normal development. In this way she expands our knowledge of narcissism.

After considering what Jung, Adler, and Horney did with narcissism we see that the concept took on more significance in psychodynamic thought as time progressed. Specifically, Jung accepted Freud's view of the concept and dealt instead with related phenomena in the archetypal realm. Then, Adler took the concept and reformulated it in terms of his own theoretical orientation, that of Self Psychology. Finally, Horney expanded on the original Freudian view. This takes us up to current views of narcissism.

Heinz Kohut and Otto Kernberg are among the most prominent theorists on narcissism in contemporary literature. For this reason they receive separate billing here, with Kernberg, the more orthodox of the two, discussed first (Jones, 1981).

Kernberg's Theory of Narcissism

Unlike many theorists who view narcissism in purely pathological terms, Kernberg conceives of both a normal and a pathological form of narcissism, though he focuses on the latter. He differentiates between mature and immature forms of normal narcissism on the one hand, and pathological narcissism on the other hand, which he regards as an over investment in a pathological self (not immature or over investment in the self per se) which arises defensively against an image of a frightening world devoid of life's necessities, especially food and love (Kernberg, 1974). Furthermore, he specifies that mature normal narcissism is self-esteem, normal primitive (immature) narcissism refers to a sense of diffuse well being with the world, and pathological narcissism is the classical "narcissistic personality"

(Loewenstein, 1977).

According to Kernberg, both normal and dysfunctional (pathological) narcissism emerge from the infant's experiences of good and bad objects (e.g., parental acceptance and responsiveness vs. rejection and neglect) which become internalized as good and bad object representations (Stevens, Pfost, & Skelly, 1984). These internal object representations form a unified self concept, which is a precondition of narcissism. That is, there can be no narcissism, which Kernberg defines as the libidinal investment of the self, if there is no self. "Kernberg thus sees people as either developing pathological narcissism and bad object relations as a consequence of bad inner object representations, or developing healthy narcissism and abundant object love as a consequence of good inner object representations" (Loewenstein, 1977, pp. 138-139). Additionally, as a result of the internalization of object representations, Kernberg agrees with Freud that narcissism develops and exists at the expense of object love only with respect to pathological narcissism, for an increase in healthy narcissism leads to an increased investment in the object world (Loewenstein, 1977).

For Kernberg there exist a number of factors which affect the formation of narcissism, including the nature of internalized object representations (this factor is essentially the nature of the attachment experience and is the one which Loewenstein [1977] believes forms the core of narcissism [whether the narcissism is healthy or pathological]), the satisfaction of basic physical and emotional needs like food and love, love and esteem supplies, the superego and its functioning, the nature of the ego ideal, and reality achievements (Loewenstein, 1977). Furthermore, there is a continuum from healthy to pathological narcissism such that a deficiency or distortion in any of the above factors (viz., the nature of internalized

object representations, the satisfaction of basic physical and emotional needs, love and esteem supplies, the superego and its functioning, the ego ideal, and reality achievements) leads to narcissistic problems (most people lie in the middle of the continuum).

This brief account of Kernberg's ideas on narcissism sets the stage for an in depth consideration of his views about normal and pathological narcissism. First, it should be noted that van der Waals gave Kernberg the idea that pathological narcissism is characterized by the simultaneous development of pathological forms of self and object love, rather than it reflecting a fixation in the narcissistic stage of development and a concomitant lack of normalcy in the developmental sequence toward object love, which is the Freudian belief (Kernberg, 1970). Thus, normal narcissism develops simultaneously with normal object relations, and pathological narcissism develops simultaneously with pathological object relations.

Normal Narcissism

Kernberg does not discuss normal narcissism much. In addition to equating the mature form with self-esteem and the immature form with an acceptance of the world and a sense of well being in it, he states that normal narcissism exists in an individual who feels secure, accepted, and appreciated by others since this enhances self and object loving behavior (Loewenstein, 1977).

Perhaps the clearest delineation of Kernberg's view on normal narcissism is provided by Tuttman (1981), who notes that Kernberg defines normal narcissism as the libidinal investment of the self, where the self is an intrapsychic structure composed of multiple self-representations. In turn, "self-representations are mental affective-cognitive structures in the form of images which reflect the person's perception of himself in real interactions with significant others and in fantasied

interactions with internal representations" (Tuttman, 1981, p. 309). Furthermore, Kernberg contends that the self is a part of the ego and the ego contains, in addition to self-representations, object representations and ideal self and object images at various levels of depersonification, abstraction, and integration. Thus, for Kernberg, "the normal self is integrated, in that its component self-representations are dynamically organized into a comprehensive whole. A realistic self-concept incorporates, rather than dissociates, the various component self-representations, and this is a requisite for the libidinal investment of the self" (Tuttman, 1981, p. 309).

Pathological Narcissism

According to Kernberg (1974), "pathological narcissism does not simply reflect libidinal investment in the self in contrast to libidinal investment in objects, but libidinal investment in a pathological self-structure" (p. 258). This definition contrasts Freud's view of narcissism as the libidinal investment of the ego (a part of the self), while Kernberg also believes that this pathological self-structure (viz., the grandiose self) does not correspond to a phase in normal development (Tuttman, 1981). A final distinction between these two theorists is that Freud believes dysfunctional narcissism results from an arrest in normal development, while Kernberg maintains that it results from an aberration of normal development (Stevens et al., 1984). As Kernberg (1974) states, "the structural characteristics of narcissistic personalities cannot be understood simply in terms of fixation at an early level of development or lack of development of certain intrapsychic structures, but as a consequence of the development of pathological (in contrast to normal) differentiation and integration of ego and superego structures deriving from pathological (in contrast to normal) object relationships" (p. 258). In support of

this contention he observes that the grandiose fantasies of small children have a more realistic quality than those of pathological narcissists, and that children can maintain libidinal investments in their mothers during temporary separations while narcissists cannot since they depend on others only for immediate need gratificiation.

What is the pathological development to which Kernberg alludes? Kernberg (1970) contends that a child reared in a cold and unempathic parental environment where the mother or mother surrogate functions well superficially but with indifference and spiteful aggression may develop frustration, resentment, aggressive urges, and a sense of inferiority. As a result the child feels despised and fears not being loved unless perfect and omnipotent. To defend against this fear, and the feeling of being unloved and the object of revengeful hatred, the child identifies with an aspect of the self worthy of envy and admiration (e.g., physical beauty or a special talent). Furthermore, the child constructs images of an ideal self and ideal parents to help compensate for early frustrations. The resulting grandiose self is a synthesis of admired aspects of the child's actual self, the child's ideal self, and the image of ideal parents (i.e., the ideal object). Finally, the unacceptable aspects of the self, notably the rage experienced in response to frustration, must be denied and hence are projected onto external objects, which are then devalued (Stevens et al., 1984). Thus, some individuals become pathologically narcissistic as a defense against their parents (Kernberg, 1970).

The images of an ideal self and ideal parents which the narcissist creates involve the internalization of bad object representations, especially a cold, narcissistic and over protective mother who sees the child as merely an extension of herself (for this reason that the grandiose self is pathological). As Loewenstein

(1977) observes, "such children may have difficulty developing a clear sense of self, because they remain to some extent mere extensions of their mothers. They cannot acquire basic healthy self-love because they have not ever been valued for themselves, but only as an extension of their parents" (p. 141).

Kernberg (1974) views the narcissistic personality structure as centered in an integrated, though highly pathological, grandiose self. Hence, just as normal narcissism revolves around a healthy integrated self, so dysfunctional narcissism revolves around an integrated pathological grandiose self reflecting a condensation of admired aspects of the real self (e.g., the "specialness" of the young child which is reinforced by others), the ideal self (i.e., fantasies of grandeur which compensate the individual for experiences of rage, frustration, and envy), and the ideal object (i.e., the fantasy of an accepting and loving mother, in contradistinction to a devaluated parental object). So, narcissistic characterology is caused by a refusion of internalized self- and object images at a stage of development in which ego boundaries are already stable, that is after self/object differentiation (Kernberg, 1970). The resulting grandiose self is used defensively against a cold interpersonal environment as the individual identifies with his or her own ideal self-image in order to deny any dependency on external objects and the internal representations of these objects (Kernberg, 1970). The integration of this pathological grandiose self also compensates for the lack of integration of a normal self-concept, and in this way "it explains the paradox of relative good ego functioning and surface adaptation in the presence of a predominance of splitting mechanisms, a related constellation of primitive defenses, and the lack of integration of object representations" (Kernberg, 1974, p. 256).

Now that the development of pathological narcissism has been discussed, it

is worthwhile to consider the characteristics of dysfunctionally narcissistic individuals.

First, since dysfunctionally narcissistic individuals have no internally consistent sense of self, because they have never been regarded as "selves" but only as narcissistic extensions of their parents, they remain extraordinarily dependent on others to give them a sense of selfhood. In this way narcissists appear dependent on others, but closer examination reveals that the relationships are only exploitative and parasitic since these others would be discarded if they displayed any lack of interest or absence of approval (Philipson, 1982). As Kernberg (1970) states, "a narcissistic patient experiences his relationships with other people as being purely exploitative, as if he were 'squeezing a lemon and then dropping the remains.' People may appear to him either to have some potential food inside, which the patient has to extract, or to be already emptied and therefore valueless" (p. 57).

Second, these individuals are characterized by self-hate rather than self-love which results from a lack of self-esteem and an inability to love others or engage in mutually beneficial caring relationships with others (Philipson, 1982).

Third, pathological narcissists have profoundly deteriorated object relations because their relationships are not between self and other but between a primitive, pathological grandiose self and the projection of that same self onto others (Tuttman, 1981).

Critique of Kernberg

Most critiques of Kernberg focus on his use of psychotherapy with narcissistic clients rather than on his theory of narcissism (e.g., Tuttman, 1981), which is my concern. Therefore, most of the criticisms here are my own.

If we compare Kernberg's theory of narcissism to the criticisms of Freud's

work on the subject not endemic to Freud's theory, we must conclude that Kernberg's view of narcissism is an improvement over Freud's. For example, Kernberg does not leave as many "loose ends" as Freud, as seen in his stating that narcissism begins after self/object differentiation, thus not leaving us wondering when the development of narcissism begins. Also, by not differentiating between narcissistic ego libido and libido proper (viz., sexual/aggressive psychic energy) Kernberg does not have to worry about determining their independent existences since either could be the libido involved in the narcissistic libidinal investment of the self (i.e., there could be either an undifferentiated pool of libido or separate pools for the different energies, both of which are congruent with Kernberg's theory).

However, there do exist several problems with Kernberg's view of narcissism. First, the evidence he presents to support his ideas is derived almost exclusively from his personal experiences in the therapeutic context, making verification difficult.

Second, given that Kernberg's use of the narcissism concept includes self-esteem, well being, and the classical narcissistic personality (Loewenstein, 1977), it appears that his use of the concept lacks specificity.

Third, Kernberg (1970) contends that the narcissistic structure, namely the defensive fusion of ideal self, ideal object, and self images, is maintained defensively when it is no longer needed because it effectively perpetuates a vicious circle of self-admiration, depreciation of others, and elimination of all actual dependency. The problem is that the narcissistic structure, in perpetuating such a vicious circle, would itself become dysfunctional and would have to be discarded. But Kernberg does not suggest this as an alternative for the narcissist. Rather, Kernberg thinks that narcissists cannot help themselves and their condition will

worsen without therapeutic intervention. However, the relative paucity of clinical cases of narcissism in comparison to its purported abundance in our "culture of narcissism" argues against Kernberg's view.

Finally, Tyson and Tyson (1984) note a number of problems with Kernberg's theory of narcissism. Tyson and Tyson criticize Kernberg's formulation of narcissism for these reasons: (a) it places undue emphasis on the consequences of presumed real events in early childhood, such as parental neglect; (b) it underestimates the centrality of the Oedipus complex; (c) it does not sufficiently take into consideration the role of the superego and its early development in self-esteem regulation; (d) it underestimates the contributions of later developmental stages in personality development; (e) it underestimates the active role of the child in development; and (f) while it overestimates aggressive components, it also underestimates the role of repressed libidinal elements and the caring and loving experiences with mother, in addition to the role these experiences play in the formation and normal functioning of the superego.

Over all it can be seen that Kernberg, like Horney, enhances our understanding of the narcissism concept by redefining it in terms other than those used by Freud. Not only does he look at narcissism from a different perspective than his predecessors, he also analyzes it in extensive detail. Even though there are difficulties with his theory he remains one of the two major theorists in the area of narcissism in contemporary literature. We now turn to the other major theorist, Heinz Kohut.

Kohut's View of Narcissism

Kohut is the final theorist discussed because he has written a theory of personality in which narcissism is a key component. His emphasis on narcissism

resembles my use of the term in the primal narcissism conjecture, considered in chapter four. Kohut elaborates an alternative conceptual framework to classical drive theory in the form of a developmental theory of the self in its relations to self-objects (S. A. Mitchell, 1981), where self-objects are others experienced as part of the self (Jones, 1981). Specifically, Kohut contends that a child is born prepared to adapt to an empathic human milieu, where relatedness is essential to psychological survival, and "the basic motivational energy and the primary unit of analysis in Kohut's system is provided by the relationship of the self to self-objects" (S. A. Mitchell, 1981, p. 319). Kohut's psychology is interpersonal or object relational, and while his formulations are in the language of narcissism his discussions reflect the complexities of the parent/child relationship.

A few comments must be made before considering Kohut's work. To begin with, he revises the concept itself such that narcissism is no longer defined as the libidinal investment of the self, but is defined by the quality of the instinctual charge. In other words, our relationships with others can be narcissistic if we experience others as extensions of ourselves, and as existing solely to meet our needs (i.e., as self-objects). Contrasted with this type of relationship is one in which the other is seen as a "true object," an independent center of existence. Therefore, "being invested with numerous relationships with people indicates very little with regard to narcissism. These others might be regarded (and needed) as reflections and echoes of the self, or alternatively they might be idealized as omnipotent heroes upon whose power and energy we draw" Jones, 1981, p. 30). As Kohut (1978a) says, "the antithesis to narcissism is not the object relation but object love" (p. 429). That is, simply being in relationships with others is not the opposite of narcissism because the others might be regarded as self-extensions.

The opposite of narcissism exists only when others are seen as true objects independent of self.

Just as Kernberg discusses both normal and pathological narcissism, with an emphasis on the pathological, so Kohut also discusses both normal narcissism (qua a developmental progression) and pathological narcissism (caused by arrested development) but with a focus on the former. According to Kohut (1978a), narcissism is viewed negatively even though narcissism per se is neither pathological nor obnoxious. He contends that this prejudice exists because of a comparison of narcissism with object love, and is justified by the belief that it is the more primitive and less adaptive of the two forms of libido distribution. This belief is not based on an objective assessment of the adaptive value of narcissism, but on the intrusion of Western civilization's altruistic value system. This, in addition to the fact that narcissism's contribution to psychic health and adaptation has not been treated extensively, has caused Kohut to stress the positive aspects of narcissism. To do this he has to step outside classical theory, which emphasizes the negative, and so he posits a separate line of development for narcissism (i.e., separate from the development of object libido) which leads from archaic to mature forms. Thus, Kohut (1978b) postulates "... two lines of development (one from archaic narcissism to mature narcissism, the other, side by side with it, from archaic to mature object love), not a single line of development (from narcissism to object love)" (p. 556), as Freud does.

The Development of Normal, Healthy Narcissism

Kohut rejects the traditional psychoanalytic position of a single line of development from narcissism to object love. His starting point is the original distinction made by Freud between narcissistic and object libido, although he alters

the meaning of these terms and suggests that they are independent energy sources which reflect different kinds of experiences and undergo independent developmental and transformational lines (S. A. Mitchell, 1981). Recall that for Freud these two forms of libido are not independent as narcissistic libido is given up to objects in the development from narcissism to object love, and object love may later be retracted into the ego (viz., secondary narcissism).

Kohut's position is significant because both narcissistic and object libido cathect objects, but the objects themselves differ. In particular, object libido cathects true objects which exist independently of the subject, while narcissistic libido cathects self-objects. "The terms narcissistic libido and object libido no longer reflect the target of the energy, as in Freud's original usage, but the quality of the relatedness to the object, with particular emphasis on whether or not the object is experienced as differentiated from the subject" (S. A. Mitchell, 1981, p. 318). Thus, Kohut postulates separate developmental lines for object and narcissistic libido, and further contends that a separate, cohesive self grows from the developmental transformation of narcissistic libido (S. A. Mitchell, 1981).

Leaving aside the development of object relations from the vicissitudes of object libido and focusing on the development of narcissism from the transformations of narcissistic libido, we note that Kohut concurs with Freud about an infantile stage of primary narcissism in which the individual feels grandiose and omnipotent and desires to merge with the omnipotent object (Loewenstein, 1977). Narcissism originates in the primary narcissism of infancy in which the infant cannot distinguish itself from others and, unaware that anything other than the self exists, feels omnipotent (Stevens et al., 1984).

The equilibrium of primary narcissism is disturbed because of imperfections

in parental caretaking, such as traumatic delays in responding to the infant's needs. As a result the infant experiences tension which it attempts to reduce by defensively splitting the good from bad aspects of the self and self-objects such that the inferior elements are projected onto external ("not me") objects (Stevens et al., 1984). Concomitantly, the positive elements are maintained by establishing a grandiose, exhibitionistic image of the self (the "grandiose self") and by projecting the original omnipotence and perfection onto the self-object, that is the parental figure, which is to be idealized (the "idealized parent imago") (Jones, 1981; Lazarus, 1982). ("Imago" is a term used by psychoanalysts referring to "an idealized memory of a beloved person, formed in childhood and not subjected to correction by subsequent events" [Chaplin, 1985, p. 221].) Thus, "both the grandiose self and idealized parent imago are established defensively as the child strives to regain the self-esteem lost through the disruption of the primary narcissism of infancy" (Stevens et al., 1984, p. 384).

Regarding the developmental transformation of the idealized parent imago, which is essentially "an admired you," we discover that it gradually loses significance during the preoedipal period, at which time the ego strengthens as a drive regulating matrix, while during the oedipal period massive loss leads to the formation of the superego. In other words, the idealized parent imago becomes more realistic, that is it faithfully represents the parents as they actually are, as the individual encounters parental imperfections. As Kohut (1978a) states, "every shortcoming detected in the idealized parent leads to a corresponding internal preservation of the externally lost quality of the object" (p. 433). This gradual breakdown of the unrealistic aspects of the idealized parent imago is termed "transmuting internalization" by Kohut (S. A. Mitchell, 1981). In place of the

idealized parent imago emerges the idealized superego (i.e., the ego ideal) as a result of the massive introjection of the idealized qualities of the parental object, and it is experienced in the form of the ideals which we strive to attain. According to Kohut (1978a), the unyielding nature of the superego is explained by this: "The fact that the idealized parent was the carrier of the originally narcissistic perfection and omnipotence accounts now for the omnipotence, omniscience, and perfection of the superego, and it is due to these circumstances that the values and standards of the superego are experienced as absolute" (p. 434).

With respect to the developmental transformation of the grandiose self, which is "a grandiose and exhibitionistic image of the self" (Kohut, 1978c, p. 477), we note that it becomes more realistic as the child becomes cognizant of his of her imperfections. This is achieved by appropriate parental mirroring (i.e., the parents recognize and approve of the child's true expressions and accomplishments) which enhances the child's self-esteem and renders the grandiose self more realistic (Stevens et al., 1984). Nevertheless, remnants of the grandiose self linger as observed in its preconscious correlate, ambition. The grandiose self is gradually tamed under optimal developmental conditions, " . . . and the whole structure ultimately becomes integrated into the adult personality and supplies the instinctual fuel for our ego-syntonic ambitions and purposes, for the enjoyment of our activities, and for important aspects of our self-esteem" (Jones, 1981, p. 31).

The grandiose self and idealized parent imago are the two basic narcissistic configurations, and while they are antithetical they also coexist from the beginning, emerging from narcissistic development along distinct developmental axes. While their separate paths result in distinct psychic contents (viz., ambitions vs. ideals), they are two aspects of the same phenomenon (Jones, 1981).

For Kohut, true object relations only occur after the transmuting internalizations of both basic narcissistic configurations. This is because object relatedness in the Kohutian sense presupposes a cohesive self distinct from objects and the vicissitudes of object libido (S. A. Mitchell, 1981).

In Kohut's usage normal narcissism consists of both the grandiosity of the grandiose self, which is mirrored by the self-object, and by admiration experienced through a fusion with the idealized self-object. This idea is of such import for Kohut that he regards these two branches of narcissism (viz., grandiosity and admiration) as forming the two poles of the self. The core of a healthy and cohesive self contains either a grandiose and exhibitionistic self or the idealized parent imago, while the nuances of the self are determined by the content of these poles and their interrelationship (S. A. Mitchell, 1981).

Kohut's departure from classical theory necessitates his rejection of the economic relation between self-love and object love (viz., an increase in one means a decrease in the other). He rejects this "U-tube theory" based on his basic axiom that object libido and narcissistic libido follow separate developmental lines, and supports his claim with clinical data consistent with his alternative (Hanly & Masson, 1976).

In summary, the main points about normal narcissism are (a) the psychologically mature individual integrates the narcissistic needs of the personality into the ego as healthy self-enjoyment and as a useful sense of disappointment over failures, and (b) the ego ideal serves as a locus for ego syntonic values which directs the individual's activities and which elicits adaptively useful disappointment when it cannot be reached (Kohut, 1978a).

Pathological Narcissism

Unlike Kernberg, who posits distinct developmental sequences for normal and pathological narcissism and hence regards pathological narcissism as resulting from an aberration rather than an arrest of normal development, Kohut's view of pathological narcissism follows directly from his view of normal narcissism. He contends that narcissistic personality disorders are manifestations of a diseased self with defective narcissistic structures. As Kohut (1978b) informs us, "the disease affects either the grandiose self or the archaic omnipotent selfobject (the idealized parent imago). Specifically, these constituents of the self are either fragmented or enfeebled . . . . The narcissistic structures remained fixated in their development" (p. 556). Narcissistic pathology results from an arrest of normal development in which the archaic forms of the grandiose self or idealized parent imago are either repressed or split off from the rest of the psyche (Kohut, 1978b).

