

EXPLORATORY PAPER ON

INDICATIVE ETHICS

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1. The twentieth century has presented ethics with a unique challenge. At the same time as human inventiveness, both technological and cultural, has made man's environment increasingly complex, it has virtually integrated the whole world into one incredibly complex interacting entity.

2. After a brief examination of the contributions of past systems of ethics, this paper will go on to describe an emerging system which could be called indicative ethics; its anthropological grounding, its decision making methodology, and its key qualities.

HISTORICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

3. The medieval world developed what has become known as Ontological Ethics. With its roots in Greek philosophy and the Judaeo-Christian tradition, its main feature was that it combined both reason and revelation. It was born of the philosophical faith that there is a right action for each and every situation. There are laws which can be discerned by human reason, and further laws which can be discovered by an examination of divine revelation.

4. This ethic was called into question as the Renaissance sponsored a reasonable alternative to the medieval doctrine of man and the Reformation challenged the traditional concept of revelation. Seeing that agreement was not possible on the right action, "Teleological Ethics" held that agreement was still possible on the desired goal. The Renaissance man saw the value of the individual. He formulated goals of civic responsibility, esthetic appreciation, and spiritual rationality.

5. In striving to attain these goals, men launched their political democracies, the scientific era, and age of enlightenment, and the industrial revolution. But all failed as answers to the sought-for humanness. These human inventions remain with us, as instruments rather than panaceas. Only in vestigial fanatical movements espousing political rightism, scientism, educational gnosticism, or Marxist-Capitalistic materialism have any of the original teleological ethics been retained. At the same time the nature of the ethical man became increasingly clouded. The renaissance image of man was questioned by Freud's theories of psychology and Darwin's theory of evolution, then ultimately was shattered by the senseless violence and mass slaughter associated with world war.

6. Out of the ashes arose dialogical ethics, known variously as situation ethics or the ethics of transcendent love. In avoiding questions of how to achieve the goal of becoming an ethical man, dialogical ethics sought norms for choosing that action most fitting in a particular situation. It took root in the Biblical injunction to love God and neighbor, in Augustine's dictum to "Love God, and do as you like." It embraces the insight of existentialism that existence precedes essence, or to put it another way, that man creates himself by his own decisions, no matter how ambiguous he experiences the context in which those decisions are made.

7. In describing the present search for a new ethic which goes beyond dialogical ethics, Daniel Callahan says:

Three issues seem to me of overriding importance. The first is the nature of man, what he is and what he can become. The second is that of the extent to which nature (human and nonhuman) can and should be manipulated and controlled. The third is the relationship between public and private morality, law and ethics.¹

The search for a new ethic goes on precisely because it was seen that dialogical ethics did not develop a doctrine of man beyond his nature as love. It denied any intention to affect human nature, and its principle of individual freedom in every situation denied to the lawmaking process and public morality any theoretical foundation.

8. In addition to the traditional criterion for an ethic, there is some agreement on the special requirements of an ethic for the twentieth century. Communications and travel have knit the world together as never before. There is need for an ethic which is comprehensive, which will be at home in the jungles of Java and the streets of New York, which will equip man to live his life on behalf of all men rather than some men. United States' wealth and knowledge continues to coexist along side dire poverty and the absence of even minimal educational opportunity. There is need for a human-oriented ethic which has the power to counteract pride and enable man to expend his life in building the new earth. It must be non-judgmental, opening the doors to communication, and trans-personal, speaking to all men. Finally power of the corporate comes as new hope to an age where exalted individualism has failed again and again.

9. The word ethics has been much misunderstood. In an era stressing freedom, liberalism, and individualism, the dogmatic and normative elements of thought have been rejected. There are signs, however, that this phase is waning and ethics is being given serious attention. Ethics is not the list of rules which covers every situation, it is not codified law. Ethics is not just a methodology which enables decisions to be made, it is rather a context within which decisions can be made. There is no such thing as an ethics of medicine or of business or of journalism. There are codes, guides to normal behavior in a particular vocational arena. But each code is only one view of that overarching vision of man which is the one ethics, just as there is one mankind. It is not a way of taking the tension out of human encounter. This is the province of etiquette, stylized conventions adopted for convenience. Ethics is a commitment to work through the tensions until true human understanding is attained, and finally to stand in the midst of ambiguity and tension and nevertheless act. Ethics is not a separate discipline along side other fields of study. It is the conglomerate of complex factors which determines the direction of action within any discipline that acts with the whole of mankind in mind. But there is no ethical system which is foolproof.