The idealized parent imago may remain archaic and cohesive for a number of reasons. These include the parents' unwillingness to serve as idealized self-objects, parental illness or death, traumatic disappointments in the adult on the part of the child, parental self-pathology or narcissistic self-concern, and the child's never being exposed to real parental limitations (which means that nothing can be internalized with which to establish ideals). Such occurrences, especially when traumatic, lead to massive and inadequate internalizations preventing the individual from establishing an idealized superego, with the result that the idealized parent imago is split off from the developing personality and cannot transform into mature ideals. This means that the idealized parent imago remains an archaic, transitional object required for maintenance of narcissistic homeostasis (Kohut, 1978c). Narcissistic pathology may result when the idealized parent imago remains immature and has not transformed into the ego ideal.

As with the idealized parent imago, the grandiose self may be arrested in its development if the child experiences narcissistic trauma. Such trauma usually consists of deficient empathic parental mirroring responses to the phase appropriate exhibitionistic displays of the child's developing self. Such faulty empathic mirroring may be due to parental depression or to the narcissistic self-preoccupation of the parents. Additionally, the child's need for approval may be frustrated, by parental rejection for example, in which case the grandiose self fails to transform and hence the child's grandiosity becomes repressed and inaccessible to reality's modifying influence. The grandiose self remains primitive rather than being transformed into healthy self-expressions, which means that the self cannot be established securely so the child does not build up self-confidence and continually needs external affirmation.

Critique of Kohut

In comparing Kohut's theory of narcissism with Freud's it appears that Kohut's view is an improved product over Freud's. For example, he, like Kernberg, does not leave as many loose ends. However, Kohut's theory does have many of the same problems as Kernberg's. For example, his ideas are based on personal experience in the clinical setting, making verification difficult, and his use of the narcissism concept lacks specificity since it encompasses many phenomena (e.g., self-esteem, rage, and infantile grandiosity).

Additionally, Kohut's theory, like the theories of Freud and Kernberg, has problems which are not easily resolved. S. A. Mitchell (1981) elucidates several. First, he wonders where the drives exist prior to the formation of the cohesive self given Kohut's beliefs that object libido cathects only true objects and true object relations only occur after the formation of a cohesive self. Second, he questions

how the emerging self can relate both to true objects through object libido and self-objects through narcissistic libido. And third, he wants to know what the relationship is between narcissistic and object forms of relatedness as this is not specified by Kohut.

Hanly and Masson (1976) suggest that another problem with Kohut's thesis involves his assertion of an economic independence between narcissistic and object libido, as this distinction is not substantiated by clinical evidence. For example, Hanly and Masson describe a patient who forms a narcissistic transference while remaining basically free of psychopathology in relationships determined by object libido since the narcissistic transference absorbs the disturbances in object relations. This seems to support Kohut's view of an economic independence between narcissistic and object libido. However, this patient suffers from an inability to mobilize object love in relationships, suggesting an exchange relationship between self-love and object love (Hanly & Masson, 1976).

Kohut (1978a) realizes that there are problems with his formulations. For example, he admits that while our ego ideal is observable (i.e., we can "see" our ideals), the narcissistic self is difficult to perceive since it has no object qualities. Thus, the existence of the grandiose self is not easily verifiable. Additionally, Kohut (1978a) admits that his formulations are based on a paucity of evidence when he states that "I am in this presentation often not able to adduce sufficient empirical support for my assertions" (p. 450).

There are at least two other problems in Kohut's view of narcissism which are not dealt with adequately. One is his statement that "an individual's profusion of object relations, in the sense of the observer of the social field, may conceal his

narcissistic experience of the object world; and a person's seeming isolation and loneliness may be the setting for a wealth of current object investments" (Kohut, 1978a, p. 429). The difficulty here is that one cannot determine whether the individual relates to others as self-objects or as true objects, and hence his view that narcissism is defined by the nature or quality of the libidinal investment, instead of the target of the investment, is unfalsifiable. (Falsifiability is one important criterion of a good theory.)

Another minor problem concerns Kohut's belief that parental pathology causes narcissistic pathology in children (Jones, 1981). The difficulty involves determining where the pathology starts. That is, what caused the first individual to become narcissistic? Kohut offers no answer to this question, although Philipson (1982) suggests a possibility by contending that the conditions surrounding mothering in the 1950s caused mothers to become narcissistic. (For a full account of this thesis, see Philipson [1982].)

Edward Jones (1981) critiques Kohut's "empathic science" and view of narcissism. Jones's general criticism is that Kohut eliminates from his theory the social dimension of personality development by not comprehending the impact of social forces on the psyche. He contends that Kohut loses sight of the social context by narrowly focusing on the individual and his or her immediate environment in self-development. Jones argues that the individual and group are engaged in a dynamic interplay of reciprocal influences such that a dialectical interaction is established, and any theory in social science, including Kohut's, must take this reciprocity into account. He criticizes Kohut for emphasizing scientific empathy, which exists when the observer is immersed in the subject's psychological field, as the mode of understanding since it requires the observer to

focus on the individual and lose sight of the broader social context. While Kohut undoubtedly focuses on the individual and pays less attention to various social forces, the legitimacy of Jones's criticism must be weighed against the fact that Kohut must delimit his theorizing and, being an analyst in intimate contact with clients, decides to emphasize the individual. Nevertheless, Jones's point seems reasonable.

Finally, Hanly and Masson (1976) have performed a critical examination of Kohut's view of narcissism. Unlike Jones, they focus on specific aspects of Kohut's theory. For example, they contend that the relative independence of narcissism and sexuality (i.e., narcissistic and object libido) purported by Kohut seems doubtful considering the interaction of these libidinal organizations in development. They further argue that clinical observations are inconsistent with Kohut's distinction between the two forms of libido and present two cases, taken from their therapeutic experiences, for support. However, two cases are insufficient proof for such a claim, and it is perhaps for this reason they state that other clinical material corroborates this assertion and call upon the readers' clinical experience for verification. However, verification of their claim by such a procedure is dubious since experiences in therapy are subject to personal interpretation.

We see that Kohut's theory of narcissism has its problems. But as Freud and Kernberg also have difficulties with their views of narcissism it is unfair to say that one theory is superior to the others. More significantly, each theory elucidates different aspects of narcissism, and as a result a consideration of all three views illuminates more of the phenomenon than does any one on its own.

A Final Remark on Kohut's Theory of Narcissism

Kohut's broader social theorizing (i.e., not dealing specifically with individual development), which, as Jones (1981) notes, is quantitatively limited, emphasizes an affirmative attitude toward narcissism. In particular, Kohut expands our knowledge of narcissism not only by redefining it developmentally, but also by focusing on its positive aspects. He stresses that the most important point to be made about narcissism is " . . . its independent line of development, from the primitive to the most mature, adaptive, and culturally valuable" (Kohut, 1978d, p. 617). Kohut contends that the ideology of the Occident extols altruism and disparages egoism, and he feels that this emphasizes only one aspect of human nature. He compares present day emphasis on altruism with the emphasis on sexual asceticism during the Victorian era and concludes:

> Just as is true with man's sexual desires, so also with his narcissistic needs: neither a contemptuous attitude toward the powerful psychological forces that assert themselves in these two dimensions of human life nor the attempt at their total eradication will lead to genuine progress in man's self-control or social adaptation. (Kohut, 1978d, p. 619)

Kohut views narcissism as a positive force both individually and culturally.

Conclusion

Due to the range of interpretations concerning narcissism, many scholars consider the term overused and confusing. Some scholars claim that a definition of narcissism in clear and precise terms is long overdue (e.g., Hart, 1947; Pulver, 1970). Pulver (1970) suggests that the confusion about narcissism and the overuse of the term results because it is a crude concept accommodating many uses. Nevertheless, narcissism remains an important contribution of psychoanalytical thought.

A final point derives from the work of Jules Glenn (1983), who summarizes many of the configurations of narcissism in life and literature. The many types of narcissism encountered suggest we may all be narcissists. Glenn (1983) alludes to this universality of narcissism by stating that "narcissism is a component of all states of human development and interpersonal relations" (p. 244). This pertains to an important point discussed in chapter four.

CHAPTER 3

THE PHILOSOPHY OF EGOISM

A major purpose of this thesis is to integrate the psychology of narcissism with the philosophy of egoism. A consideration of egoism must now be undertaken. However, a few observations in its regard should first be made.

First, a distinction must be drawn between two forms of egoism, psychological and ethical (normative). Ethical egoism is the view that people ought to act to promote their own interests while subordinating the interests of others to this primary concern (Milo, 1973). Psychological egoism is the view that people are, in fact, always like this (R. Campbell, 1979). Ethical egoism is a moral statement about how people should be, whereas psychological egoism is a statement about how people are, in essence it is a statement about human nature.

Further distinctions must be made between egoism and related terms. For example, egoism is not the same as egotism. An egotist is one who wants to be the center of attention, who believes that his or her life is more interesting than anyone else's (Barnhart, 1976) and is dedicated to putting him- or herself first, at the expense of others (Gauthier, 1974).

Likewise, egoism is not the same as selfishness. Selfishness exists when one is concerned exclusively with one's own interests (Barnhart, 1976; Milo, 1973), as when one tries obtaining as many scarce goods as possible (Gauthier, 1974). An egoist may be egotistic or selfish but need not be.

Historical Overview

A consideration of the chronological development of egoistic philosophy is in order before discussing current views.

The tradition of psychological and ethical egoism in western culture has its

roots in the writings of Thomas Hobbes. His assertion that the object of all voluntary human acts is some good for the individual is not only a succinct espousal of psychological egoism (his "selfish hypothesis") which serves as a key premise in his argument for ethical egoism, but was also a stimulus for much thinking on the nature of self-love and its relationship to benevolence and morality (Milo, 1973). One source of Hobbes's belief in ethical egoism is that "since the individuals in terms of whose coming together social life is to be explained must be presocial individuals, they must lack those characteristics which belong to the compromises of social life and be governed only by their presocial drives" (MacIntyre, 1972, p. 463). For Hobbes all human motivation, including benevolence, is grounded in self-interest (Lawrence, 1948).

Shaftesbury is also a noteworthy scholar in the area. Bishop Joseph Butler popularized Shaftesbury's view of human nature, according to which self-interest and benevolence do not conflict because benevolent conduct satisfies an individual's natural bent. In other words, while benevolence and self-love (self-interest) are independent "passions," there is no fundamental distinction between the two when self-interest is properly "enlightened" since they seek the same goal (Lawrence, 1948; MacIntyre, 1972).

According to Milo (1973), Butler made the first noteworthy contributions to the philosophical analysis of self-love, self-interest, and selfishness, although Hobbes and Shaftesbury were responsible for stimulating much interest in the area. For this reason it is helpful to briefly outline some of Butler's important observations.

First, Butler distinguishes between self-love and particular passions or appetites. Self-love is a general desire for one's own happiness, the object being an

internal state of satisfaction. The particular passions seek satisfaction in particular external objects (e.g., food is the object of hunger). The particular passions are first order desires while self-love is a second order desire because it belongs to one's rational nature, to one's ability to reflect on one's own happiness.

From this Butler concludes that our particular desires are logically prior to self-love since self-love would have no object, that is there would be nothing to constitute our happiness, if we had no particular desires. In contrast to psychological egoism all our motives cannot be reduced to self-love.

Butler also maintains that failure to distinguish between the objects of our particular desires, which are external things themselves, and the pleasure arising from them is apt to cause confusion. This can be seen, according to Butler, by noting that we would derive no pleasure from obtaining such external objects if we had no desire for them.

Next, Butler states that the psychological egoist cannot maintain that the pleasure arising from the satisfaction of a particular desire is always one's own for support of the thesis as this purchases evidence for the thesis at the cost of trivializing it. That is, for the psychological egoist's hypothesis to be significant it must be logically possible for nonegoistic actions to exist even if such actions can never occur due to the psychological make up of humans. Since the psychological egoist argues that (a) a person's voluntary acts are based on the individual's desires, and (b) the person derives pleasure from doing what is desired, then nonegoistic actions are logically impossible--all persons must act from self-love.

Failing to distinguish between self-love and the particular desires, and reducing all desires to self-love, is absurd according to Butler. Given this absurdity, saying that a person's voluntary acts are motivated by the individual's

desires lends no support to the egoist's claim that all actions are motivated by self-love. The particular desires are not only distinct from self-love but may actually conflict with it, and Butler asserts that it is not uncommon for individuals to succumb to passions that lead to their ruin and are in direct opposition to their real interest and self-love.

Finally, Butler argues that benevolence is distinct from self-love and bears the same relationship to self-love as do the other particular desires, and hence is not incompatible with self-love. Butler believes it to be more compatible with self-love than many other desires since the enjoyment experienced in helping others is a principal ingredient of personal happiness. The common belief of an incompatibility between benevolence and self-love arises, he argues, from confusing self-love with selfishness, the latter being incompatible with benevolence since it involves actions which entail a disregard for others.

The last individual considered in this chronological overview of philosophers in the area is David Hume. In general, Hume allies himself with the view that benevolence is not reducible to self-interest, and he excuses those philosophers who do so on the grounds that self-love is a powerful force in human nature, and that the interest of every individual is intimately connected with that of the community. He makes this point explicit by contending that the "moral sentiment" of benevolence persists even when private and public interest interfere: "We have found instances in which private interest was separate from public; in which it was even contrary, and yet we observed the moral sentiment to continue, notwithstanding this disjunction of interests . . . . Compelled by these instances, we must renounce the theory which accounts for every moral sentiment by the principle of self-love" (Hume, 1973, pp. 41-42). He concludes that a "public

affection" exists in which we are not entirely indifferent to the interests of society.

Hume continues his argument for benevolence by stating that the principles governing human nature as observed in daily experience force one to conclude, a priori, that it is impossible for people to be totally indifferent to others and hence a natural sentiment of benevolence exists. Considered a posteriori, he contends that the merit of social virtue derives from the feelings of humanity with which it affects others and hence a natural sentiment of benevolence exists.

This completes our overview of the historical roots of egoistic philosophy. It is apparent that the terms under consideration, such as self-interest, self-love, and benevolence, are not explicitly defined. Additionally, these philosophers maintain a sufficiently narrow view of self-love as to warrant consideration of benevolence as distinct. Contemporary philosophers arguing for the egoistic position criticize their predecessors supporting an egoism/altruism distinction, and in so doing clarify the issues by clearly defining the terms.

Ethical Egoism

Generally speaking, ethical egoism is the view that it is morally right (i.e., obligatory) for an individual to act in his or her own self-interest, even when this self-interest conflicts with another's (Kalin, 1970). Unlike psychological egoism it is not a view describing the way people are, but rather the way they should be. The ethical egoist claims that it is not reasonable to act contrary to self-interest even if it is psychologically possible. As Milo (1973) states, "if one believes that it cannot be reasonable for a man to intentionally act contrary to his own interests on the whole, and if one also believes that what morality requires us to do must always be reasonable, then one will naturally conclude that morality cannot really require us ever to sacrifice our genuine, long-range interests" (p. 8).

Ethical egoism is not categorically incompatible with altruism or utilitarianism, as the proponents of these latter views suggest. For example, the doctrine may admit that sometimes the best means to securing one's greatest happiness is by giving pleasure to others, or that directing one's efforts towards getting pleasure for oneself is the best means of increasing the general sum of happiness (G. E. Moore, 1970). Nevertheless, there exists a debate amongst moral philosophers regarding the issue of egoism versus altruism. While this issue is considered in detail later, we now focus on the three basic types of ethical egoism: individual, universal, and rule.

Individual Egoism

Individual (personal) egoism is the view that one ought to pursue one's own self-interest and never sacrifice it for others, and that others ought to sacrifice their interests for oneself in the case of a conflict of interests since one's interests are overriding. That is, if X is an individual egoist, then for any other person, Y, X believes that Y's interests ought to be subordinate to his or her (X's) own.

A number of criticisms can be levied against this view. One is that it is not a proper ethical theory since it contains no fundamental principle describable without using proper names (Hospers, 1973). That is, it lacks universality which, in the opinion of some scholars, is an essential feature of a moral principle (Quinn, 1974). Thus, one objection to individual egoism is that its limited scope makes it inadequate to provide guidance for all but one of its proper targets (Emmons, 1969).

A related objection is that the individual egoist is covertly inconsistent. While such an individual does not claim to be different from other human beings, thus not seeming to warrant special treatment, he or she nonetheless expects special

treatment. It seems reasonable to suppose that everyone like the individual egoist should be granted preferrential status, but this is inadmissible according to the doctrine (Emmons, 1969).

A third problem is that the individual egoist cannot preach this moral norm. Specifically, if one is an individual egoist and if somebody else holds this outlook then the egoism of the other contradicts one's own since, according to this view, only one person can have supreme interests.

Finally, Emmons (1969) contends that despite these rational defects in individual egoism the ultimate objection is moral rather than intellectual. He states that "we object to the character of the man who lives consistent with the norm in question . . . . Hence the 'flaw' in individual egoism is inaccurately labelled if we confine our attention to formal considerations . . . . Our real objection is moral" (p. 311).

The merit of these criticisms has caused ethical egoists to reformulate the doctrine in a universal form, hoping to avoid the pitfalls encountered in individual egoism.

Universal Egoism

In universal (impersonal) egoism the interest to be promoted is extended to everyone whose interest is at stake in the circumstances in question. That is, morally speaking each person ought to perform a specific action, all things considered, if and only if that action is in that person's overall self-interest (i.e., in the long run). This view meets the universalization requirement.

This view has also experienced considerable criticism. For example, one objection to universal egoism appeals to interpersonal "ought" principles like "morally speaking, one ought not to cause another person to do what he ought not

to do" and "morally speaking, if a person ought to perform a given action, then another person ought not forcibly to prevent him from so doing," since these principles conflict with universal egoism in those circumstances in which they imply incompatible courses of action (Quinn, 1974, p. 458). However, this antiegoistic argument is of questionable validity because of the uncertainty that such principles are true (Quinn, 1974).

This view has been subject to debate in the philosophical literature. Both sides of the debate are considered shortly, after discussing rule-egoism.

Rule-Egoism

Ethical egoism may be treated as either an outlook on personal morality formulated in terms of particular acts maximizing self-interest, or as a system of social decision formulated in terms of the adoption of rules compliance with which by everyone aids in the maximization of self-interest (Sanders, 1978). Though the emphasis has been on the former view, John Hospers (1973) argues favorably for the latter.

Hospers maintains that certain rules are in everyone's interest if they are universally operative within society. "For example, the rule prohibiting theft of one's earnings is to the interest even of the person who violates it in practice [e.g., he may be caught, his earnings may be stolen from him, or his guilty conscience may bother him], even though on some occasions it might actually be to his interest to violate the rule (though he is unlikely to know in advance which occasions these will be)" (Hospers, 1973, p. 393). It is not altruism or generosity leading one to assent to such rules, but rational self-interest. Also, the rules may not be to the individual's self-interest in every case, but since one usually does not know in advance which cases these will be it remains in one's interest to follow the rule at

the time of acting, all things considered. "It is to one's own interest to deal honestly with other people, not only because it 'feels better' (to most people) to do so but because if one does not, one will not be honestly dealt with in turn . . . . There are some rules, then, whose adoption it is to the long-range interest of each person in the society to accept and to follow" (Hospers, 1973, p. 392).

Hospers's argument has been furthered by Sanders, who distinguishes two ways of interpreting universal ethical egoism, called "act" and "rule" egoism. Act-egoism applies to specific acts in which one evaluates the act in the specific circumstances in terms of its conduciveness to the agent's self-interest. But in rule-egoism the egoistic principle does not apply directly to specific actions. "One applies it instead to kinds or types of actions, not to the specific instance. What is thus considered is the conduciveness to one's own good that actions of that kind may generally be expected to have" (Sanders, 1976, p. 274). Sanders (1978) further states that "where act-egoism employs as its criterion the egoistic consequences of the particular act done in the particular circumstances, rule-egoism employs as its criterion the egoistic consequences of the adoption of certain rules by everyone" (p. 295). This view is significant because it allows egoism to transcend particular acts and instead be regarded as a system of rules.

This completes our analysis of the three types of ethical egoism. From this analysis it has been surmised that individual egoism is an outdated view receiving minimal support today. Universal egoism is the most popular form of ethical egoism, and is that version of the doctrine dominating the next section dealing with a critique of ethical egoism. Finally, rule-egoism is a relatively new form of ethical egoism having only been the subject of much consideration since Hospers's article in 1973.

Criticisms and Defense of Ethical Egoism

The controversy over the intellectual viability of ethical egoism, especially universal egoism, revolves around three main issues: (a) [redacted] is logically flawed or gives no account of the basic parts of morality, (b) misunderstanding between the parties of the debate regarding the doctrine, and (c) various criticisms which some scholars regard as unwarranted.

Kalin (1975) refutes the claim that ethical egoism cannot serve as a morality. He distinguishes between two kinds of moral reasons: (a) traditional, in which moral reasoning involves the discovery of moral principles and rules; and (b) nontraditional, wherein moral reasoning involves creating and adopting moral principles and rules. Therefore, traditional moral reasoning involves the discovery of the truth of a proposition (i.e., it is reasoning about a particular case) while nontraditional moral reasoning is interpersonal, the purpose being the attainment of mutually satisfactory rules of interaction.

Next, Kalin argues that there are only a few traditional principles, that these principles are egoistic in character, and that nontraditional moral principles must be established using these egoistic ones as their basis otherwise the only reasons in force will be egoistic traditional ones. He argues that morality as a set of nontraditional principles can be based on egoistic reasons, and hence there exists an egoistic morality even though egoism per se does not constitute a set of moral reasons. Furthermore, he contends that morality is nontraditional in character, and that the principles governing moral reasoning are rational because of the egoistic purposes of the individuals involved. That is, "ethical egoism is best understood not as a lone principle which is to be applied as it stands to each action, but rather as the foundation for establishing a system of interpersonal, or moral, reasons which

are nontraditional in character" (Kalin, 1975, p. 339). Thus, egoism can be the framework for a nontraditional morality.

A number of scholars resist the claim that ethical egoism is logically inconsistent. Helen Freeman (1977) contends that "ethical egoism is not an irrational doctrine when considered from the point of view of the rationality of the egoistic principle" (p. 5), and offers for support her observation that the egoist's obligation to serve his or her own interest need not stop the individual from accepting secondary obligations, such as keeping promises and helping others (which are still in the individual's interests since others will likely reciprocate, this being to the individual's advantage).

Similarly, Dwyer (1976), Mack (1973), and Kalin (1970) defend egoism from the view that it is incoherent once universalized. The argument against egoism states that the egoist must desire others to be egoistic, that is to share his or her belief, but this may be against the egoist's self-interest, especially when there is competition. Dwyer, Mack, and Kalin contend that proponents of this antiegoistic view fail to realize that while egoism will not remove conflicts resulting from competing interests, a conflict and a contradiction are not identical. Likewise, being committed to approving of anyone's egoistic behavior and believing that they ought to promote self-interest does not commit one to wanting this. Kalin (1970) states this persuasively by drawing an analogy with competitive games: "I may see how my chess opponent can put my king in check. This is how he ought to move. But believing that he ought to move his bishop and check my king does not commit me to wanting him to do that" (p. 74). Thus, while the egoistic claim that everyone ought to do what is in his or her own self-interest may lead to conflicts, this does not mean that the view is internally contradictory.

We now consider the contention put forth by Regis (1980) that "there is, in fact, no one conception of egoism common to all or most parties to the debate, and in their attacks and defenses, disputants are seldom talking about the same thing" (p. 50). He argues that once properly defined ethical egoism is not only a moral theory which avoids many of its predicated fatal consequences, but is also consonant with the moral responsibilities it is felt people owe to one another (Regis, 1979). That is, some critics of ethical egoism misconstrue the doctrine. For example, critics of ethical egoism regard the requirement of "exclusive" pursuit of self-interest as meaning that an individual should only perform those actions for which he or she is the sole beneficiary, while defenders construe this requirement as meaning that an individual ought only to perform an action if the motive is promotion of self-interest, in which case the action may also benefit others. Only if this requirement is defined in the first sense are many criticisms of the doctrine valid. It seems, then, that the doctrine may not be subject to much criticism once properly explicated.

Many critics of ethical egoism misrepresent the doctrine when criticizing it (Regis, 1980). We now discuss some misconstrued criticisms and others which are unfounded.

Unwarranted Criticisms of Ethical Egoism

Gauthier (1974) criticizes egoism by stating that no complete principle of action meets the conditions of egoism, where a complete principle of action determines an action for every possible situation. Beside it being unlikely for any doctrine to meet this condition, Gauthier holds a narrow view of rational egoism as unrestricted maximization of subjective value. On this basis he tries to prove that there can be no complete principle of unrestricted maximization. However, ethical

egoists do not preach unrestricted maximization, and hence Gauthier's argument does not refute the egoistic doctrine.

Both Emmons and Brunton argue, contrary to most critics, that "the fight against Egoism and its extensions cannot, in the main, be waged by pointing out logical inconsistencies" (Brunton, 1956, p. 303). For instance, Emmons (1969) states categorically that pure reason cannot undermine any normative ethical code, including egoism, and the only effective refutation of egoism must be moral rather than intellectual: "Our principal objection to any form of egoism is at base a moral protest" (p. 314). But what of the altruistic character? An individual whose duty is to sacrifice him- or herself to others is morally appalling as this person would likely have no drive or sense of immediate purpose since the opportunities for self-sacrifice are rare. And if all people are only to sacrifice themselves for others and not gain anything from others (as this would be egoistic), then who is to benefit? Obviously, attacking the egoist on such moral grounds is pointless as there are other characters who could be equally, if not more, morally repugnant.

Laurence Thomas (1980) argues that ethical egoism is unacceptable since its moral dictate is impossible to perform because of our make up as humans. In particular, he contends that humans are not capable of exploiting others for personal advantage, provided there will be no adverse long range side effects, which he states is the egoistic disposition. It is obvious that ethical egoism does not require people to exploit others for personal gain, and hence Thomas's claim seems unwarranted. But if we granted Thomas this claim his argument still has limitations. For example, the success of his argument depends upon defining a friend as one who could not harm or exploit anyone with whom that person is a friend. Beside the definition being tautologous and arbitrary it is also false, for a

person could harm a friend if that person decided that so doing would be in the friend's best interests, such as teaching that friend an important lesson (e.g., "sometimes you have to be cruel to be kind"). In general, then, Thomas's criticism is arbitrary as well as unfounded.

Sanders (1978) levies two criticisms against ethical egoism which are considered by Reed (1979). Sanders first criticizes egoism on the grounds that as a form of consequentialism it implies that people are substitutable, for outcomes are of fundamental importance and hence one agent can be replaced by another. Sanders also criticizes egoism for failing to abstract from the identity of persons, hence making it significant who one is. "Now it is worth noting that Sanders' critique of egoism is incoherent. We may see this by conjoining his criticisms, through which we obtain: egoism implies both that persons are replaceable and that it makes a significant difference who in particular one is" (Reed, 1979, p. 417). Furthermore, Sanders's first claim is false since whose good is at issue makes a difference to the egoist.

Finally, Nielsen (1974) limits the meaning of egoism in his criticism of it by assuming a narrow conception of self-interest in which the egoist must always place self-interest above the interests of others. While this is usually true it is nevertheless consonant with the egoistic doctrine that it is sometimes to one's advantage, especially in the long run, to give "pride of place" to another's consideration in the present. Nielsen's criticism is unwarranted when applied to universal ethical egoism and applies only to a constricted form of egoism (viz., individual act-egoism) which has already been found wanting.

In concluding this discussion of ethical egoism it is worthwhile noting that an excellent article overviewing the history and issues of the debate over the

doctrine is provided by Tibor Machan (1979) in "Recent Work in Ethical Egoism." It is also timely to point out Henry Sidgwick's view, held by other ethical philosophers (including Ayn Rand), that the egoist's own greatest happiness is part of the Universal Good as well as being the rational ultimate end for the individual. That is, utilitarianism is grounded in egoism. Indeed, Sidgwick (1970) affirms the egoistic view by stating the following:

> It would be contrary to Common Sense to deny that the distinction between any one individual and any other is real and fundamental, and that consequently "I" am concerned with the quality of my existence as an individual in a sense, fundamentally important, in which I am not concerned with the quality of the existence of other individuals: and this being so, I do not see how it can be proved that this distinction is not to be taken as fundamental in determining the ultimate end of rational action for an individual. (p. 37)

Psychological Egoism

Psychological egoism is a view of human motivation stating that human beings are so constituted by nature that their primary aim, and the ultimate desire for which all agents are always and only motivated to act, is pursuit of their own happiness or some state of themselves (Milo, 1970; Paterson, 1964). The claim is a strong one that all people always act this way (Nielsen, 1959). Psychological egoists deny that individuals ever voluntarily act to promote the interests of others unless it is also in their interest, and the only thing moving people to act is the belief that such action will promote their interest. As Nielsen (1973) states, "the claim, quite literally, is that for every individual all of his voluntary acts are always acts which are done to further or protect what he believes to be in his own interests or

what will promote or protect what he judges to be his own greatest good" (p. 15).

This definition of psychological egoism is called final psychological egoism, as distinguished from modal psychological egoism. Modal psychological egoism is the view that since "every human act needs a motive, and the motive must be the agent's desire . . . [then] I am condemned forever to be moved by what I want" (Brown, 1979, p. 294). It matters not whether what is desired benefits oneself or others, and hence may be altruistic. The fact that "I" desire it makes it egoistic.

The motivation for action described by psychological egoism may be anywhere from fully conscious to fully unconscious (Lemos, 1960). In this way psychological egoism is not incompatible with altruism since altruistic actions may be covertly egoistic. People are not always consciously egoistic. (Psychoanalytic studies demonstrate that humans are often unconsciously motivated to act.) An example given by Paterson (1964) illustrates this: "In relieving the distress of a beggar, I am terminating the pain which the idea of his distress caused to me . . . . The object even of apparently altruistic actions, therefore, is to bring about a state of myself, to increase my felt happiness or reduce my felt pain" (p. 92).

While it may be contended that psychological egoism is an arbitrary claim not amenable to empirical verification, Michael Slote (1973) argues contrarily that it may have a basis in human psychology. Specifically, he notes that certain behavioristic theories posit the existence of basically "selfish" unlearned primary drives, such as hunger and sex, from which all other motives are derived via laws of reinforcement such that these higher order motives are functionally dependent on the primary ones. That is, a higher order motive like benevolence is associated with the satisfaction of selfish primary drives. While such behavioristic theories may not

adequately explain adult human behavior and motivation, Slote contends that they may be true and they provide a plausible basis for psychological egoism.

Critique of Psychological Egoism

Nielsen (1959) states that there exists no evidence for the psychological egoist's contention that all individuals are always motivated to increase their interest. He admits, however, that the psychological egoist may take a Freudian tack by arguing that our motivation is unconscious. By doing this, however, the doctrine is rendered conclusively irrefutable since there would be no crucial test establishing its truth. In reply it should be pointed out not only that the truth of psychological egoism appears intuitive to many intelligent thinkers, as some authors have indicated (e.g., Broad, 1973), but an irrefutable theory may nevertheless be pragmatic, as Freudian psychoanalysis demonstrates.

Unlike Nielsen, Brown (1979) admits that there is truth in the psychological egoist's claim. He maintains that there is a character trait, sometimes referred to as self-will, in which that fact that it is "I" who wants becomes morally significant. It is his thesis that psychological egoists overuse the truism of this trait to explain human motivation. Hence, he admits the "truism" of a character trait tantamount to a weak version of psychological egoism.

Paterson (1964) defends psychological egoism from those critics who maintain that the doctrine should be dismissed because it is tautologous. These critics note irregularities in the logical architecture of psychological egoism and assert that it is philosophically trivial because of them. However, as Paterson argues, demonstrating the tautological nature of a view and concluding that it is insignificant are different things, and hence the tautological character of psychological egoism does not entail its pragmatic triviality. Paterson further

contends that formal tautologies have been used and understood in advocating particular moral attitudes and courses of social action. For example, when the appropriate factors are present, such as context and speaker, " . . . 'You are the son of your father' ceases to be an empty tautology and becomes an emotional appeal or a melodramatic exhortation" (Paterson, 1964, p. 100). In general, then, "a philosophical theory like Psychological Egoism does not have a logical metabolism of its own, according to which it lives or dies in cool disregard of the human beings who employ it . . . . We are deceiving ourselves if we think that logic can issue some kind of absolute warrant which is impeccable beyond further question. Nothing can" (Paterson, 1964, p. 103).

Broad (1973) claims that psychological egoism is false because there is no one ultimate human motive but rather a plurality. He contends that there seem prima facie to be a number of ultimate desires which humans seek (e.g., getting pleasant experiences and avoiding unpleasant ones, exercising power over others, etc.) that cannot be reduced to a unity, as psychological egoism does. Nevertheless, he admits that psychological egoism is the most plausible attempt to reduce this plurality. It must be noted, however, that it is unresolved whether there are several kinds of ultimate desire or only one, and so Broad's argument remains tentative.

Lastly, we consider the argument advanced by Nielsen (1973) and Brown (1979) that psychological egoism is trivial. They state that it is trivial to maintain that all people are egoistic because they do what they desire as this is an analytically true fact. However, it must be remarked, as with the argument that psychological egoism warrants dismissal because it is tautologous, that the logically vacuous nature of the proposition does not render insignificant its pragmatic utility.

This completes a discussion of the two forms of egoism, ethical and psychological, appearing in most philosophical discourse. Before presenting the egoism versus altruism debate consideration should be given to Ayn Rand's ethical objectivism, a variant of egoistic philosophy, as it has profoundly influenced ethical philosophy since its first publication.

Ethical Objectivism

Ayn Rand's philosophy, a variation of ethical egoism, is termed ethical objectivism. The gist of Randian objectivism is that "the actor must always be the beneficiary of his action and that man must act for his own rational self-interest" (Rand, 1964, p. x).

Rand contends that one acts in order to gain or keep "value," but the value concept is not primary as it presupposes an answer to the question of value for whom or what. Only entities acting to achieve goals in the face of alternatives can have values since there can be no goals or values where no alternatives exist. Furthermore, there is only one fundamental alternative, that between existence and nonexistence, and it pertains only to living organisms since inanimate matter cannot cease to exist but only change form. This is the cardinal principle of objectivist ethics; namely, that "it is only the concept of 'Life' that makes the concept of 'Value' possible. It is only to a living entity that things can be good or evil" (Rand, 1964, pp. 15-16).

Rand further states that an organism's life is its ultimate value and is the standard of value against which all lesser goals, which are means to the ultimate goal, are evaluated, such that what furthers the organism's life is good while what threatens it is evil. Moreover, it is only an end in itself, an ultimate goal, which makes the existence of values possible. Life, being the only phenomenon

metaphysically an end in itself, must be prior to values, which are genetically derived from it.

Rand also contends that living entities need values and must pursue them to remain alive, not just that entities must be alive to have values. As Branden (1970a) observes, "for each living species, the course of action required is specific; what an entity is determines what it ought to do" (p. 201).

As intimated above, "the Objectivist ethics holds man's life as the standard of value--and his own life as the ethical purpose of every individual man" (Rand, 1964, p. 25). This is elaborated on by Branden (1970a):

> Man must choose his values by the standard of that which is required for the life of a human being--which means: he must hold man's life (man's survival qua man) as his standard of value. Since reason is man's basic tool of survival, this means: the life appropriate to a rational being--or: that which is required for the survival of man qua rational being. (p. 199)

This does not mean that one's foremost concern is physical self-preservation as this is incompatible with the standard of human life. Rather, risking one's life may necessary if crucial values are jeopardized. The individual voluntarily risking his or her life to achieve freedom, for example, " . . . is acting on the principle of man's life as the standard of value. He knows what human existence is--and he will not accept anything less. He is unwilling to endure and regard as normal a non-human state of being . . . . It is in the name of the life proper to man that a rational person may be willing to die" (Branden, 1970a, p. 204).

Regarding the social implications of objectivist ethics, Rand maintains that every human being is an end in itself and not the means to the ends of others. Therefore, "man must live for his own sake, neither sacrificing himself to others

nor sacrificing others to himself. To live for his own sake means that the achievement of his own happiness is man's highest moral purpose" (Rand, 1964, p. 27). This is not separate from the maintenance of life as holding one's life as one's ultimate value and pursuing one's happiness as one's highest moral purpose are two aspects of the same achievement. Specifically, pursuing rational goals maintains one's life while the psychological result is an emotional state of happiness, so one lives one's life by experiencing happiness.

However, living for one's happiness entails that one know what this objectively requires. This is why rationality is the cornerstone of objectivist ethics, as happiness results when one lives as a rational being pursuing (via reason and not whim) values which are life serving. As Rand (1964) states, "this is why the objectivist ethics is a morality of rational self-interest--or of rational selfishness" (p. x), and further that "since reason is man's basic means of survival, that which is proper to the life of a rational being is the good; that which negates, opposes or destroys it is the evil" (p. 23).

> The following is a cogent summary of Rand's ethical objectivism:
>
> The Objectivist ethics proudly advocates and upholds rational selfishness--which means: the values required for man's survival qua man--which means: the values required for human survival--not the values produced by the desires.
>
> The Objectivist ethics holds that human good does not require human sacrifices and cannot be achieved by the sacrifice of anyone to anyone. It holds that the rational interests of men do not clash. (Rand, 1964, p. 31)

Critique of Ethical Objectivism

Many criticisms of ethical egoism also apply to ethical objectivism. However, there have been critical articles directed specifically at Rand's doctrine.

Robert Nozick (1971) authored a critique of the Randian argument. Many of his criticisms deal with the logistics of Rand's arguments, although some pertain to the metaphysical underpinnings of her view. He questions Rand's claim that life is the greatest value and suggests there is no argument to support this assertion. While this point may be valid, Nozick's criticisms generally fail because he does not appreciate the content or methodology of Rand's thought (Den Uyl & Rasmussen, 1978). For example, Nozick seeks to disprove Rand's claim that "only living beings have values with a point" not realizing that Rand does not claim this. Rand claims that only living beings have values, period, which is significantly different from Nozick's statement. To claim that "only living beings have values with a point" suggests that nonliving entities have values (albeit without a point)--a claim rejected by Rand. Den Uyl and Rasmussen (1978) observe that Nozick's construction of the Randian argument is not Randian, and thus his criticisms pertain to his own construction and not Rand's statements.

Stephen Taylor (1969), like Nozick, misses the mark with his criticisms of Rand. For example, he claims that, for Rand, an individual ought never to sacrifice him- or herself for another. Yet Rand never says this, and in fact says the contrary. Specifically, ethical objectivism states that an individual should never sacrifice his or her rational <u>values</u>, not that the person <u>per se</u> should not be sacrificed (for example, Branden [1970b] states that one may rationally sacrifice oneself for a loved one if the thought of life without that person seems valueless).

This completes the presentation of egoistic philosophy. We turn now to the egoism versus altruism controversy.

Egoism and Altruism

We must define altruism. There does not exist a unitary definition of the term in the philosophical literature. Some scholars suggest that we may think of altruism as the opposite of ethical egoism, hence regarding the central claim of altruism as negative; namely, that explaining morality cannot be reduced to self-interest. Restated positively, this view asserts that a necessary condition of morality is an interest in others for their own sake, and frequently makes the stronger claim that a desire to help others is a sufficient condition of morality (Laurence Urdang Associates Ltd., 1984). From this perspective Barnhart (1976) reaches the conclusion that "altruism comes at the point when a person loves others but has absolutely no self-interest in so doing, not even an interest in his own pleasure or happiness" (p. 105).

A concise definition is provided by Lemos (1960), who regards ethical altruism as the view that "we ought to act so as to promote the interests of others as well as our own, and that, when there is a conflict between promoting our own interests and those of others, sometimes we ought to sacrifice our own so as to promote those of others" (p. 541).

Finally, Branden (1970a), an ethical objectivist, states that altruism literally means placing others above self. That is, altruism's essence is self-sacrifice.

We may now discuss egoism and altruism together. There is little work in which altruists defend their doctrine from the attacks of egoists. For this reason most of the work considered here involves criticisms of altruism and reinterpretations of altruistic activity in egoistic terms. Since many authors use the term altruism without first providing a definition it is difficult to know precisely how they conceive of altruism in their criticisms and reinterpretations of it.

Criticisms of Altruism

Altruism suffers from several difficulties, primarily logistic. First, altruism is self-contradictory if it contends that one should sacrifice oneself for another, for then it simultaneously denies and affirms the value of self (denying one's own value and affirming another's) (Katz, 1948). Second, altruism allows little place for social reform since the individual is to be sacrificed in the name of society, while concomitantly undermining the individual's sense of dignity (Olson, 1961).

Dwyer (1976) provides a third criticism of altruism based on a statement made by Rand. Rand wonders why, according to altruism, it is moral to give a value away if it is immoral to keep it, and why it is moral for others to accept the value if it is immoral for one to keep it (i.e., if giving the value away is selfless are they not selfish by accepting it?). From this Dwyer concludes that altruism is parasitic on egoism since it presupposes the validity of egoism. In this sense it is self-refuting. He notes a further difficulty with altruism: if, according to altruism, it is moral to serve the values of others rather than one's own in conflicts of interest, then it cannot be moral for others to serve their own values, so they must serve the values of others, who must then serve the values of others, ad infinitum. Altruism leads to a vicious regress in which nobody's values are served by anybody.

A final criticism of altruism, made by Regis (1979), involves the obligation claims of the altruist. An obligation claim only exists if there is a specific connection between debtor and creditor, otherwise the claim is arbitrary. There is unlikely to be a specific debtor/creditor connection if the obligation claim has a wide scope. For an individual to "owe" the rest of humanity requires that person to be connected to them somehow. The only connection is that all are living human

beings, but this connection is unchosen since people do not choose to be human. Finally, the established debtor/creditor connection must not be voluntarily assumed, for then the obligation is contractual rather than altruistic. These are fatal criticisms for altruism but not ethical egoism as the latter denies that individuals have unchosen moral obligations to others. This denial is based on the reasons (a) that an individual is morally responsible only for his or her own being in need, and (b) that a person is not morally obligated to satisfy needs which are not self-created.

These criticisms are problematic for altruism but not egoism. Still, we must consider how egoists explain altruistic activity.

Egoistic Interpretation of Altruistic Activity

Hobbes explains altruistic behavior straightforwardly: "What appears to be altruism is always in fact, in one way or another, disguised self-seeking. Undisguised, unmodified self-seeking leads to total social war. The fear of such war leads to the adoption of a regard for others from purely self-interested motives" (MacIntyre, 1972, p. 463). A similar position, iterated by Olson (1961), contends that one's obligation to others derives from one's desire to eliminate conflict.

Sidgwick (1970) suggests that we help others to ameliorate our own distress of seeing them and then other things, such as gratitude received, perpetuates and reinforces benevolence. Similarly, we may behave altruistically to avoid a guilty conscience for not doing so (Lemos, 1960), or for self-approval rather than gratitude from others (Lawrence, 1948), or because we enjoy the feeling of success incurred (Barnhart, 1976). In all cases the motive for altruistic action is self-interested; as in Olson's (1961) assertion that one acts altruistically to secure a favorable position in a spiritual afterlife, or because one is observing an allegedly impersonal moral law.

One's own good is frequently served best by "sacrificing" immediate self-interest for the common good since compliance with the common good, which includes one's own good, is more conducive to self-interest than noncompliance (Sanders, 1976). In this way selfless behavior is covertly egoistic. Likewise, certain self-sacrificial actions may be epiphenomenal. That is, an action not appearing selfish in the present may be selfish when viewed in the long term, as when one (apparently) selflessly devotes oneself to studying medicine to help others while hoping that doing so secures a profitable future. This suggests that altruism may conceal egoism.

Olson (1961) differentiates between deliberate and nondeliberate self-sacrificicial acts. He contends that one may perform a self-sacrificial act if it follows " . . . from a sense of duty or an attitude of benevolence which was itself rationally cultivated in the belief that it was in the agent's best over-all interests and which has become a permanent personality trait over which the agent has little conscious control" (Olson, 1961, p. 534). In these instances one acts on probable knowledge which turns out to be false.

We conclude the discussion of altruism with the work of ethical objectivists as their criticisms are particularly incisive.

Ethical Objectivism and Altruism

Rand (1964) notes that a morality must answer two questions: (a) what are values? and (b) who should benefit from them? Altruism evades defining a moral code of values by substituting the second question for the first, leaving people without moral guidance. It does this by declaring that actions taken for another's benefit are good while actions taken for one's own benefit are evil, making the only criterion of moral value the beneficiary of actions. This, she believes, leads to the

insoluble conflicts and appalling immorality characterizing human relationships.

Rand maintains that this beneficiary criterion of morality leads individuals to regard morality as antagonistic since nothing is to be personally gained. One also learns that relationships bring mutual resentment since they are based on an exchange of unwanted values which neither party is morally permitted to obtain for him- or herself. Additionally, people possess no moral significance except when performing acts of self-sacrifice, which are infrequent. Also, because people support their own lives by self-effort--nature provides no automatic form of survival--a doctrine regarding as evil one's own interests implies that people's desire to live is evil. Such a doctrine must itself be evil, yet Rand maintains that this is the meaning of altruism.

Similarly, Branden (1970a) asserts that altruist ethics engender only hostility among people since it forces them to accept a role as object of sacrifice and profiteer on human sacrifices. It also leaves people with no standard of justice in an amoral jungle. For these reasons "a morality that tells man that he is to regard himself as a sacrificial animal, is <u>not</u> an expression of benevolence or good will . . . Contrary to the pretentions of altruism's advocates, it is human brotherhood and good will among men that altruism makes impossible" (Branden, 1970a, p. 206). He argues that benevolence and respect for others' rights proceeds from an opposite code of morality in which the individual is not a sacrificial object but an entity of supreme value, wherein the person exists for his or her own sake and not as a means to the ends of others. This opposite morality (viz., ethical objectivism) rests on the value of a person's life, while altruism is premised on the idea that a person's life has no value as it is an object of sacrifice. But if altruism is correct and people are ciphers, then why should anyone be concerned to help others?

Branden (1970a) concludes that "it is only the rational man's view of the individual's value that can provide an incentive or reason to help anyone--but his view is incompatible with the creed of self-sacrifice" (p. 208).

Likewise, Rand contends that altruism permits no concept of a self-respecting and self-supporting individual as all people are victims of sacrifice and parasitic profiteers on sacrifice. This causes the cynicism and guilt in which most people spend their lives: "cynicism, because they neither practice nor accept the altruist morality--guilt, because they dare not reject it" (Rand, 1964, p. [illegible]).

Rand criticizes individuals who accept [illegible] ethic for they must suffer the following: (a) lack of self-esteem since [illegible] primary concern is not how to live their lives but how to sacrifice them, (b) [illegible] respect for others since all people are objects of sacrifice and profiteers on sacrifice, (c) a nightmare view of existence since disasters are the primary concern, and (d) an indifference to ethics and a cynical amorality since they are unlikely to encounter the situations in the questions they are concerned with as these situations bear no relation to actual problems.

Rand's final criticism of altruism is that altruistic doctrines are "moral cannibalism" since they are premised on the idea that one person's happiness necessitates another's injury.

Finally, Rand disapproves of the way in which altruists describe selfish people. According to her, altruists characterize selfish people as murderous brutes stopping at nothing to get what is desired. She contends that altruists do this to make people accept two inhuman tenets: "(a) that any concern with one's own interests is evil, regardless of what these interests might be, and (b) that the brute's activities are in fact to one's own interest" (Rand, 1964, p. vii). It is apparent that

the brute's activities are not self-interested in an enlightened sense, yet this is the image altruists must convey if people are to abide by the altruist ethics.

These criticisms of altruism by ethical objectivists allow for an interpretation of altruistic behavior by Rand.

Rand (1964) states explicitly that "any action that a man undertakes for the benefit of those he loves is not a sacrifice if, in the hierarchy of his values, in the total context of the choices open to him, it achieves that which is of greatest personal (and rational) importance to him" (p. 45). The virtue of helping those one loves is not selflessness, as altruists believe, but integrity and loyalty to one's values and acting in accordance with them.

Ethical objectivists contend that the good will which people display toward others is profoundly egoistic as people feel that others are of value because they are also human beings. In revering others they are also revering themselves.

Altruism apparently has more difficulty with its endemic criticisms than egoism. While this presentation may been biased in favor of egoism, it nevertheless suggests that egoism should be warranted serious consideration as an ethical outlook.

Conclusion

Philosophers have debated about the ingredients of fundamental human nature for centuries, and even if fundamental human nature exists. This chapter presents a philosophical view, egoism, which many scholars contend is fundamental human nature.

This chapter is significant not only because the philosophical outlook investigated here is integrated with the psychology of narcissism in the next chapter, but because the resultant view ("primal narcissism") is much like

psychological egoism with elements of both ethical egoism and objectivism.

CHAPTER 4

THE PRIMAL NARCISSISM CONJECTURE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO EGOISM AND NARCISSISM

The previous chapters form the basis of an original view concerning human nature called primal narcissism, which basically states that people are ultimately concerned with themselves. The primal narcissism conjecture integrates aspects of the psychology of narcissism, such as heightened self-concern, with aspects of the philosophy of egoism, such as promoting one's own interests.

After the primal narcissism view is defined in this chapter some observations regarding it are made. To begin with, it is noted that primal narcissism is observable both in our history and in modern daily living. For example, our prehistoric ancestors hoarding goods necessary for survival, and contemporary business executives accumulating money and power, both evidence primal narcissism overtly. A reasonable question to ask is why, if primal narcissism is a fundamental aspect of human nature (as suggested by the primal narcissism conjecture), is the view original and why has nobody formulated it before? I maintain that it is because we are subject to conflicting societal messages: we are socialized overtly to obey an altruistic ethic, while primal narcissism is covertly encouraged and condoned. That is, we are socialized to suppress the primal narcissism in our innate nature, and for this reason primal narcissism is not conspicuous in most people.

Following this explication of the primal narcissism conjecture, the conjecture is related to the literature on the psychology of narcissism discussed in chapter two. Basically, psychologists have defined narcissism as a libidinal cathexis, differentiating their use of the term from that in the primal narcissism

conjecture, and they underestimate the significance of narcissism by treating it as merely one among many psychological concepts. The primal narcissism conjecture, on the other hand, regards narcissism as a fundamental aspect of human nature.

When the relationship between the primal narcissism conjecture and the egoism literature of chapter three is studied, it becomes apparent that egoist philosophers emphasize utility and logical, rational action. This neglects other aspects of human functioning, such as the nonrational, which are not excluded from consideration by the primal narcissism conjecture. By including the nonlogical, and suggesting that people may act for no other reason than because it makes them "feel good," the primal narcissism conjecture distinguishes itself from egoism. (Hospers [1973] also suggests that people may behave in certain ways because it "feels good" to do so.)

A consideration of the major "forces" in psychology (viz., psychodynamic, behavioral, humanistic/existential) reveals that they all suggest that primal narcissism is an aspect of human nature. Support for the primal narcissism view is therefore derived from a consideration of these forces.

The chapter concludes with a discussion of our "culture of narcissism." This section demonstrates that some scholars view narcissism as an aspect of intrinsic human nature, although narcissism is becoming increasingly more noticeable because contemporary society condones its expression (by emphasizing materialism and individualism). This may help us to understand why the primal narcissism conjecture has only recently been formulated: not until recently has society condoned its expression sufficiently to allow it to become apparent.

My aim in this chapter is to make the primal narcissism conjecture appear

reasonable. This is accomplished by relating the primal narcissism conjecture to the psychology of narcissism and the philosophy of egoism, which are similar to the primal narcissism view, and by presenting a number of observations which suggest the existence of primal narcissism. If I am successful in my ambition the primal narcissism conjecture will be regarded as a valid means of construing an aspect of human nature.

It is necessary at this time to differentiate between the meanings of two important words as they are used in this chapter: concept and conjecture. Primal narcissism is a conjecture and not a concept. While the word "concept" may have equivocal uses, I restrict its use to the psychological definition given by Medin and Smith (1984) as ". . . a mental representation of a simple class (i.e., a class denoted by a single word)" (p. 114), that is, a word reifying a phenomenon producing an image of the phenomenon. Since primal narcissism is not a phenomenon it is therefore not a concept. Heath (1972) likewise notes that the word concept has equivocal uses in philosophy and is perhaps best defined in the context of a particular view, as I am doing here. On the other hand, "conjecture" is basically a suppositional statement presented for consideration, as primal narcissism is. The words "conjecture," "formulation," and "view" are used interchangeably in this chapter as they relate to primal narcissism.

The Primal Narcissism Conjecture

The primal narcissism conjecture maintains that one is ultimately concerned with oneself. As used here "ultimately" means primarily and lastly, for while one does feel concern for others one is fundamentally concerned with oneself. That is, in any situation one's primary concern is oneself and how the situation affects oneself (e.g., whether it is beneficial, harmful, or neither). Furthermore, one may

be concerned about others in the situation but to a lesser extent than one is concerned about oneself. In the final analysis one's overriding concern is oneself. The view is termed primal narcissism because one's ultimate and fundamental concern is oneself--one is "primally" concerned with one's own existence--and since one's ultimate concern is oneself--one's own existence is of concern, and hence is "narcissistic." This suggests, then, that a "primal narcissist" is one whose ultimate concern is oneself, as defined by the primal narcissism conjecture.

I maintain that primal narcissism is a fundamental aspect of human nature. "Human nature" is frequently taken to mean a biological predisposition which manifests itself both consciously and unconsciously. For example, sociobiologists such as Donald Campbell (1975; 1978) and Edward O. Wilson (1978a; 1978b) regard human nature as a genetic predisposition. If primal narcissism is an aspect of human nature, then it may be thought of as biologically given.

It is worthwhile to briefly relate the primal narcissism conjecture to a term connoting a similar meaning (selfishness) and to a term which is essentially antithetical (altruism) in order to provide a context from which to gain a clearer understanding of the conjecture. Primal narcissism and selfishness are alike except for two fundamental differences. First, the selfish person is concerned exclusively with him- or herself, while the primal narcissist is concerned with others but ultimately concerned with him- or herself. Being ultimately concerned with oneself does not mean doing things only for oneself; doing things only for oneself is selfishness. That is, a primal narcissist may do something for another person but be concerned with how this affects him- or herself (e.g., he/she may help a friend because it "feels good" to do so). The selfish person would not do something for another unless it is to his or her advantage (e.g., he/she is paid). Basically, the

attitude of the selfish person is "what is in it for me?" This suggests the second difference between selfishness and primal narcissism: the selfish person has no regard for others while the primal narcissist does. The selfish person does not care about what others think and feel, while the primal narcissist does because he or she knows that it is necessary to maintain good relationships with others since others are necessary to satisfy some needs (e.g., the need for love). It may be beneficial to think of primal narcissism as a modified form of selfishness, with the modifications arising from the differences between the two terms mentioned above.

Essentially, the opposite of primal narcissism is altruism. The essence of altruism is that one is concerned for others over and above a concern for oneself. The primal narcissism conjecture suggests that one cannot be concerned with others as much as or more than one is concerned with oneself. I include the word "essentially" when describing altruism as the opposite of primal narcissism because altruism is actually the antithesis of selfishness, not primal narcissism. Since the selfish person has no concern or regard for others and the altruist is concerned with others over and above a concern with oneself, then selfishness (not primal narcissism) and altruism are opposites. That is, the primal narcissist, unlike the selfish person, is concerned with others, and so primal narcissism is not truly antithetical to altruism (selfishness is). (As noted in chapter three, Bishop Butler likewise contends that benevolence and selfishness are "incompatible.") Since I cannot find an idea or concept truly antithetical to primal narcissism, and altruism is the closest opposite, I describe altruism as "essentially" the opposite of primal narcissism. If the primal narcissism conjecture is true, that is people are not concerned about others as much as or more than they are concerned about themselves, then a way must be found to account for "altruistic" acts which is

compatible with the conjecture. A number of possibilities exist. For example, one may behave altruistically because one "feels good" doing so, or because one thinks that one's altruistic actions may be reciprocated at a time when it is beneficial to have somebody helping oneself. The point is that altruism may be understood in terms of primal narcissism. (Altruism and its relationship to primal narcissism is considered further in the next chapter.)

It should be mentioned that primal narcissism (or egoism or selfishness) and altruism (or benevolence) need not be viewed as antithetical. They may be "oppositional," which means that they form two poles of a single dimension (i.e., they are "bipolar") in which one pole is understood in terms of its opposite (Rychlak, 1981). Such bipolarities establish "dialectical" meaning relations. "The basic idea is that at some level all meaning relations are tied together or they can be brought into a common core of meaning" (Rychlak, 1981, p. 8). This suggests a complementarity between the constructs. Nevertheless, for the purpose of providing a context in which to "visualize" primal narcissism, one may envisage a "self/other" continuum with selfishness at one end and altruism at the other, wherein the primal narcissism conjecture may be thought of as falling in between the two endpoints but closer to the selfishness end. Since the definition of primal narcissism given here is short and ambiguous, explication of it qua various observations and supporting evidence is now presented.

Explication of the Primal Narcissism Conjecture

The oldest philosophical belief concerning human nature claims that people are essentially selfish, and they are obliged to others only as far as these others enhance their personal welfare (J. J. Mitchell, 1972). The primal narcissism conjecture similarly claims that while people are ultimately concerned about

themselves they are concerned about others since others are necessary to satisfy some needs, such as the needs for love and belongingness. This is illustrated by the contemporary view of the prehistoric person hoarding food and shelter for him- or herself and living with others to satisfy basic needs for sex and security (i.e., in the event of attack one is safer in the company of others).

Primal narcissism is observable in our evolution. Our prehistoric ancestors fended for themselves in order to sustain their existence while still being concerned with others who satisfied their basic needs. Furthermore, history abounds with examples of exploitation which can be understood as manifestations of primal narcissism. For example, Russian serfdom, American slavery, and exploitation of the proletariat by the bourgeoisie during the Industrial Revolution each exemplify the enhancement of the powerful at the expense of the weak. These social practices were condoned or accepted by large segments of society and government, and in each case the wealthy who controlled the practices exhibited sufficient concern for those being controlled to keep them in place. This suggests that, in some regards, society perpetuates, and even rewards, primal narcissism.

In modern society primal narcissism is conspicuously observable among those who forsake social "virtues" for personal gain. For example, the business executive stopping at nothing to obtain money, power, or prestige is frequently portrayed in popular literature and television. This type of individual cares for others principally because they help satisfy his or her own needs and desires, and so this type of action is indicative of primal narcissism. A truly selfish person, that is one who is exclusively self-concerned and who displays no regard for others, would not likely succeed in the business world where one must get along with others (e.g., a person who thinks solely of him- or herself would probably make

many enemies--enemies who could stifle his/her climb to the top). In this way the ambitious business executive exemplifies primal narcissism and not selfishness.

Society covertly promulgates primal narcissism by telling people to look out for themselves. The expression "look out for number one" informs us that the individual is most important and others must beware. Likewise, there is a large market for publications which promote the idea that to get ahead in this world you must think of yourself first (e.g., Entrepreneur, Fortune, and Money magazines).

While we are covertly taught to look out for number one, condoning and encouraging primal narcissism, we are simultaneously taught overtly to be considerate of others and to live by the golden rule. (This is what Kohut [1978d] refers to when he discusses the altruistic value system of the Occident.) One might speculate why society encourages people to live in a manner alien to their basic narcissistic nature. One answer is suggested by Freud (cited in J. J. Mitchell, 1972) who asserts that, to exist effectively, civilization must force people out of their natural state of selfishness into a state of social cooperation since this betters the chances for peace and survival. According to Freud, society has decided that it is best for people to stifle their innate nature in order to produce peace. Since our innate nature, which includes primal narcissism, has been stifled, it is not easy to demonstrate the existence of primal narcissism.

If society stifles primal narcissism in order to produce peace, then it is worth knowing how this is done. Carl Rogers (1980) establishes a method by noting that children are totally dependent on others for care and positive regard. (It follows from the primal narcissism conjecture that if primal narcissism is intrinsic to human nature, then children, before socialization takes effect, will exhibit this aspect of their innate nature as primal narcissists.) This regard becomes associated

with conditions of worth which the children introject. That is, children are taught to feel responsibility to others by internalizing their conditions of worth. This is a part of the socialization process. Apparently, then, our initial nature as primal narcissists is modified by socialization, wherein we are taught responsibility to others.

To reiterate, the primal narcissism conjecture states that people are innately self-concerned. The proliferation of narcissism in our "culture of narcissism" results from modern society's allowing it more ventilation by covertly condoning hedonism and materialism. Lasch (1979) states that "people today hunger not for personal salvation . . . but for the feeling, the momentary illusion, of personal well-being, health, and psychic security" (p. 33). Ergo, in one way society allows for a fuller ventilation of primal narcissism.

Society chiefly attempts to minimize primal narcissism by teaching conformity to the altruistic ethic in the belief that this will enhance social (and peaceful) cooperation. However, society accomplishes this by imposing an external standard on all people. Laing (1983) states that "being good is not . . . done out of any positive desire on the individual's own part to do the things that are said by others to be good, but is a negative conformity to a standard that is the other's standard and not one's own, and is prompted by the dread of what might happen if one were to be oneself in actuality" (p. 98). Basically, people conform to the altruistic ethic because they dread what might happen if they do not.

An appreciation of primal narcissism may be gained by considering daydreaming. My experience suggests that while daydreaming a person's concern is him- or herself. For instance, some daydreams involve the daydreamer performing a heroic act, such as saving another's life, which produces a good

feeling or extrinsic reward or admiration. This phenomenon is particularly observable during adolescence when the individual feels special and unique (the "personal fable") especially since it is believed that others are constantly watching (the "imaginary audience").

The research literature on daydreaming primarily involves subjective evaluations of daydreams (e.g., if the subject liked/disliked the daydream) rather than the content of daydreams per se. However, in a review of the literature Singer (1975) found that the content of daydreams, though differing in specifics (e.g., from "tortured self-examination" to an interest in one's own fantasies), revolves around oneself, and some aspect of oneself, such as achievement orientation, is the focus of the daydream. This is significant since the focus of a daydream is oneself.

The primal narcissism conjecture is a sweeping statement regarding human nature. Such statements are frequently criticized for overgeneralization and for ignoring scientific method. This point is made by Bader and Philipson (1980):

> It is notoriously difficult to demonstrate convincingly that particular psychological themes and traits are widespread, culturally syntonic, and subject to social-historical change. Such proposals usually meet both the psychoanalytic objection that the rich complexity and variation of intrapsychic life are glossed over, and the positivist retort that the simple requisites of scientific method have been grossly ignored in the attempt at psychoanalytic explanation. (p. 301)

While this caution is worth noting, it is nevertheless apparent that primal narcissism represents a "particular psychological theme" which I seek to demonstrate is widespread. The validity of this claim has not prevented scholars from describing diverse psychological phenomena in terms of self-made constructions, and it is in

this tradition that I write.

Egoism, Narcissism, and the Primal Narcissism Conjecture

The psychology of narcissism and the philosophy of egoism are related to the primal narcissism view. A relationship between narcissism and egoism has been noted by both philosophers and psychologists. Paterson (1964), for example, defines psychological egoism as the theory that all actions are motivated by self-love, where self-love and narcissism are commonly regarded as synonymous. Freud (1916/1959a) directly links egoism to narcissism by stating that "narcissism and egoism are indeed one and the same; the word 'narcissism' is only employed to emphasize that this egoism is a libidinal phenomenon as well; or, to put it another way, narcissism may be described as the libidinal complement of egoism" (p. 138). The relationship which exists between narcissism, egoism, and primal narcissism will now be explicated.

The Relationship Between Narcissism and Primal Narcissism

According to Freud (1917/1981), "narcissism is the universal and original state of things, from which object-love is only later developed, without the narcissism disappearing on that account" (p. 465). This emphasizes two points. First, primary narcissism is integral in personality development. Second, and more important, this original state is not overcome with the onset of object choice. The child does not truly cathect an external love object since the child views the external object as a self-extension, hence maintaining the ego cathexis.

Andreas-Salomé (1962) states that "narcissism is not limited to a single phase of the libido, but is a part of our self-love which accompanies all phases. It is not merely a primitive point of departure of development but remains as a kind of fundamental continuity in all the subsequent object cathexes of the libido" (p. 3).

She draws an analogy between the narcissism/object love relation and the plant growing toward the light while remaining embedded in the earth and contends that psychoanalytic investigation provides abundant confirmation (e.g., from studies of masochism and sexuality) that object libido is narcissistic and hence object love is self-love in disguise.

The primal narcissism conjecture likewise suggests that, since primal narcissism represents a fundamental aspect of human nature, all children are primally narcissistic and all people remain grounded in primal narcissism through their adult years. This belief finds support in Freud's idea of the Oedipus complex. Children likely pass through the stage of narcissism into object choice because they receive parental censure for being self-absorbed. Freud's hypothesis concerning the Oedipus complex illustrates that primary narcissism appears to be relinquished but actually is not. Specifically, during this period the child chooses the opposite sex parent as a love object. Since parents are viewed as extensions of the child (they satisfy the child's needs) the child maintains a self-cathexis while apparently loving the parents. In this way Freudian theory implies that object love is disguised narcissism resulting from an individual's relinquishing self-absorption in the face of social pressures. The primal narcissism conjecture similarly suggests that we are socialized into feeling responsibility to others, and a primary reason why we are concerned with others is that they help us satisfy our own needs.

Secondary narcissism, as evidenced by Freud, may be derivative of primal narcissism. It is usually not apparent that all people are primally narcissistic. Secondary narcissism may represent an extreme in which one's primal narcissism is visible because the social pressures required to minimize it are ineffective.

Unlike Freud's theory of narcissism, primal narcissism is not a stage of

development but is a fundamental aspect of human existence permeating all stages of the lifespan. Nevertheless, primal narcissism changes form during maturation to meet cultural acquirements (viz., it is very obvious in children but not nearly as obvious in adults as they are socialized to suppress it [as noted earlier]). For instance, adults display primal narcissism covertly by collecting material possessions which function as self-extensions. (This idea is elaborated upon in the next chapter.)

Freud contends that an early stage of our species' evolution is characterized by a belief in the omnipotence of thoughts, supporting his view of an early stage of global narcissism. The modern view which regards the prehistoric person as basically a selfish hoarder of goods similarly exemplifies primal narcissism overtly.

Some observations are pertinent at this time. First, the phenomena discussed by Freud can be described in terms of primal narcissism without positing the existence of libido and intrapsychic structures. This makes it a more parsimonious account which avoids the difficulties involved in proving that these entities exist. Second, that Freud is criticized for his narcissism theory does not deter from the significance of the primal narcissism conjecture to explain his findings. This is because criticisms of Freud's view of narcissism involve internal contradictions in his logic, difficulties with his use of libido theory, or criticisms endemic to his view. This suggests that while the primal narcissism view accounts for the phenomena considered by Freud it does not have the difficulties of Freud's theory.

Jung, Adler, Horney, and Primal Narcissism

For Jung, narcissism bridges the personal and archetypal worlds, and hence is a part of the collective unconscious. This removes narcissism from the realm of

conscious awareness and rationality, much as the primal narcissism conjecture does (this point is discussed in the section entitled "logical, rational action and primal narcissism"). Likewise, Adler moves beyond Freud's statements by looking upon narcissism positively (again, this is elaborated upon when considering Kohut). Finally, in Horney's theory the narcissist does nothing of merit except as an accidental side effect of the need for self-aggrandizement (Douglas, 1981). This view parallels one suggested by the primal narcissism formulation, namely that one only helps out another person because it is to one's advantage or because it makes one feel good, and is considered in the next chapter. This paragraph relates the primal narcissism conjecture to the views of these scholars (considered in chapter two) and concurrently foreshadows material to be considered.

Kernberg and Primal Narcissism

Kernberg concentrates on the negative aspects of narcissistic characterology. His statements on normal narcissism are basically an elaboration of Freud's original writings. However, he envisions a continuum from healthy to pathological narcissism. This continuum could result if some people covertly display primal narcissism (those at the "healthy" end of the continuum) while others overtly manifest it (those at the "pathological" end). Those at the healthy end of the continuum have accommodated themselves to the altruistic ideology traditionally pervading Western civilization, while those at the pathological end are susceptible to trends, becoming more pronounced in our narcissistic culture, which emphasize individuality and materialism. This helps us to understand why the narcissistic personality is becoming more pronounced (more is said about this in the section of this chapter dealing with the "culture of narcissism").

Kohut and Primal Narcissism

Kohut's use of the narcissism term resembles the primal narcissism conjecture. For example, by postulating separate developmental lines for object and narcissistic libido he asserts that narcissism is a unique aspect of human nature. The primal narcissism conjecture claims that narcissism is a fundamental aspect of human nature.

Most scholars contend that normal narcissism exists, yet they focus on its pathological dimension. Kohut (1978a) believes that narcissism is evaluated negatively because it is considered more primitive and less adaptive than object love. However, this belief is based on the intrusion of the altruistic value system of the Occident (viz., the emphasis on selflessness and living by such dictums as the golden rule) which emphasizes traits antithetical to narcissism. Kohut attempts to rectify this unfair assessment of narcissism by emphasizing an affirmative attitude toward it, considering narcissism's contribution to psychic health and adaptation. As he (1978d) states:

> We should not deny our ambitions, our wish to dominate, our wish to shine, and our yearning to merge into omnipotent figures, but should instead learn to acknowledge the legitimacy of these narcissistic forces as we have learned to acknowledge the legitimacy of our object-instinctual strivings. We shall then be able . . . to transform our archaic grandiosity and exhibitionism into realistic self-esteem and into pleasure with ourselves, and our yearning to be at one with the omnipotent selfobject into the socially useful, adaptive, and joyful capacity to be enthusiastic and to admire the great after whose lives, deeds, and personalities we can permit ourselves to model our own. (p. 620)

Furthermore, narcissism may be denied or suppressed in response to ostracism. As

Kohut (1978d) warns, "the suppressed but unmodified narcissistic structures, however, become intensified as their expression is blocked; they will break through the brittle controls and will suddenly bring about, not only in individuals but also in whole groups, the unrestrained pursuit of grandiose aims and the resistanceless merger with the omnipotent selfobjects" (pp. 619-620). Kohut believes that we should accept and express our narcissism in a healthy manner, for failure to do so will cause problems when the suppressed narcissism erupts, as it inevitably must. Basically, Kohut (1978a) maintains that psychological maturity results when narcissistic needs are integrated into the personality.

That many scholars discuss narcissism suggests its importance. What distinguishes the primal narcissism conjecture from most views is that it regards narcissism as a fundamental aspect of human nature rather than as a single psychological concept. Jules Glenn (1983), a practicing psychoanalyst for many years, has extensively studied many of the configurations of narcissism in life and literature. He has uncovered a plurality of narcissistic experiences in literature which reflect the many forms of narcissism in life. For example, he suggests that the characters of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Antonio Salieri in Peter Shaffer's play Amadeus behave like twins, and the twin motif has narcissistic connotations (e.g., one twin sees the other as a self-extension). This is significant because the many forms of narcissism he encounters implies the universality of narcissism, and this supports the view that narcissism represents a fundamental aspect of human nature.

In general, the theorists considered here define narcissism libidinally and view it as a clinical or developmental phenomenon. This distinguishes their views from the primal narcissism conjecture, which suggests that narcissism is an

important part of human nature. Most psychologists minimize the importance of narcissism by treating it as merely a single psychological phenomenon. The primal narcissism view makes the importance of narcissism explicit by regarding it as a fundamental aspect of human nature.

The Relationship Between Egoism and Primal Narcissism

Thomas Hobbes's "selfish hypothesis," which states that the object of all voluntary human acts is some good for the individual, is akin to the primal narcissism conjecture except that it deals only with the utility of voluntary actions. The primal narcissism claim that people are ultimately concerned with themselves, on the other hand, can accommodate nonvoluntary actions and actions which do not enhance the utility of the person performing them. For example, a person may behave a certain way for not other reason than it feels good to do so. (This point is elaborated upon in the section on "logical, rational action and primal narcissism".)

Bishop Butler does not advocate psychological egoism because it renders logically impossible nonegoistic actions. However, a proposition is not trivial simply because it is logically vacuous (e.g., it may stimulate the development of new ideas). (The relationship between the primal narcissism conjecture and logical action is discussed further in the section entitled "logical, rational action and primal narcissism.") Butler also contends that benevolence, a principal ingredient of personal happiness, is distinct from self-love. However, by definition a psychological egoist maximizes personal happiness, and so benevolence and self-love may not be distinct. That is, if benevolence contributes to achieving personal happiness (the goal of self-love), then it may not be independent of self-love. Consequently, self-love and benevolence are not necessarily incompatible. This suggests a compatibility between primal narcissism and altruism since Butler's view

of self-love is similar to the primal narcissism conjecture, and the distinction between altruism and benevolence is unclear. (Altruism is discussed further in the next chapter.)

Like Butler, David Hume does not believe that people act benevolently solely to enhance their self-interest. However, he contends that individual and community interests, while distinct, are intimately connected. This distinction follows from the observation that benevolence occasionally persists when public and private interest interfere. However, the "moral sentiment" of benevolence may result from socialization in an altruistic value system where caring for others is advantageous in the long term. In other words, we may be socialized into behaving benevolently on occasion because our benevolent action may be reciprocated in the future. Hence, it may be erroneous to claim that people behave benevolently for a reason other than enhancing their self-interest.

Ethical Egoism and Primal Narcissism

Ethical egoism resembles the primal narcissism conjecture when it declares that it is unreasonable to act contrary to self-interest. The primal narcissism conjecture suggests that ultimately people do not act contrary to self-interest. That is, in the final analysis, when all relevant factors have been considered, people behave in ways which they believe are in their own best interests. Of the three forms of ethical egoism discussed in the previous chapter, individual egoism (a selfish hypothesis abandoned as untenable) is the least like the primal narcissism formulation since it may be properly applied to only one person while primal narcissism characterizes all people. Universal egoism states that it is rational for people to promote their own interests. This is similar to the primal narcissism conjecture, but with an emphasis on rational motivation. Lastly, rule-egoism

maintains that it is advantageous to adopt certain social rules which benefit everybody (including oneself), this being consonant with the primal narcissism conjecture since one's own interests are also enhanced.

It is important to note that being ultimately concerned with oneself does not mean doing things only for oneself. I may do something for others but be concerned with how this affects me. For example, I may help a friend in need of assistance because I feel good doing so and not because my friend needs the help. Sidgwick's (1970) statement that common sense dictates the distinction between myself and others to be fundamental, and I am therefore concerned with myself in an important sense in which I am not concerned with others, epitomizes the primal narcissism view and supports the primal narcissism claim that I may be concerned with others but ultimately concerned with myself.

Psychological Egoism and Primal Narcissism

The primal narcissism conjecture is much like psychological egoism. However, there are differences between them. Psychological egoism is a theory of human motivation while the primal narcissism conjecture deals with a person's ultimate concern (they are not equivalent). For example, I may be motivated to help a friend in need but not ultimately concerned with doing so. This example suggests that motivation is subsumed by ultimate concern. Specifically, motivation refers to the impetus for action while ultimate concern, as used here, involves not only motivation but also the likely outcome of an action, its associated feelings, and generally the benefits which accrue to the person performing the action. With reference to the above example, I may be motivated to help my friend because he helped me before and I feel that I owe him (i.e., I am motivated by reciprocity), but I may not be ultimately concerned with helping him because there are other things

that I would rather do and because it is unlikely that I will benefit in any way.

On the basis that one is only motivated to promote one's own interests psychological egoists deny that one voluntarily promotes another's interests unless doing so also enhances the interests of oneself. The primal narcissism conjecture does not emphasize utility. It follows from the primal narcissism conjecture that one may promote another's interests because one "feels good" doing so. For example, I may help someone cross the street because it makes me feel good even though it is not in my interest (e.g., it is unlikely that my action will be reciprocated).

Aside from these differences psychological egoism and the primal narcissism conjecture are much alike. Psychological egoism emphasizes voluntary, conscious, rational, and logical action. The primal narcissism formulation also encompasses the unconscious, nonrational, and nonlogical aspects of human functioning. (This point is elaborated upon in the upcoming section "logical, rational action and primal narcissism.")

Ethical Objectivism and Primal Narcissism

Ethical objectivists stress rational self-interest more than the psychological egoists do. Apart from this the two views are similar, and consequently ethical objectivism and psychological egoism bear much the same relationship to the primal narcissism conjecture.

The primal narcissism formulation and the philosophies of egoism differ regarding the role of the rational and logical, as alluded to above. We now consider the difference.

Logical, Rational Action and Primal Narcissism

Egoistic philosophies emphasize logical, rational action which maximizes

utility while the primal narcissism conjecture suggests that one may act in a certain way because it feels good, without regard to utility. Emphasizing logical, rational action neglects other aspects of human functioning, such as intuition (i.e., getting a "hunch" about something or gaining knowledge without rational thought). The intuitive and feeling character types are worthy of serious consideration. The claim that people always rationally think to enhance their utility does not follow from the primal narcissism conjecture, which suggests that something may be done because it makes one "feel good."

By including the fact that people may act nonrationally or nonlogically the primal narcissism view improves on traditional egoistic formulations. While it may be argued that intuitions and feelings represent the external manifestations of unconscious logical reasoning, in which case the primal narcissism conjecture elaborates on egoistic philosophy only slightly, egoistic philosophers nevertheless imply a conscious reasoning process (in fact, they frequently employ the word "conscious" in their discussions).

Ayn Rand (1964), whose objectivist ethics stress rational action, admits that sensations and emotions are important. However, she regards them as subservient to rationality. It is consistent with the primal narcissism conjecture to regard sensations and emotions themselves as important. Other scholars make similar observations. For example, Andreas-Salomé (1962) states that "we never attain conviction without the privy compliance of the narcissistic demand within us . . . . Our narcissism is nothing other than that mysterious knowledge rooted in the emotional life, which posits the ultimate in subjectivity as the keystone of our objective existence" (p. 15). In other words, we only attain conviction when something "feels right." As Paterson (1964) maintains, "we are deceiving

ourselves if we think that logic can issue some kind of warrant which is impeccable beyond further question. Nothing can" (p. 103).

The "mysterious knowledge rooted in the emotional life" to which Andreas-Salomé refers may be a bodily knowing, as discussed by Prescott for example (in Valle & King, 1978). He discusses a form of knowing in which one senses meaning affectively in the body. This is a form of prereflective knowing which may give rise to articulate, verbal expression. This prereflective knowing may be the basis of the claim, consonant with the primal narcissism conjecture, that a person may do something because he or she feels good doing it.

A few points involving the egoism literature should be made before considering further psychological support for the primal narcissism conjecture. The first is Regis's (1980) criteria necessary to define a view as a successful theory of ethical egoism. Basically, he states that a formulation which satisfies certain criteria may be regarded as a form of ethical egoism. Since the relationship between the primal narcissism conjecture and egoistic philosophies is being established here, it is instructive to determine if the primal narcissism conjecture satisfies Regis's criteria. According to Regis, the following criteria must be satisfied if a formulation is to be regarded as a theory of ethical egoism: (a) it must emphasize the pursuit of self-interest (as the primal narcissism view does by asserting that one is ultimately concerned with oneself); (b) it must not require such pursuit to be the only kind of action (pursuing a goal for another's benefit is compatible with the primal narcissism conjecture) nor must one do all those actions which may be to one's interest (this is consonant with the primal narcissism view); and (c) it must deny that actions done for another are morally obligatory (it follows from the primal narcissism conjecture that one is not obliged to do anything for another although

one may choose to, and it is probably advantageous to do so occasionally). Since the primal narcissism conjecture satisfies these criteria, then according to Regis it qualifies as a theory of ethical egoism.

I have stated that a logically vacuous proposition need not be trivial or insignificant. Supporting this contention is Stolorow's (1975) definition of narcissism, namely "mental activity is narcissistic to the degree that its function is to maintain the structural cohesiveness, temporal stability, and positive affective colouring of the self-representation" (p. 179), which suffers the same logical flaws as the primal narcissism formulation (e.g., it accommodates all psychological phenomena). His article is frequently cited by other scholars despite its logically vacuous definition, indicating that such a view is useful. For example, it stimulates discussion and the development of theory. For this reason the primal narcissism view is not insignificant simply because it is logically vacuous.

The previous two paragraphs suggest that the primal narcissism conjecture may qualify as a theory of ethical egoism (since it satisfies Regis's criteria), and while it is logically vacuous it may nevertheless be significant because it can stimulate discussion and the development of new ideas.

In sum, the term "narcissism" in psychology has acquired a particular meaning (viz., a libidinal cathexis) differentiating it from the primal narcissism conjecture. Egoism differs from the primal narcissism view as it emphasizes rationality. The primal narcissism conjecture is an original formulation integrating aspects of the psychology of narcissism with aspects of the philosophy of egoism, transcending some of the limitations of each in the process (e.g., it does not emphasize rationality as the egoistic philosophies do, and it regards narcissism as a fundamental aspect of human nature rather than as a single psychological

phenomenon).

Further Psychological Support for the Primal Narcissism Claim

The primal narcissism conjecture transcends diverse personality theories by extrapolating from them a common view concerning human nature. It does this by showing that the main "forces" in psychology (viz., psychodynamic, behavioral, humanistic/existential) imply primal narcissism as a fundamental aspect of human nature. Since psychodynamic views have been considered extensively in chapter two we now discuss humanistic/existential-phenomenological psychology and behaviorism as they relate to the primal narcissism view.

Existential-Phenomenology, Humanism, and Primal Narcissism

A consideration of the fundamental constructs of existential-phenomenological psychology suggests that the individual plays a significant role in the theoretical formulations of this view. For example, "being-in-the-world" means that the phenomenological world exists in relation to the individual, or that each individual represents a unique disclosure of the world. In other words, the world is viewed from one's own perspective, suggesting the paramount importance of the individual. Laing (1983) asserts that "we can be ourselves only in and through our world and there is a sense in which 'our' world will die with us although 'the' world will go on without us" (p. 19). Also, phenomenological research explicates one's experience of a phenomenon, again implying the importance of one's own experience.

Rollo May, an existential psychologist, states that "the first ontological characteristic . . . is that all human beings are potentially centered in themselves" and desire to preserve their centers (May, 1979, p. 94). People desire to preserve their centers because they are concerned about themselves. Furthermore, the primal

narcissism conjecture differs from egoism by not stressing logical actions based on utility. In this vein May (1979) contends that "the human being is 'exquisitely rational,' and will choose what is rationally best for him if he is given the right opportunity" (p. 17), which means that one does not have to be consciously rational for what one "feels" may naturally be rational.

The primal narcissism view suggests that Western society covertly condones primal narcissism while overtly minimizing it. May (1984) writes similarly that "on one hand, the society promises that all our wishes will be granted . . . . But there also seems to be in our culture a curious cautiousness . . . we should wait passively until the genie of technology--which we don't push or influence, only await--brings us our appointed gratifications" (p. 263). That is, there is acknowledgement of primal narcissism since all wishes will be satisfied, but this satisfaction is subject to technological advancement. Since most individuals have little control over technological development, which is subject to the control of certain aspects of society (e.g., politicians who provide funding), their ability to satisfy their desires is minimized.

Alexander Lowen similarly observes conflicting societal messages. Our society is economically capitalistic, the essence of which is competition in a free market. The competitive spirit is evident in other spheres of life, such as sports events, and while we are explicitly told that it is not whether you win or lose but how you play the game there is an implicit injunction that winning is everything. This is demonstrated by the frustration that the losers of a competitive game display. This suggests that society sends conflicting messages: overtly it is play fair and be nice while covertly it is look out for number one, a recognition of primal narcissism.

Carl Rogers's humanistic outlook also lends support to the primal narcissism conjecture. Rogers's formulations are based on his experiences in psychotherapy (1961). From these experiences he notes that the individual desires to shed surface behavior and become truly him- or herself. As an individual progresses through therapy "the only question which matters is, 'Am I living in a way which is deeply satisfying to me, and which truly expresses me?'" (p. 119). That is, in therapy people drop the facades they have erected to comply with social demands and accept responsibility for their true selves. This supports the primal narcissism conjecture because it suggests that people are concerned with their "true" selves, not the false selves established to conform to our altruistic ethic. The following excerpt, in which the therapist mirrors the client's sentiment, exemplifies this: "I would face the world as though a part of my primary responsibility was taking care of this precious individual who is me--whom I love" (Rogers, 1980, p. 153). Briefly, Rogers's experiences indicate that while undertaking therapy people become aware of their true selves and strive to live in a self-satisfying manner.

Behaviorism and Primal Narcissism

A number of premises which form the basis of behavioristic psychology lend support to the primal narcissism view. For example, Edward Thorndike's law of effect, which states that organisms repeat those responses emitted just prior to a satisfying state of affairs, and B. F. Skinner's observation that people act to maintain reinforcement and a nonthreatening environment both contend that people perform and repeat acts which are self-satisfying. To know which acts are self-satisfying and to be able to repeat them requires that individuals be concerned with themselves and aware of the processes affecting them.

Similarly, Slote (1973) contends that certain behavioristic theories ground

all motives in selfish unlearned primary drives, implying that all motives are ultimately selfish. Such seemingly unselfish actions as benevolence are satisfying because of their association with selfish primary drives. "The hypothesis does, indeed, entail that we continue to act 'benevolently' or 'self-sacrificingly' only because such action on our part is in general reinforced by the rewarding of selfish primary drives" (p. 103). The primal narcissism conjecture likewise suggests that benevolence is not a unique aspect of human nature but is derivative of people's ultimate concern with themselves. (This issue is analyzed more extensively in the next chapter.)

This consideration of the major forces in psychology reveals that primal narcissism may be observed in each, and while not every personality theory has been considered major representatives of the three forces have been described. The psychodynamic perspective is considered extensively in chapter two and consequently is not dealt with here. We have seen that Rogers's experiences, which form the basis of his humanistic views, and the underlying principles of existential-phenomenological psychology both intimate the importance of the individual. Likewise, certain behavioristic premises support the primal narcissism claim.

The "Culture of Narcissism"

Narcissism has been regarded as both an aspect of intrinsic human nature and as a recent adaptation to cultural change (Dyrud, 1983). For example, Morgenthau and Person (1978) favor the former view when they state that "the celebration of the self has been a recurrent theme in western civilization since antiquity" (p. 337). Battan (1983) bridges the two views when he argues that narcissism is timeless but has acquired a new meaning when applied to recent

changes in American culture, such as the growing preoccupation with solipsistic movements (e.g., the "Moonies"). Likewise, Dervin (1982) notes that narcissism is timeless but has recently surfaced as a dominant type in therapy because analysts are beginning to discard old "preformed conceptions" of mental illness. Kovel (1980) states the position of those scholars who view narcissism as part of human nature: "Narcissism is an aspect of personal life without which human existence would not be thinkable . . . . Narcissism, as the location of desire in the self, is ubiquitous, and indeed transhistorical" (p. 88).

Narcissism may be considered an outgrowth of traditional bourgeois individualism (e.g., see Jacoby, 1980). According to Satow (1981), Durkheim's individualism (viz., the self as the arbiter of reality in which individuals are unwilling to subordinate their self-interest to the collective interest, a worldview produced by the marriage of capitalism with the Protestant Ethic) and modern narcissism are the same but discussion has shifted from economic self-interest to other spheres of existence, such as physical fitness and personal relationships. That is, the concern with the self is now evident in aspects of life other than the economic. Similarly, for Mazlish (1982) contemporary narcissism results from the fusion of American individualism and conformity: "Individualism redefined becomes narcissistic self-indulgence, and conformism is transformed into an agreed-upon withdrawal from society, i.e., the selfish removal from society is now a 'mass,' and not an individualistic action" (p. 186). Lasch's (1979) social commentary suggests that narcissism is a form of decaying individualism. This is evident when he " . . . describes a way of life that is dying--the culture of competitive individualism, which in its decadence has carried the logic of individualism to the extreme of a war of all against all, the pursuit of happiness to

the dead end of a narcissistic preoccupation with the self" (p. 21). These views suggest that narcissism is transhistorical.

In contrast to viewing narcissism as an aspect of human nature it may also be thought of as a new cultural phenomenon. Morgenthau and Person (1978) contend that "the ascendancy of the concern for self as an ultimate value is unmistakable. Take as an example the cultural preoccupation with both survivalism [e.g., building bomb shelters] and self-actualization [e.g., physical fitness]" (p. 337). Marin (1975) argues that ours is an age of narcissism and only the individual matters (e.g., therapies such as "est" tell the client "only you are important"). This is Lasch's (1979) fundamental thesis: "Narcissism appears realistically to represent the best way of coping with the tensions and anxieties of modern life, and the prevailing social conditions therefore tend to bring about narcissistic traits that are present, in varying degrees, in everyone" (p. 101). Note that Lasch regards narcissism as the best coping mechanism for modern ailments, giving rise to the view of narcissism as a new cultural phenomenon, although narcissistic traits exist in all people.

Jacoby (1980) accounts for the ascendency of contemporary narcissism by maintaining that people today are protesting, in the name of individual health and happiness, the irrational sacrifice of the individual for social institutions. This suggests that it is the individual and not the collective which is of importance. For Mazlish (1982) modern American capitalism proliferates narcissism by providing more people with the finances needed to realize their narcissistic desires. That is, while traditionally only the elite had the capital needed to realize their desires, more people today have the required finances due to the success of American capitalism. Wachtel (1981) argues that contemporary narcissism is a corrupted version of the

idealistic questioning of the 1960s in which a serious search for alternative values has been perverted into a search for means of self-aggrandizement. Other scholars state that narcissism fits the logic of capitalism in that an economic system which caters to a consuming public fosters narcissistic qualities (e.g., Aronwitz, 1980). Ewen (1980), summarizing this position, views narcissism as the result of a general trend in the mass culture itself:

> The rise of a world market system; the development of a Protestant ideal of salvation and individual mobility; the development of industrial cities, factories, bureaucracies; the enlightened abandonment of community structure and ritual; and the universal penetration of a wage system of survival--all since the seventeenth century--have generalized the self as the highest form of popular existence. (p. 77)

The emergence of a culture of narcissism seems unmistakable. Mullins and Kopelman (1984) conducted a study to investigate this. They monitored the subject matter of nonfiction bestsellers between 1950 and 1979 and noted an increase over the three decades in the number of popular books with content indicative of narcissism. The content categories were conceptually identified, a priori, in terms of self-absorption (e.g., concern with self-improvement). Hence, there is quantitative evidence to support the claim that societal narcissism is increasing.

This literature on our narcissistic culture supports the contentions of the primal narcissism conjecture that narcissism is an aspect of fundamental human nature--various scholars considered here view narcissism as a timeless aspect of human nature--but narcissism appears to be increasing because conditions present in contemporary society (e.g., the success of capitalism) allow for its expression.

Conclusion

The primal narcissism conjecture represents an integration of narcissism and egoism, and is related to both sets of views. By integrating these views the primal narcissism conjecture has transcended some of the limitations associated with each. As the primal narcissism view is an original formulation, a few comments are in order. First, in accordance with Sidgwick's (1970) proposal that "a psychologist must accept as elementary what introspection carefully performed declares to be so" (p. 30), I posit primal narcissism as a fundamental aspect of human nature based on introspection. This means that the primal narcissism conjecture represents my view of human nature, although similar views have been expressed since antiquity. My view is original since it is the first to integrate egoism and narcissism.

Second, Nielsen (1959) suggests that recurrent ideas are worthy of consideration even though neither common consent nor longevity is a good test for truth. For this reason it is worthwhile considering primal narcissism an aspect of fundamental human nature since similar views (e.g., egoism, narcissism) have been recurrent in Western thought.

Finally, the primal narcissism conjecture provides little ability to fully explain specific facts but may function as an aid to help us understand various psychological phenomena. It is like ethical egoism described by Kalin (1975) as a ground plan not intended to be applied as it stands to each action but to serve as the foundation for establishing a system of rules to help us understand human activity.

CHAPTER 5

ALTRUISM AND THE PRIMAL NARCISSISM CONJECTURE

It would weaken the primal narcissism conjecture if altruism was an aspect of human nature separate from primal narcissism. This is because altruism, as a concern for others over and above a concern for oneself, is essentially the antithesis of primal narcissism. (However, altruism and primal narcissism may be viewed as complements, as noted in the previous chapter.) For this reason a consideration of the nature and origins of altruism is undertaken.

Upon considering a number of definitions of altruism made by scholars in various fields it becomes apparent that while there is no consistent definition of altruism there is a commonality among the definitions, namely that altruism involves a concern for others over and above a concern for oneself. In order to gain an understanding of the concept, altruism is discussed in a developmental context and related to levels of cognitive and moral reasoning, and then sociobiological accounts of altruism are mentioned. The upshot of this discussion is that these various conceptualizations of altruism are consistent with the primal narcissism claim that people are ultimately concerned with themselves. Similarly, a critical examination of the biological and behavioral evidence supporting altruism as a separate aspect of human nature indicates that this evidence, while providing some support for the altruism claim, is interpretable from the perspective of the primal narcissism conjecture. In sum, it is suggested that altruism does not necessarily exist as an aspect of human nature independent of primal narcissism.

It seems contradictory that one could be both ultimately concerned with oneself, as the primal narcissism conjecture states, and simultaneously be concerned with others over and above a concern for oneself, as altruism maintains.

For this reason it is necessary that a way be found to view "altruistic" actions which is compatible with the claim that people are ultimately concerned with themselves if the primal narcissism conjecture is to appear reasonable.

Why should one perform altruistic acts if ultimate concern is with oneself? Three possibilities are mentioned in this chapter. First, one may "feel good" helping somebody in need and may behave altruistically in order to feel good. (John Hospers [1973], an egoist philosopher, also maintains that one may behave in certain ways because it makes one feel good.) For example, one may be reinforced by others for performing altruistic acts, and being reinforced by others makes one "feel good." This suggests that even when helping others one's concern is how this affects oneself and makes one feel. Second, one's altruistic acts may be reciprocated at a future date when it is to one's advantage to have somebody helping oneself. Third, altruistic behaviors are frequently performed when one witnesses another person in distress and decides to help. Seeing another person in distress often creates and inner sense of distress in the witness, and so the witness may help the victim in order to relieve his or her own inner feeling of distress. These reasons for behaving altruistically, consistent with the primal narcissism conjecture, are elaborated upon as the chapter unfolds.

The primal narcissism conjecture implies many things. Since the conjecture paints a general picture regarding an aspect of human nature specific implications (i.e., involving specific contexts) are not forthcoming. Instead a general account of some broad implications is presented here. These implications have in common that one's ultimate concern is oneself. In particular, examples illustrate how the primal narcissism conjecture may be used to help analyze group behavior and the stages of the life cycle. An approach to therapy consistent with the primal narcissism

conjecture, in which the therapist accepts as a foundation for therapeutic work the client's ultimate concern with him- or herself, is also discussed. Finally, ways of understanding psychopathology which follow from the primal narcissism view are considered. These are only a few of the implications of the primal narcissism conjecture, but they are sufficient to create a sense of how the conjecture may be used to help us understand various phenomena.

The chapter concludes with a consideration of the "semiphilosophical" nature of the primal narcissism conjecture and the impossibility of conclusively proving or refuting it. (The term "semiphilosophical" is considered in chapter one.) The semiphilosophical nature of the conjecture arises because experimental evidence does not bear directly on it, and because all human phenomena may be interpreted from the perspective of the conjecture (i.e., it is unfalsifiable). For these reasons the conjecture cannot be proven right or wrong. Instead, the conjecture may function as a heuristic device and provide a context from which one may interpret various phenomena. Emphasis is placed upon the context in which the view was formulated and the relativity involved in human observation. That is, I take a contextualist perspective and maintain that while the primal narcissism conjecture represents my view of an aspect of human nature the same view is unlikely to be held by everybody because we all view things differently, depending on our past experiences, present situation, beliefs, goals, et cetera.

I have three goals in writing this chapter. First, the previous chapter sought to make the primal narcissism conjecture believable by showing how it is related to literature on narcissism and egoism, and by extracting supportive evidence from everyday life. In this chapter I endeavour to make the conjecture appear all the more reasonable by casting doubt on the existence of altruism, essentially the

antithesis of primal narcissism, as a separate aspect of human nature. This is done by criticizing, on conceptual and logical grounds, the evidence supporting the altruism claim (viz., altruism as a separate aspect of human nature). Second, I wish to demonstrate the practical usefulness of the primal narcissism conjecture, and this is accomplished by considering some of its implications. Third, I want to stress that the conjecture is semiphilosophical, and is not intended to be the final treatise concerning human nature.

The Case of Altruism

Various definitions and conceptions of altruism are presented here in order to clarify the meaning of the n and to see how it relates to the primal narcissism conjecture. First, however, it is worthwhile to briefly reco se aspects of the primal narcissism view which are pertinent to a discus ism.

The primal narcissism conjecture states that people ar mately concerned with themselves. They are not exclusively concerned with themselves, which is selfishness, nor ultimately concerned with others, which is the essence of altruism. Being ultimately concerned with themselves does not mean doing things only for themselves, and in this way primal narcissism and altruism are not categorically incompatible. Basically, primal narcissism may be viewed as falling in between the endpoints of a continuum which runs from selfishness to altruism but closer to the selfishness end.

In the previous chapter I stated that we are socialized overtly by an altruistic ethic while our primal narcissism is covertly recognized and condoned, and that while such conflicting social messages exist narcissism is nevertheless becoming more pronounced because contemporary society encourages its expression (by emphasizing materialism and individualism). The distinction between overt and

covert social messages is emphasized here because Donald Campbell, a sociobiologist whose view is considered shortly, similarly distinguishes between biological and social evolution, and observes a conflict between them.

Definitions of Altruism

As noted in chapter three, there is no agreed upon definition of altruism in the philosophical literature. Philosophers have defined altruism as the opposite of ethical egoism in which one loves others independent of self-interest (Barnhart, 1976), as a moral injunction to promote others' interests when they conflict with one's own interests (Lemos, 1960), and as placing others above self, that is self-sacrifice (Branden, 1970a). Philosophers frequently discuss altruism without first defining it, and hence it is difficult to delineate a precise philosophical definition of altruism. However, other scholars, notably those in the social sciences, provide clear definitions of altruism, and it is to a consideration of some of these definitions that we now turn.

Bar-Tal, Raviv, and Leiser (1980) bridge the philosophical and psychological realms by defining altruism in moral and behavioral terms. They state that "only a moral act that aims to benefit another, that is performed voluntarily, and that functions as an end in itself with no expectation of external rewards can be defined as altruistic behavior" (p. 516). A similar definition focusing on the action itself rather than the intention of the action is provided by Rushton (1980). He regards altruism as the opposite of egoism, and defines altruism as " . . . social behavior carried out to achieve positive outcomes for another rather than for the self . . . even at the expense of the self" (p. 8). This definition is not incompatible with the primal narcissism conjecture since one may be ultimately concerned with oneself and still perform behaviors designed to

"achieve positive outcomes for another."

In their book on prosocial behavior, Mussen and Eisenberg-Berg (1977) also provide a definition of altruism which is not incompatible with the primal narcissism conjecture. For them "prosocial behavior [including altruism] refers to actions that are intended to aid or benefit another person or group of people without the actor's anticipation of external rewards. Such actions often entail some cost, self-sacrifice, or risk on the part of the actor" (pp. 3-4). One may be ultimately concerned with oneself and still perform actions intended to benefit others because one feels good doing so. Lastly, the sociobiologist Edward O. Wilson (1978a) states that while "altruism is ordinarily defined as self-destructive behavior performed for the benefit of others," evolutionary biologists provide a stricter definition of altruism " . . . as behavior that enhances the personal genetic fitness of others at the cost of genetic fitness on the part of the altruist; the altruist either reduces its own survival capacity, or curtails its own reproduction, or both" (p. 11).

A common thread runs through these disparate definitions of altruism, namely that altruism involves a concern for others over and above a concern for oneself. For the remainder of this chapter altruism will be defined in this way unless otherwise specified. A greater understanding of altruism may be gained by discussing it in developmental terms and by considering sociobiological accounts of altruism.

Developmental Levels of Altruism

Altruism may be regarded as a developmental construct, changing its nature with advances in cognitive and moral development. For instance, young children behave "altruistically" because they are rewarded for doing so or punished for not

doing so. Most people, however, function at either the conventional or ideological levels of altruism (Oosterhuis, 1984).

The conventional level of altruism roughly corresponds developmentally to Piaget's level of concrete operations in cognitive development and to Kohlberg's conventional level of moral reasoning. People functioning at the concrete operations stage are able to perform operations (i.e., manipulations of objects in relation to one another) on identifiable, concrete objects (e.g., blocks), that is they are unable to deal with abstractions but must deal with "concrete" items (this does not mean that the items must be present physically, only that the person must be able to imagine them). During the conventional level of moral reasoning people conform to the expectations of their social groups, they behave in ways that please others and that are approved of by others, and they maintain the existing social order. This suggests that during the conventional stage of altruism one complies with presumed expectations and social norms, and that "one does things for others because it is the 'nice' thing to do; society expects it from us . . . . [C]onformity brings social approval, security, enhanced self-esteem" (Oosterhuis, 1984, p. 54).

The conventional level of altruism may itself be divided into two stages. During the first stage people comply with the norm of reciprocity. Reciprocal altruism involves one giving to others but with the expectation that such giving behavior will be returned. "As a norm for behavior, reciprocity explains an altruism that is more self than other-oriented . . . . The norm of reciprocity is a recognition of the innate hedonistic nature of humanity--one gives only when pleasant rewards can be expected. One gives because there is something in it 'for me'" (Oosterhuis, 1984, p. 80). Obviously, this form of altruism is compatible

with the primal narcissism conjecture because the emphasis is on oneself and not the recipient of the altruistic act.

The second stage of the conventional level of altruism centers on the norm of social responsibility. According to this norm people should help those who are dependent. People adhering to this norm help others for self-approval and for the satisfaction of doing what is "right;" they do not act for social approval or material gain. Basically, people behave altruistically for "personal gains," which may be tangible (e.g., money) but which may also consist of pride, joy, or "enhanced self-concepts" which are "less readily discernable" (Oosterhuis, 1984). Mussen et al. (1977) state that "internalized motives and self-rewards (intrinsic rewards such as increased self-esteem or feelings of satisfaction, pleasure, or pride following an action) seem to determine many prosocial acts, although it may be difficult to identify or to demonstrate these motives empirically" (p. 4). Furthermore, "the norm of social responsibility is most often observed as tempered by self concerns, because one adheres to the norm's demands with those who will eventually reciprocate: one's children, employer, friends" (Oosterhuis, 1984, p. 90). Again, this type of altruism is consonant with the primal narcissism conjecture since the focus is oneself and not the other. In addition, the "personal gains" and self-rewards discussed above may provide the reason why, as implied by the primal narcissism conjecture, some people behave altruistically in order to "feel good."

In sum, as determiners of altruistic behaviors the norms of reciprocity and social responsibility " . . . suggest a self-centered orientation as the only possible developmental level of altruism" (Oosterhuis, 1984, p. 90), and this is consistent with the primal narcissism claim that people are ultimately concerned with themselves. As we shall soon see, people functioning at the ideological level of

altruism also behave in ways compatible with the primal narcissism conjecture.

Piaget's formal operations period and Kohlberg's postconventional level of moral reasoning correspond developmentally to the ideological level of altruism. In contrast to the concrete operations period, people at the formal operations level are capable of dealing with the abstract and hypothetical rather than just the concrete. During the postconventional level of moral reasoning people identify universal moral principles, such as justice and equality, which respect the dignity of all individuals and which are universally valid. Basically, at the ideological level of altruism "one does not desire to deny self per se; one desires to effect the realization of the 'good' in the lives of others. This highest level is an enlightened self-interest in which others' needs do not violate one's own or vice versa" (Oosterhuis, 1984, p. 56). Even the developmentally highest level of altruism involves an "enlightened self-interest."

At the ideological level, one behaves altruistically because one believes in and upholds such principles as justice and equity. However, "doing what I want done to me [equity] is an egoism that does not have altruism as its original position" (Oosterhuis, 1984, p. 112). In other words, behaving altruistically because one believes in the principle of equity is egoistically motivated. Likewise, the distress of injustice, which frequently involves seeing somebody being prevented by external forces from living the best life possible, may motivate one to altruism. But one also expects personal gain for one's altruism: "personal gain from correcting injustice is not simply the reduction of distress; the confirmation of one's ideal self as the upholder of the principle is also a benefit . . . . The personal gain is an enhanced feeling of self-worth and self consistency" (Oosterhuis, 1984, p. 119).

For the person who behaves altruistically in order to establish or reestablish

justice, a concern for the other is not the primary motive. "He/she more accurately balances self's abilities with the actions perceived essential in establishing justice. It is a balance that de-emphasizes the specifics of the other who is experiencing injustice because principles and integrity prevail. One engages in role-taking for the sake of principles . . . . The other's gain is not the focus; the responsibility of self in contributing to justice gives the impetus for action" (Oosterhuis, 1984, p. 121). The reasons for behaving altruistically at the ideological level do not violate the claim of the primal narcissism conjecture because they involve an overriding concern for oneself, whether it be in achieving personal gain or in maintaining integrity to one's principles.

This discussion of the developmental levels of altruism suggests a compatibility between altruism and the primal narcissism conjecture. Specifically, one may be ultimately concerned with oneself and still behave altruistically because one expects one's actions to be reciprocated or because it "feels good" to adhere to a social norm such as social responsibility (at the conventional level), or because one expects personal gains (e.g., "enhanced self-concepts") for doing so (at the ideological level). Basically, "a totally selfless altruism is not possible for the human being" (Oosterhuis, 1984, p. 6).

Sociobiology and Altruism

There does not exist a unitary sociobiological account of altruism. The views of two prominent sociobiologists, Edward O. Wilson and Donald T. Campbell, are considered here. Generally, Wilson argues for a genetic evol altruism since it may increase the individual's genetic fitness. However, he human altruism as "ultimately self-serving" and does not believe in the exist a totally selfless altruism. Campbell takes issue with Wilson's position argui

the genetic competition for procreative opportunities does not provide for the perpetuation of altruism. He argues instead for the social rather than biological evolution of altruism (Wispé, 1978).

The problem created by postulating the existence of widespread altruism involves determining how genes inducing altruism will persist in a species if altruism is disadvantageous to the individual (e.g., the individual is unlikely to survive in order to reproduce and pass his or her genes to offspring). Wilson (1978a) suggests that such genes are really not disadvantageous as long as the beneficiaries of the altruism carry some of the actor's genes (i.e., they are relatives), including the genes inducing altruism, and provided that the altruism allows the beneficiaries to multiply those genes in the population to a more than compensating degree. In this way the genes will increase in the population and the altruism will spread. In a nutshell, Wilson believes that altruism evolved through kin selection. (The kin selection model is discussed further in the upcoming section on "biological models of altruism.")

It is important to note that the kin selection model is consistent with the primal narcissism conjecture since people only behave altruistically if they believe that it is ultimately to their genetic advantage. Wilson (1978b) similarly distinguishes between "hard core" altruism, which exists when a person performs altruistic acts with no expressed desire for reciprocity and which is relatively unaffected by social reward or punishment, and "soft core" altruism, which is ultimately selfish since the altruist expects reciprocation, and he states that human altruism is soft, that is selfish.

For Wilson (1978b), human altruism is "ultimately self-serving": "No sustained form of human altruism is explicitly and totally self-annihilating. Lives of

the most towering heroism are paid out in the expectation of great reward, not the least of which is a belief in personal immortality" (p. 154) or because of "personal vanity and pride" (p. 150). He goes on to state that this ultimately self-serving quality of altruistic behavior is observable in Hinduism and Nibbanic Buddhism. In particular, Hinduism condones self-preoccupation but allows for altruism with close relatives since they further enhance one's own situation, while "a central goal of Nibbanic Buddhism is preserving the individual through altruism. The devotee earns points toward a better personal life by performing generous acts and offsets bad acts with meritorious ones" (p. 154).

Wilson does not believe in a totally selfless altruism. He states that greater social harmony would result if human beings lived according to their innate biological selfishness (Wilson, 1978b). A final point involving Wilson's work: He conceives of a "spectrum of self-serving behavior" with the individual at one extreme and "the highest sociopolitical units" at the other extreme, and he states that "human being are well over toward the individual end of the spectrum" (Wilson, 1978b, p. 158). This is similar to my postulation of a self/other continuum with selfishness at one end, altruism at the other end, and primal narcissism falling near the selfishness end.

Unlike Wilson, Donald Campbell (1975) does not believe in a genetic evolution of altruism due to genetic competition for procreative opportunities. He conceives of a "two system model," visualized as a continuum, in which biology leads us to selfishness at one end and our social system preaches us to altruism at the opposite end. "Human urban social complexity is a product of social evolution and has had to counter with inhibitory moral norms the biological selfishness which genetic competition has continually selected" (p. 1123). Furthermore, he states that

trends in our present day favor our biological nature with the result that there is now an abundance of " . . . overly narcissistic, and overly selfish individuals" (p. 1116). I similarly argue that we are socialized overtly by an altruistic ethic while primal narcissism is covertly encouraged and condoned, and that recent trends emphasizing materialism and individualism have caused narcissism to become more pronounced.

Campbell (1978) elaborates upon Freud's view of the counterhedonic content of culture by suggesting that human social evolution has inculcated behavioral dispositions antithetical to the selfish tendencies resulting from genetic selection. He argues strongly for the conflict between social and biological evolution for it makes sense out of the preoccupation with sin and temptation in our religious traditions. "The commandments, the proverbs, the religious 'law' represent social evolutionary products directed at inculcating tendencies that are in direct opposition to the 'temptations' representing, for the most part, the dispositional tendencies produced by biological evolution. For every commandment, we may reasonably hypothesize an opposite tendency that runs counter to some social-systemic optimum" (p. 52).

In sum, Campbell contends that social and biological evolution are in conflict, especially with respect to altruism. Specifically, our biological evolution predisposes us to selfishness while "the traditional moralizings of urban social systems . . . uniformly scold human selfishness" (Campbell, 1978, p. 51) while rewarding altruism. While Wilson and Campbell hold disparate views regarding the evolution of altruism, they both believe that human nature, which they take to mean a genetic predisposition, is essentially selfish.

Now that a deeper understanding of altruism has been gained by

considering some of its definitions, by considering it developmentally, and by explicating sociobiological accounts of altruism, and with the relationship between the primal narcissism conjecture and these various definitions and conceptions alluded to, we may now consider biological conceptions of altruism and behavioral evidence supporting altruism.

The relationship between altruism and human nature is considered by Hoffman (1981). He contends that traditional biological and psychological views leave little room for altruism, but current biological models and psychological research demonstrate the acquisition of altruistic structures in humans which are distinct from egoistic structures. These altruistic structures are analogous to, but independent of, egoistic structures, and they function as a general tendency to help others.

Biological Models of Altruism

Hoffman summarizes the mechanisms suggesting a biological basis to altruism. The first mechanism, group selection, states that individuals may act in ways contributing to group survival but not advancing their own interest since cooperative social life has obvious survival value. Evolutionists regard this as unlikely since the reproductive unit is the individual and so natural selection must have favored traits maximizing individual fitness. Furthermore, while the group may survive a threat because of altruistic acts, altruists are less likely to survive and pass their genes to offspring--natural selection must have operated against altruism.

Due to these limitations of the group selection model evolutionists favor models of altruism focusing on the individual. The most influential theoretical model at present is kin selection, originated by Charles Darwin in The Origin of Species, since it explains altruism while remaining consistent with egoism

(Hoffman, 1981). The modern version of the kin selection model was launched by W. D. Hamilton (Wilson, 1978a). Hamilton's pivotal concept is "inclusive fitness." This concept states that one's genetic fitness (i.e., the likelihood that one's genes will survive and reproduce) must be measured by the enhancement of the fitness of one's relatives (individuals with common genes) as well as by one's own survival and reproduction and the survival and reproduction of one's offspring. "Hamilton's key result can be stated very simply as follows. A genetically based act of altruism . . . will evolve if the average inclusive fitness of individuals within networks displaying it is greater than the inclusive fitness of individuals in otherwise comparable networks that do not display it" (Wilson, 1978a, p. 29). In this way altruistic acts (acts beneficial to others but detrimental to oneself) may be selected if they enhance the overall fitness of one's gene pool. That is, altruistic behavior may occur between relatives when doing so increases the likelihood that one's genes will survive and reproduce. Genes inducing altruism will be selected when the recipient is closely related (i.e., there is a large percentage of shared genes), resulting in a net increase in the actor's genes.

Trivers has devised a model, called reciprocal altruism, which also focuses on the individual (Hoffman, 1981). This model demonstrates that natural selection favored altruism even between nonrelated individuals because of the long term benefit to the individual performing the altruistic act. The model states that helping others in danger is to one's advantage since the risks involved are usually low and a role reversal in the future is likely. In this way natural selection favors a tendency to help others.

The kin selection and reciprocal altruism views are consonant with the primal narcissism conjecture since one may help others, as suggested by the

reciprocal altruism view, or sacrifice oneself for a relative, as stated in the kin selection model, because one is ultimately concerned with oneself. These actions are not necessarily the result of a natural tendency to altruism. Specifically, the reciprocal altruism model essentially states that one performs altruistic acts because of the long term advantage to oneself, namely one's actions will likely to reciprocated. Behaving altruistically because we think our actions will be reciprocated is consonant with the primal narcissism conjecture. Also, the kin selection model contends that altruistic acts are in the best interests of the individual since they increase the chances that the individual's genes will survive. While the focus in this model is on the individual's genetic make-up rather than the individual per se, it is still consistent with the primal narcissism claim that the individual's ultimate concern is him- or herself since the concern is the individual's own genes. As Wilson (1978a) points out, "the theory of kin selection has taken most of the good will out of altruism . . . [because] altruism is conceived of as the mechanism by which DNA multiplies itself through a network of relatives" (p. 33). Nevertheless, since modern evolutionary theory suggests the existence of altruistic dispositions there should be psychological research compatible with this view. We now consider some of this research, as reviewed by Hoffman (1981).

Behavioral Evidence Supporting Altruism

The first line of behavioral evidence Hoffman presents to support altruism involves studies under controlled conditions in which people help others when there are no witnesses present and when the need is clear. For example, a person sitting alone in a psychology laboratory hears somebody fall off a ladder in the next room and goes to help. However, this evidence does not verify altruism for several reasons, one being that it occurs under contrived rather than natural conditions.

Different processes may be operating in controlled and natural conditions, and if altruism is a natural phenomenon it should be investigated under natural conditions. As well, the witness may help the victim because it makes the witness feel good and not because there is an inherent altruistic disposition. That is, the motivation is egoistic. The possibility that an altruistic action is performed because of the pleasurable feeling it induces in the person performing it is not thoroughly considered by Hoffman. That is, sometimes it "feels good" to know that you are helping somebody in need (as noted earlier). In addition, Hoffman (1981) points out that "the incidence of helping behavior in this country may seem to have little relevance to the universality of altruism . . . . People, although often socialized to help others, are exposed to a value system that places its primary emphasis on individual achievement, competition, and success, as well as pressures from the social structure (especially in the occupational sphere) that reinforce these values" (p. 125).

Next, Hoffman suggests that if the traditional psychological view is correct, namely that helping behavior reflects an underlying egoistic motive, then the motive is social approval. Research findings indicate that people do not usually help in order to gain approval (Hoffman, 1981). However, Hoffman does not acknowledge that people may help because it makes them feel good or because they expect personal gains such as "enhanced self-concepts" (as noted in the section on "developmental levels of altruism"), independent of what others think. That one helps others because one feels good doing so or because it "enhances" one's self-concept is implied by the primal narcissism conjecture.

Lastly, if altruism reflects a biological motive then, according to Hoffman, there should be instances in which altruistic action is automatic. Hoffman appears

to be suggesting that all biological motives automatically elicit actions designed to satisfy the biological functions in question. This reflects a naive belief since there are biological motives (e.g., for sex) which are not always satisfied automatically. Therefore, even if altruism reflects a biological motive this does not necessarily mean that altruistic actions will be automatic. Nevertheless, he reviews a number of studies involving emergency situations, such as somebody having an epileptic seizure, in which the frequency and speed of response of the subject support this expectation (e.g., the subject responds quickly to emergencies). However, this research does not support a biological basis to altruism since the subject may have predetermined ideas of what to do in emergencies and may be acting on these ideas. For example, after a prior experience of this nature in which the subject was reinforced for helping someone in distress he or she may decide to help again if the need arises particularly since the risks involved in helping are usually minimal or nonexistent. Sidgwick (1970) likewise suggests that people help others for essentially selfish reasons and then other things, such as gratitude received, perpetuates and reinforces helping behavior. In this way frequency of response and reaction time are not indicators of altruistic motivation since the person may be acting on preformed ideas. Furthermore, the person may expect reinforcement, such as feeling good, for doing so. Hoffman also points to evidence suggesting that altruistic action is reinforcing for the actor.

According to Hoffman, the evidence considered above is sufficient to warrant viewing altruism as par man nature. While this conclusion may be difficult to defend because of the problems with the evidence noted here, Hoffman further states that the altruistic response system required by natural selection must be reliable and also flexible since the situations requiring an altruistic response vary.

That is, it was not altruistic action itself which was selected but mediators of altruistic action which provided the necessary flexibility and enabled effective determination, in terms of inclusive fitness, of whether or not to perform an altruistic act. Hoffman suggests that these criteria are satisfied by empathy.

The Case for Empathy

Empathy may be defined as a vicarious affective response to another, that is an affective response appropriate to another's situation and not one's own (Hoffman, 1981). Research indicates that people respond empathically to another person in distress, not that this predisposes them to altruism. Hoffman is wrong when he states that empathic arousal always predisposes one to altruistic action. If distressing empathic arousal always (i.e., under all conditions) induces one to behave altruistically then one would expect that the subjects in Milgram's (1964) "shock" experiment, in which subjects believed they controlled the amount of electrical shock received by another, would have refused to continue with the study. The fact that subjects in this study continued to shock another person suggests that empathy does not always produce altruism.

Additionally, when discussing altruism one should remember that people are also egoistic (Hoffman, 1981). In particular, since empathic distress is aversive to the observer one might expect the observer's focus of attention to be him- or herself and not the victim. Because of this one may engage in altruistic behavior to reduce one's own sense of distress at seeing the victim. That is, since empathy may be an aversive state which is alleviated by helping the person in need it may be treated as an egoistic motive (Hoffman, 1981), as the primal narcissism conjecture suggests.

Hoffman, however, does not view empathic arousal as an egoistic motive.

He distinguishes between the consequence and aim of an act such that feeling good after helping someone in need may not be why the person initially acted. Hoffman cites studies in which subjects were asked what crossed their minds when the victim cried out for help and why they intervened. None of the subjects reported helping in order to alleviate their own distress, and a typical reason for intervening is that it was the "right thing to do." However, this does not constitute sound evidence for altruism since people may respond in this manner because it is what they consider socially acceptable and consequently the answers may not represent the true motive for helping, which may be egoistic. Regarding the reasons people give for behaving altruistically, Bar-Tal et al. (1980) found that "verbal expressions of motives or judgments do not necessarily correspond to the actual motives behind the behavior . . . [because people] often distort their answers according to notions of social desirability" (pp. 517-518). (Similarly, some psychometric tests, such as the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory or MMPI, actually contain "lie" scales designed to determine if respondents answer in particular ways because it is what they consider socially acceptable.) For example, [redacted]y that one intervened because it is the right thing to do suggests the influence of being socialized in an altruistic value system, since it is largely from the socialization process that we learn the "right" and "wrong" things to do. Hoffman (1981) states that "it is of course possible that people help others in order to reduce their own sense of empathic distress without knowing that this is the reason" (p. 134), but further asserts that there is no evidence for such an unconscious motive. Since there does not exist a method to reliably ascertain the contents of the unconscious it is premature to reject the claim that people behave altruistically in order to relieve their own sense of distress.

In concluding his article Hoffman states that it would be difficult to explain the results of research on altruism without assuming that altruism is independent of egoism. This conclusion seems unwarranted, however, since the data forming the basis of his position has been brought into question above. He also cites other researchers who conclude that determining the underlying force to altruism will likely never be answered completely by reference to data and will remain of a "semiphilosophical" nature. This is perhaps the most reasonable position since either the primal narcissism conjecture or Hoffman's argument (viz., altruism as a unique aspect of human nature) may be correct but there is no way of definitively knowing since the data is insufficient to distinguish between them. (The "semiphilosophical" nature of this work is considered at the end of the chapter.)

Research Supporting the Altruism Claim

Batson, O'Quin, Fultz, Vanderplas, and Isen (1983) performed a series of studies based on the results of earlier work by Batson and Coke (cited in Batson et al., 1983). The studies are based on a proposed distinction between personal distress and empathy as emotional responses to seeing somebody suffer, and the belief that personal distress leads to egoistic motivation whereas empathy leads to altruistic motivation to help. This distinction challenges the primal narcissism conjecture, which suggests that all motivation is essentially egoistic. By criticizing the studies based on this distinction, and by reinterpreting the results of the studies, I endeavour to show that this research does not undermine the primal narcissism claim that people are ultimately concerned with themselves.

The authors suggest three strategies to determine if distress and empathy are qualitatively distinct. The first strategy is a statistical one, using the technique of factor analysis on the self-reported emotional responses of individuals witnessing

another person's distress. The technique involves determining if adjectives indicative of distress (e.g., disturbed) load on a different factor than adjectives reflecting empathy (e.g., compassionate). Studies using this approach report results favoring the distress/empathy distinction. However, this research has at least two problems. First, people may not reliably differentiate between feeling "disturbed" and "compassionate." These are words used to represent similar emotions, and words are human constructions susceptible to confusion. That is, the words people use to describe their emotions may not accurately reflect what they are actually feeling. The common occurrence of not being able to "find the right word" to describe exactly what you mean or feel suggests this. Consequently, those reporting concern may actually be experiencing personal distress. Second, people who report feeling "compassionate" may nevertheless help the victim in order to reduce an inner feeling of distress. There is no guarantee of an isomorphic relationship between the subjects' feelings and their motivation for helping such that those feeling empathy, for example, are predisposed only to altruistic motivation to help.

The second strategy to distinguish between distress and empathy is to attempt to experimentally manipulate one independently of the other. The authors cite a previous study by Batson and Coke employing this logic in a misattribution technique. Batson and Coke (cited in Batson et al., 1983) had subjects watch a videotape of a woman receiving electric shocks after the subjects had been given a drug (actually a placebo) and some were told the drug would make them feel warm and sensitive (empathic feelings) and others were told they would feel uneasy (distress feeling). If personal distress and empathy are qualitatively distinct, and both feelings are elicited by watching the woman receiving shocks, then these

researchers predict that participants induced to misattribute their empathic feelings would view their emotional reaction to watching the video as personal distress, while participants induced to misattribute their distress feelings would perceive their emotional reaction to be empathy. Results of the study support these predictions, and hence the distinction between empathy and personal distress. However, Schachter and Singer's (1962) study of the various determinants of emotional state, in which it was discovered that many emotions are physiologically similar and can only be differentiated by social and cognitive cues, suggests that subjects in the above study reported feeling what they expected to feel based on the misattribution technique. For example, subjects induced to misattribute their distress feelings reported feeling empathy. While all subjects may only have felt personal distress those led to misattribute their feelings in terms of warmth and sensitivity expressed their feelings in empathic terms. As with the first strategy for distinguishing between distress and empathy, it is unwise to unquestionably accept subjects' reports since subjects may be expressing in different words the same emotions.

A third strategy to determine if there is a qualitative distinction between distress and empathy is to demonstrate that the two emotions evoke different types of motivation. In particular, we want to know if distress leads to egoistic and empathy to altruistic motivation to help. The aforementioned study by Batson and Coke (cited in Batson et al., 1983) employed a procedure purportedly distinguishing between these two types of motivation. The procedure involves manipulating the ease with which a witness could escape observing a victim in distress without helping. Batson and Coke reasoned that if helping is moderately costly to the witness (e.g., in terms of danger to him- or herself) and the motivation to help is egoistic, that is to relieve one's own sense of distress, then the rate of

helping behavior should decrease by making escape easy. This is because the witness' ultimate goal is to minimize personal distress and escape is the least costly way to attain this goal. However, if the motivation to help is based on one's empathy for the victim, that is it is altruistic, then making escape easy when it is moderately costly to help should not reduce the rate of helping behavior since the witness' ultimate goal is to minimize the victim's distress, and escape does not produce this goal. Results of the Batson and Coke study support the view that distress leads to egoistic and empathy to altruistic motivation to help. However, it may be false to claim that those with egoistic motivation are likely to escape when the risk involved in helping is high and escape is easy. To contend that witnesses with egoistic motivation will escape under such circumstances presupposes that they can forget the victim's distress by leaving the situation. This is unlikely in all cases, and hence the internal distress of seeing the victim may persist. That is, the internal distress of seeing the victim will likely not disappear by leaving the situation, especially if one knows that the victim is still in need of help. The best way to relieve the inner distress is to help the victim as this assures one that the victim's distress, and consequently one's own, is stopped. In this way those witnesses who help the victim may do so to alleviate their own distress, although their motivation may be mislabeled as altruistic. It is conceivable that only egoistic motivation exists, and that those participants whose motivation is labeled altruistic may have overcome their distress by helping the victim.

The studies conducted by Batson et al. (1983), extending the earlier work of Batson and Coke (cited in Batson et al., 1983), assume the results of these earlier studies to be valid. However, we have just seen that Batson and Coke's work suffers from conceptual pitfalls. Nevertheless, the first study by Batson et al.,

essentially a replication of Batson and Coke's earlier work but in a natural setting, produced only marginally significant statistical results ($p < .06$). This fact, coupled with the conceptual flaws noted above, casts doubt on the meaningfulness of these results. The results of Batson et al.'s second study, a modification of the first, reached statistical significance ($p < .05$). The authors argue that this provides clear evidence that distress leads to egoistic and empathy to altruistic motivation to help. However, the importance of this result must be tempered by the fact that achieving statistical significance by making the proper experimental manipulations is frequently not difficult. That is, certain changes can be made to the design of the first study which increase the likelihood that statistical significance will be attained in the second study. The work of Batson and his colleagues, in light of the problems noted here, provides dubious support for the claim that altruism exists as an aspect of human nature independent of primal narcissism.

This detailed consideration of both Hoffman's (1981) and Batson's (Batson et al., 1983) work suggests that the evidence supporting the claim that altruism is a separate aspect of human nature is not convincing. The evidence these scholars provide to support the altruism claim contains conceptual flaws and may be reinterpreted in terms of primal narcissism. The primal narcissism conjecture implies that we are motivated to help somebody in need for one or more of three reasons: (a) to relieve our own distress of seeing the person, (b) because we think our actions may be reciprocated, and (c) because it makes us "feel good." However, it is conceivable that we label our motivation for helping "altruistic" in order to make it more socially acceptable (i.e., our society emphasizes an altruistic ethic and condones benevolent behavior), while our true motivation is egoistic. In addition, many people may inappropriately label what they think or feel since words

are human constructions susceptible to confusion. It is possible that many actions people label "altruistic" are not actually altruistic. It may be best to conclude that the true motivation of "altruistic" behavior cannot be determined by data alone but is "semiphilosophical" (e.g., see Hoffman, 1981). It is timely to consider some arguments which support the primal narcissism view.

Arguments Supporting the Primal Narcissism Conjecture

One may be a primal narcissist (i.e., one whose ultimate concern is oneself, as defined by the primal narcissism conjecture) and still perform apparently "selfless" acts. As Freeman (1977) intimates, being ultimately concerned with oneself need not stop one from accepting obligations to help others since these others may later help oneself. Accepting such obligations is to one's advantage not only because one may feel good doing so, knowing that one is helping somebody else, but also because others may reciprocate. Similarly, Bishop Butler argues that one must take an interest in things other than oneself in order for self-interest to develop (Sanders, 1978). This is because self-interest, as a general desire for one's own happiness, would have no object if one had no interest in things other than oneself. The neutrality of these "first order" interests paves the way for being interested in others and for acting in ways which involve the interests of others. That is, one's self-interest may consist of an interest in helping others. This suggests that even when helping others one may be concerned with how this affects oneself. Kalin (1975) summarizes this view stating that "there is no restriction on what a person can want or have an interest in. His wants may be selfish, confined to his own pleasure or advancement, or they may be nonselfish, directed toward the pleasure and well-being of another, or they may even be impersonal, scientific or artistic, for example" (p. 329). This suggests the following: (a) primal narcissism

is not selfishness since one may be interested in helping others (the selfish person is only interested in him- or herself and has no desire to help others); (b) primal narcissism is unfalsifiable since all of a person's interests can never be known (it is semiphilosophical); and (c) benevolence, as a desire to help others, is not distinct from primal narcissism.

Barnhart (1976) distinguishes between altruism, which exists when a person loves others free of self-interest, and unselfishness, which exists when a person contributes to another's happiness with no self-interest beyond finding pleasure in the other's happiness. He doubts that an altruist could exist since people do not help others without also expecting personal benefit (e.g., personal happiness). What Barnhart describes as unselfishness may be called altruism by many people. These words, representing similar but distinct phenomena, are susceptible to confusion. If this is true then when these people claim to be altruistic they really mean unselfish. The primal narcissism conjecture suggests that we can be unselfish but not altruistic as these terms are defined by Barnhart. This is because one's overriding concern for oneself precludes the possibility of acting with no self-interest.

Olson (1961) differentiates between deliberate and nondeliberate acts of self-sacrifice. Acts not in the agent's interest may be performed unintentionally if the person has adopted an attitude of benevolence which has become a permanent part of the personality and over which the individual has little control. The benevolent attitude may have been adopted initially if the person believed that it would be to his or her advantage (e.g., he or she felt that others would reciprocate). That is, the person behaves altruistically because of an unconscious belief that it is to his or her advantage to do so, and in this way altruistic behavior is covertly

egoistic.

In sum, Dwyer (1976) states "the point is that one cannot rationally value someone else's happiness as such (as an end in itself) over and above one's own happiness as such. And this fact is empirically verifiable--by means of introspection" (p. 287). In conclusion, neither biological models of altruism nor behavioral evidence supporting the altruism claim constitute sufficient grounds to warrant viewing altruism as an aspect of human nature distinct from primal narcissism. This is because the evidence supporting altruism is conceptually flawed and may be interpreted from the perspective of the primal narcissism conjecture. Further, many scholars, while disclaiming altruism on philosophical grounds, lend support to the primal narcissism formulation. With the existence of altruism (essentially the antithesis of primal narcissism) as a unique aspect of human nature doubtful, there may be more reason to regard primal narcissism as constituting an aspect of human nature.

Implications of the Primal Narcissism View

Since the primal narcissism conjecture is a general statement concerning an aspect of human nature, its implications are broad. Specific implications, that is those involving particular situations, can only be obtained from specific theory. This is because a general picture concerning human nature, as the primal narcissism conjecture paints, cannot take into account all variables in all contexts. Nevertheless, there is a common element among the implications, namely that one's ultimate concern is oneself.

Analyzing Group Behavior

The primal narcissism conjecture is a statement about the functioning of the individual, and is properly applied only to the individual. Nevertheless, for

purposes of illustrating the applicability of the primal narcissism conjecture it may be extrapolated beyond the individual to help us understand group behavior and historical phenomena. While such analysis falls within the realms of sociological and social psychological inquiry, other psychological constructs have also been projected onto the group. For example, the term "narcissism" originated as a means of describing facets of individual activity, while there is currently discussion of group narcissism and a culture of narcissism. It seems reasonable, therefore, to apply the primal narcissism conjecture to the study of groups.

There are essentially two levels of analysis which may be used when describing group phenomena in primal narcissism terms. First, one may focus on the group itself, in which case the ultimate concern of a group is itself, where "ultimate concern" is defined the same way here as it is for the individual (in chapter four) and a group refers to a collectivity of individuals taken as a single unit. This level of analysis, emphasizing the group itself as one entity, is typical of sociological inquiry. Second, one may focus on the individual in the group, on how he or she responds to the group and interacts with other members of the group. This level of analysis, focusing on the individual/group relationship, is common to investigation in social psychology. Both of these levels of analysis are utilized here when applying the primal narcissism conjecture to group behavior.

A number of characteristics or functions may be ascribed to the analysis of groups utilizing the primal narcissism conjecture. First, patriotism and loyalty may be considered a devotion of the individual to those groups or affiliations, such as his or her nation or religion, which are of ultimate importance to the individual. An individual's passion for "my country," for example, and the willingness of somebody to die in the service of his or her country may be regarded as byproducts

of the individual's ultimate concern with the nation. Fromm (1973) similarly regards group narcissism as the basis of expressions of patriotism, faith, and loyalty. Second, primal narcissism in the group may help account for the solidarity and cohesion of the group. Specifically, people affiliate themselves with others who have something in common with themselves (e.g., a common origin, ideology, etc.). Such affiliation infuses a sense of community in the members of the group who are ultimately concerned with the group as there is a common bond among its members. Again, Fromm (1973) believes that group narcissism furthers the solidarity and cohesion of the group. Third, group primal narcissism may be seen as the force behind the instances in which a group looks out for its own best interests. The history of the Chinese in the Caribbean, considered shortly, exemplifies this. Fourth, a belief in the ultimate importance of one's own group may provide one with a sense of satisfaction, pride, and worthwhileness. This is particularly true of those individuals who have few other reasons for feeling this way, for even if one is the least respected member of the group there is compensation in knowing that "I am a member of this important group" (Fromm, 1973). Finally, primal narcissism may be the agent responsible for the tendency of some people to elevate their own group while devaluing other groups. If one's own group is of ultimate concern then other groups must not be as important, and therefore may be devalued. This is only a partial list of ways in which the primal narcissism conjecture may be used to help analyze group phenomena, but it is sufficient to create a sense of the utility of the conjecture in this endeavour. With this foundation we may now consider a few examples of group behavior and historical occurrences as they would be viewed from this perspective of the primal narcissism conjecture.

Moses (1982) uses the notion of group narcissism to help us better understand historical events. For example, he describes Nazi Germany as an instance of extremely pathological group narcissism displaying the emotional and behavioral manifestations of narcissistic rage. Kohut (1978d) and Loewenstein (1977) also describe Nazi Germany in group narcissism terms. For Loewenstein, Hitler was a narcissist who above all else sought revenge, on a world wide scale, for the humiliation he experienced in his youth. He appealed to the German people because he was strong and because he infused them with a narcissistic pride in their nation. (In the preceding two decades before Hitler gained power Germany was not a proud nation because of its loss during the first World War and its consequent economic collapse.) As Fromm (1973) suggests, leaders who are convinced of their missions and who appear absolutely certain in their ambitions find it easy to convince large audiences to follow. Basically, Hitler was ultimately concerned with satisfying his own desire for revenge rather than helping the German people, and the German people collectively were ultimately concerned with making their nation strong and proud.

When Chinese immigrants arrived in Jamaica late last century an economic vacuum existed on the island as there was no group operating the retail system. The black peasantry was tied to a rural existence on slave plantations while the upper class whites regarded retailing as beneath them. The Chinese, constituting a minority of less than one per cent of the population on the island, occupied and dominated retail trade, improving their economic lot enormously. They also consolidated their ranks through cultural exclusiveness, such as restrictive marriage customs and ethnic allegiance. However, the social environment changed dramatically in the 1950s when Jamaica gained its independence and the new ruling

elite were a racial mixture. It was now advantageous for the Chinese to join the elite socially rather than occupy a racially segregated middle class, and within fifteen years they no longer constituted a distinct cultural group. They adopted the bourgeois life style while maintaining racial consciousness (Wilson, 1978b). While the history of the Jamaican Chinese may make a good case study for an analysis of the psychological phenomenon of adaptability, it also illustrates a group behaving in its own best interests. It is reasonable to assume that the Chinese immigrants were ultimately concerned with themselves as a group because they were new to the island and they shared a common heritage. Their history illustrates group primal narcissism since they collectively undertook what was in their own best interests while simultaneously maintaining group loyalty.

A final example of group primal narcissism involves war. Such confrontations frequently occur when one group elevates itself while devaluing the other. Believing that the devalued group is somehow less important than itself, the group which has elevated itself feels justified in humiliating and otherwise harming the devalued group. Moses (1982) likewise suggests that it is characteristic of all nations to feel superior to other nations. He utilizes this notion when describing the predominance of narcissistic phenomena in the conflict between the Arabs and Israelis, and notes how each nation regards itself as good and the other as bad. The primal narcissism conjecture may be used to analyze the Arab/Israeli conflict, in which case each group is ultimately concerned with itself. The conflict arose because each group felt that it had the right to claim certain territory for itself. Because each group is ultimately concerned with itself and believes itself to be good and doing the right thing it feels justified it neglecting the claim of the other group, and hence there has been no resolution of the conflict. The primal narcissism of

each group perpetuates and exacerbates the situation.

While the primal narcissism conjecture deals specifically with the individual person it may nevertheless be applied to an analysis of group behavior. Once extrapolated the conjecture states that the ultimate concern of a group is itself. Several ways in which the conjecture may be used to investigate group phenomena have been elucidated and illustrated. The point is not that this is the only way of construing such phenomena, which may also be viewed as manifestations of "enlightened self-interest" for example, but that they are capable of being interpreted by the primal narcissism conjecture.

Primal Narcissism and the Life Cycle

The stages of the lifespan reflect an unfolding of primal narcissism. With changes in physical, social, and cognitive development, and with variations in learned cultural acquirements, personal beliefs, goals, et cetera, primal narcissism manifests itself differently at different ages. Nevertheless, certain characteristics common to most people of a given developmental level may be interpreted from the perspective of the primal narcissism conjecture.

In order to survive infants are biologically predisposed to behave in ways which are self-satisfying or which cause adults to satisfy their needs. For example, genetically determined reflexes such as the rooting reflex (in which the infant searches for and sucks on the mother's nipple when brushed on the cheek by it) are geared toward biological survival while crying makes the caregivers aware that certain needs or wants should be satisfied. As the infant matures during the first year of life he or she will express distress upon seeing the primary caregiver, usually the mother, "disappear" since it is this person who is responsible for the infant's welfare. The infant also begins to explore and master the environment as

the first step toward some degree of autonomy and independence. Furthermore, young children love to be the center of attention, and it is not uncommon for them to "perform" when an audience is present. In general, the infant is biologically predisposed to be ultimately self-concerned in order to sustain biological survival, but as he or she progresses through the first year of life social development allows for the child to want to become the center of attention to the point that "the word selfish, as commonly used by adults, is an appropriate description of the one-year-old" (J. J. Mitchell, 1980, p. 79).

Bleiberg (1984) states that a child encounters narcissistic injuries while establishing a personal identity, boundaries, and autonomy, suggesting libidinal self-investment at this time. Furthermore, as these processes require self-reflection (e.g., a child must be aware of what he or she is capable of or not capable of when determining boundaries) a certain level of self-concern is necessary. Children also display certain drives or needs which suggest that they are ultimately concerned with themselves. For example, the needs to acquire competence and gain independence are requisite for survival and assume self-concern for their success as it is only with self-concern that survival is maintained. It is also commonly assumed that children are egocentric, believing that the world revolves around them and that the only view of the world is their own. It is also at this time that children are heavily socialized into an altruistic ethic. As Rogers (1980) maintains, the care and positive regard which children are dependent on others for becomes associated with conditions of worth which they introject, and hence children are made to feel responsibility to others. Finally, children follow rules and obey commands for essentially selfish reasons, such as avoiding punishment or getting praise, or to receive personal benefits. In sum, children (especially one to three year olds) " . . .

behave with their own interests in mind" (J. J. Mitchell, 1980, p. 96).

Primal narcissism is perhaps most conspicuous during adolescence. There are several reasons for this. To begin with, adolescence is the time of what Erikson calls the "identity crisis," in which youth are actively engaged in a process of determining who they are. Self-concern is prerequisite to this endeavour because one would not be concerned with establishing ego integrity if one was not concerned about oneself to begin with. In addition, with physical and cognitive maturation adolescents seek to develop a sexual identity and they become preoccupied with their own thought processes (they are now capable of dealing with abstractions and hypotheticals). Many also become involved in ideological struggles as they react against their parents and assert themselves in the cognitive realm. Furthermore, it is during adolescence that the processes of individuation and distantiation from parents occur. Conversely, adolescents are self-conscious of conforming to what the peer group considers acceptable social behavior and appearance, and are very susceptible to peer group pressure. This is the result mainly of a concern with being accepted. Finally, adolescents display a lingering egocentrism, as observed in the "imaginary audience" (viz., the belief that one is the center of attention and that one's every move is being scrutinized by one's peers) and the "personal fable" (viz., the associated belief that, since one is the focus of attention, one is somehow special or unique).

Many adults are socialized by our altruistic value system into sublimating their primal narcissism. They yield to our society's materialistic preoccupation and display their primal narcissism covertly by acquiring material possessions, such as houses and cars, which act as self-extensions. This is evidenced by the pride that many people display in their possessions, such as "my car" or "my house."

According to Erikson, the young adult is faced with the psychosocial crisis of intimacy versus isolation. If resolved successfully he or she establishes a relationship with a partner of the opposite sex to satisfy personal needs (e.g., for sex and begetting offspring). The main reason for not successfully resolving this crisis is that one is unwilling to share oneself. The key to favorably navigating this crisis is to absorb oneself in "intimate sexual fulfillment" with one's partner while still maintaining an "independence of spirit" (Monte, 1980, p. 256). The mature adult, Erikson suggests, must face the crisis of generativity versus stagnation. Successful resolution occurs when the adult needs to be needed and needs to be concerned with his or her own offspring. However, failure to do so results when the adult cannot give him- or herself over to his/her progeny but remains basically selfish, desiring to satisfy his/her own personal needs. In both cases the mature adult's concern is with satisfying some of his or her own needs (albeit different needs depending on how the crisis is resolved).

Finally, some older people become overtly preoccupied with themselves as they strive to find or create the meaning of their lives in the face of death. They become so consumed with despair at the thought of their own death that they totally immerse themselves in making the most of the time they have left (e.g., doing the things they always wanted to but never did), while others wallow in their despair. Conversely, other older people may become immersed in the trivialities of everyday living because of their fear of death. In both cases they are concerned with themselves and their mortality. This view of the final stage of the life cycle is akin to Erik Erikson's final psychosocial stage of development, denoted by the crisis of ego integrity versus despair, in which the person in old age cares for him- or herself if the crisis is successfully resolved.

This ends the life cycle, and suggests how the primal narcissism conjecture may be used in describing various stages of the lifespan. The point is that changes people undergo over time may be described at least partially in terms of variations in the manifestations of primal narcissism with age.

Causes of Psychopathology

The determinants of abnormal ideation and behavior are unknown and presumed numerous. Among the plurality of potential precipitants of psychopathology some of those consistent with the primal narcissism conjecture are suggested here. These accounts of mental disease are similar to those elucidated by humanistic and existential psychologists since the focus is on the inner experiences of the individual rather than observable behavior. It is first suggested that psychopathology is fostered by an environment which teaches and reinforces acceptance of an altruistic ethic, thereby frustrating one's natural inclination to express primal narcissism. Under such circumstances an incongruence is created between one's social facade and one's real self, and this incongruence may causally precipitate the development of a mental disorder. Next, it is proposed that one's inability to reconcile discrepant needs, specifically the need for self-centeredness with those needs involving others (e.g., for belongingness), may cause one to lose a sense of one's own independent existence, thereby promoting psychopathology. Finally, the current proliferation of narcissism may be accounted for by the view, expressed in the previous chapter, that modern society encourages the expression of narcissism by its emphasis on consu[illegible]erism and individualism. (Consumerism may be viewed as an expression of ind[illegible]dualism in that the emphasis on satisfying one's own desires expressed in indivi[illegible]may be accomplished partially through the acquisition of material po[illegible])

Society teaches conformity to the altruistic ethic while condoning primal narcissism covertly. One may create a facade to conform to the social demands of the altruistic ethic (e.g., being selfless, playing fair) while still identifying with the primally narcissistic self-concept. As Laing (1983) states, "the individual reacts and feels towards oneself only partially in terms of the person one takes oneself to be [the social facade] and partially in terms of his phantasy of what one is [the primally narcissistic self]" (p. 35), where the social facade arises as the individual complies with the expectations of others. Laing (1982) asserts that if one's social facade of conformity is confirmed by others with a concomitant lack of genuine confirmation of the real (i.e., primally narcissistic) self, then one is placed in a false position of not knowing which of one's identities (viz., the social facade or the primally narcissistic self) accurately portrays one's real nature. In other words, one begins to wonder whether the social facade or the primally narcissistic self represents the "real" person. As Laing (1982) implies, psychopathology is a possible outcome of this incongruence. This is similar to Rogers's belief that anxiety results when there are inconsistencies between the way one sees oneself and the way one believes others perceive oneself.

One must go beyond self-centeredness in order to establish relationships which satisfy some of one's needs (e.g., the need for love) (May, 1979). However, one may extend too far and lose one's centeredness. That is, one may lose one's identity in relationships with others, becoming merely an extension of these others. "A firm sense of one's own autonomous identity is required in order that one may be related as one human being to another. Otherwise, any and every relationship threatens the individual with loss of identity" (Laing, 1983, p. 44). As Laing (1983) suggests, lacking a sense of autonomous identity may precipitate the

development of a mental disorder. Establishing and maintaining a sense of independent identity involves formulating and preserving one's own values, opinions, and goals. These processes all require that one be concerned with "what I think" and "how I feel." They all require self-concern, a variant of narcissism.

There has been an apparent proliferation of narcissism over the past several years (e.g., see Stevens et al., 1984). The precise reason for this is unknown. One possibility is that the actual frequency of narcissism is not increasing but therapists are only now discarding preformed conceptions of mental illness, thereby allowing them to clearly see instances of narcissistic characterology (Dervin, 1982). Another possibility, maintained by some scholars (e.g., Battan, 1983), is that narcissism represents an adaptation to recent cultural changes. Whatever the reason(s), the proliferation of narcissism is evidenced by both the quantity of articles in psychological publications dealing with the subject, and by the success of popular literature on the topic, Christopher Lasch's bestseller The Culture of Narcissism for example.

The view expressed in the previous chapter, namely that primal narcissism is an aspect of human nature but narcissism is increasingly more evident because of the emphasis on individualism in contemporary society, may help account for the current burgeoning of narcissistic phenomena. Briefly, both explanations for the increase in narcissism noted above are consistent with my claim that while the amount of narcissism is actually not increasing (since narcissism represents an aspect of human nature and hence we are all narcissists) recent cultural changes encouraging materialism and individualism have nevertheless produced an apparent proliferation of narcissism by condoning its expression.

This illustrates ways in which the primal narcissism conjecture may be used

to help us understand psychopathology. These are, however, only tentative delineations which may be further elaborated.

Approach to Therapy

A psychotherapeutic approach consonant with the primal narcissism conjecture would be similar to humanistic and existential modes of therapy. It would likely be a "talking" therapy in which the therapist engages the client personally, at a level involving the client's true self, rather than at a level involving social roles that the client has adopted. This is because the therapist realizes that the client's ultimate concern is his or her true (primally narcissistic) self, and therapeutic progress is only possible when the client is encountered on this level. This suggests that the therapist would not utilize an arsenal of standard techniques since doing so minimizes the uniqueness of each client and his/her specific problem, and consequently the intimacy required in order for the therapist to engage the client personally would be lessened. Generally, psychotherapy based on the primal narcissism conjecture would be grounded in two fundamental principles: (a) the therapist assumes that people are ultimately concerned with themselves, and (b) the therapist's task is to help the client realize and accept this. The therapist must accept the client's ultimate self-concern and use it as a foundation for therapeutic work. Furthermore, since the primal narcissism conjecture suggests that the self is the arbiter of reality, then the client must work out solutions to his or her own problems. The therapist functions as a facilitator, helping the client to accurately see his or her problems and self.

As implied above, primal narcissism therapy would be different from therapies which make use of standard techniques. This is because such therapies do not affect the client's "true," primally narcissistic self but rather involve his or

her social facade, and only by engaging the authentic self can progress be made. This may help us to understand why behavioral technologies, such as behavior modification, are of limited effectiveness unless continually reinforced (i.e., effects created with the use of such technologies extinguish without continued reinforcement): they do not contact the client's true self, which is ultimately important. Such behavioral therapies treat the symptoms of a problem (the behavior, the social facade) rather than the cause, which is rooted in the true self. Psychotherapy based on the primal narcissism conjecture, on the other hand, would engage the true self, and while perhaps being more difficult to conduct than behavioral therapies its results would likely be more substantial (e.g., long lasting).

Psychotherapists attempt to help their clients alleviate possible sources of their problems. For the therapist who adheres to the primal narcissism conjecture this is done by respecting the client's ultimate self-concern, and hence the therapist must make contact with the client's true self. The exact way in which a therapist helps a client depends on that client's specific problem. For example, in the above section on causes of psychopathology it was noted that people may alienate their true selves by erecting a social facade which is confirmed by others, and this may contribute in some measure to a mental disorder. In such a case the therapist may help the client become aware of the discrepancy between the true and false selves, and allow the client to discover that accepting one's ultimate self-concern and living in terms of what "feels good" rather than by the reinforcement of the social facade one may achieve mental health. This illustrates one way in which therapy consistent with the primal narcissism conjecture may be conducted.

A certain sequence would likely unfold during the course of therapy. The steps outlined here are similar to those discussed by Rogers (1961; 1980). First,

the therapist would help the client overcome the demoralizing feelings associated with the belief that one is somehow psychologically disturbed. The therapist could accomplish this by letting the client know that he or she is valued for who he/she is and not who he/she is supposed to be (i.e., the true self vs. the social facade). Next, the client would be encouraged to formulate the essence of his or her problem and to determine possible causes of the problem (e.g., the incongruence between one's true self and one's social facade as created by conformity to the altruistic ethic). During this stage the therapist helps the client to achieve insight into the problem. In the third stage ways of alleviating the problem are suggested and implemented. For example, the client is encouraged to accept that people are ultimately concerned with themselves and to trust him- or [illegible]ather than live by the expectations and reinforcement of others. Finally, the [illegible] is taught self-monitoring skills and accepts self-rewards, such as personal satisfaction, rather than external rewards for determining what is acceptable. (Reliance upon external rewards may be a cause of the problem to begin with since they are frequently contingent upon conformity with social expectations which run counter to one's natural bent to live as a primal narcissist.)

Basically, a therapeutic approach based on the primal narcissism conjecture would be a talking therapy in which the therapist accepts the client's ultimate self-concern and helps the client to accept this as well. The client is encouraged to live in a self-satisfying manner rather than in accordance with social expectations, and is taught to rely on self-rewards rather than reinforcement from others (e.g., to do things because they "feel good," regardless of what others think).

These are general descriptions of some broad implications of the primal narcissism conjecture. The basis of all of these implications is that an individual's

ultimate concern is him- or herself.

Conclusion

The issue of human nature has been the subject of considerable speculation and debate since antiquity. The diversity of views regarding human nature and their philosophical flavor vary from Ortega's (1975) contention that people have no inherent nature but must determine it uniquely at each moment of existence, to the ethical objectivist's claim that humans are innately selfish. In this thesis I present a formulation of human nature in the form of the primal narcissism conjecture.

The primal narcissism conjecture states that one is ultimately concerned with oneself. I contend that primal narcissism is a fundamental aspect of human nature. In support of this contention I extract evidence principally from the disciplines of psychology and philosophy, and I consider possible objections to the primal narcissism claim (e.g., altruism, as a concern for others over and above a concern for oneself, is essentially the antithesis of primal narcissism). I also suggest some broad implications of this view.

I realize that there will be objections to the primal narcissism claim, as there are with all views of human nature. For example, sweeping statements about human nature may be criticized for oversimplifying the diversity of human phenomena and for ignoring individual differences. Such criticisms are inevitable when dealing with a concept as all-encompassing as human nature. Furthermore, empirical evidence in support of the primal narcissism conjecture is sparse, and data are insufficient to decide which view of human nature, if any, is "right." Arguments for or against a particular view must necessarily remain "semiphilosophical," as this term is described in chapter one.

The primal narcissism view is "semiphilosophical" since no experimental

evidence bears directly on it, and consequently its validity as a statement concerning human nature cannot be determined by empirical data alone. The semiphilosophical nature of the primal narcissism conjecture arises because it suggests an answer to the primal question "what is human nature?" This question cannot be answered definitively. As Jaspers (1975) observes, while we can ask primal questions we cannot "stand near the beginning" to answer them: "Our questions and answers are in part determined by the historical tradition in which we find ourselves. We apprehend truth from our own source within the historical tradition" (p. 160).

The validity of the primal narcissism conjecture in representing an aspect of human nature, like that of egoism and altruism, cannot be determined conclusively based on existing evidence. This is because all action and motivation may be viewed as manifestations of primal narcissism but need not be (e.g., altruism may be regarded as separate from primal narcissism).

The value of my thesis lies in articulating an alternate view of human nature resulting from the integration of egoism with narcissism. It is not intended to provide a definitive answer to the question "what is human nature?", but to generate new ideas and to bridge the gulf between related ideas in philosophy and psychology. It has the added virtue of helping us to understand ourselves, and the view espoused here accommodates the appearance of individual differences (in attitudes, temperament, etc.) while maintaining that we share a basic commonality, namely that we are all ultimately concerned with ourselves.

Finally, a few suggestions for further study can be made. The work presented here is conjectural. Some of the ideas may be elaborated upon or tested by quantitative and qualitative research. For example, one might utilize a projective test in which respondents relate a story in order to determine the degree to which

people are ultimately concerned with themselves in their stories, or a phenomenological description of people's experiences may be used to clarify the conjecture. Lastly, the implications of the primal narcissism view suggested here may be fleshed out. A full explication of these implications, along with a consideration of others, would prove valuable.

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