THE NATURE OF MAN

10. Every man experiences the shock of awakening to the consciousness that there was a time when he was not and there will be a time when he will no longer be. In confronting his limits in time, space and perception, man encounters mystery. He looks out at space and into the heart of the atom. Mysterious forces

welling up from within him are a constant reminder of that which is deeper than rationality where chaos is ordered, deeper than irrationality where creativity becomes visible. The first element of an anthropology is man's relationship to this mystery which is his deepest reality. Humanness is mystery.

11. To be man is to be self-conscious of one's own being as mystery. In his being is the mystery of the encounter with death which is the final upagainstness. And humanness is the mystery of knowing no possibility of escape from the inescapable power of this moment. Man is the mystery of the transformation when all things become new and he finds himself recreated. Finally man is the mystery of his own infinite passion for this mysterious depth which encounters, envelopes and transforms him.

12. There is no moral imperative that man ought to be mystery. There is no need to tell man he ought to sense the fear and fascination of the holy, he just does. But the mystery which appears in the depths of humanness is obscured by secularism's story that man's increasing knowledge will eventually banish all mystery concerning man. The mystery, however, is irreducible and implicit, and thus constitutes man.

13. Existentialism has grasped the absurdity of death, and the absurdity thus reflected upon all life. In Jean-Paul Sartre's story "The Wall,"² Pablo Ibbieta determines to give his life meaning by dying for the resistance cause. He succeeds in betraying a colleague and saving his own life. The absurdity of life and the hollowness of death are both illuminated. The mystery is that man discovers meaning in life, in spite of the absurdity.

14. Martin Heidegger's concept of man's thrownness (Geworfenheit) articulates that man always finds himself already here. He comes to consciousness born into a culture, living at a specific time, without every being consulted or given any opportunity to choose and yet with a deep sense of responsibility for his own being.³

15. Wolfhart Pannenberg uses Schleiermacher's concept of the ultimate dependence of man as the launching point of his anthropology. He observes that man is the one who is "open to the world." He is in fact driven beyond any achievement, driven through any closed system of thought upon which he might be dependent, into the open. Here and here alone, in openness to that upon which he is infinitely dependent, can he expend the passion which he experiences as mystery and which carries him to a destiny beyond the world.⁴ Kierkegaard's "Knight of Faith" who makes "the leap" likewise symbolized the mystery of human re-creation.⁵

16. A second element of humanness has to do with consciousness. A plant or bacteria reacts to its environment. The animal world has consciousness. Man has consciousness of consciousness, as indicated by his creation of a culture, for culture can be described as the objectification of consciousness. The chain does not end here, for man has developed a consciousness about culture. He knows that he can create not just the culture he finds on his hands but any culture he chooses to create.

17. Humanness is, therefore, freedom. To be man is to be freedom, to be conscious of alternative obligations and to decide always out of ambiguity. Man is the freedom to take an authentic relation, to be conscious not only of the other,

but also conscious of that consciousness of the other. Man is the freedom to create his own world, design his own universe which is in turn self-creation. He is the freedom to be his own conscience, to decide, and to experience those decisions made in the ambiguity of the moment as the decisions of life itself. He is the freedom of being accountable not to anything in this world, but of knowing his obligation to that upon which he is infinitely dependent.

18. To be the one who decides his being means man is his freedom, is his decision, not merely that he has freedom. Freedom is constitutive rather than attributive of man. Today we find this freedom to be obscured by the determinism which sees each man's decisions made for him, whether by the economic world, the political world, the family, or society. This determinism hears only one call at each crisis point of life.

19. It is here that the relationship between law and ethics is forged out. A man under the law is responsible to the world for the world. An ethical man is responsible for the world but to the mystery, the freedom, the care and the fulfillment in his humanness, and through his humanness to that which is the ground of humanness. He is free to be his freedom in the world. It is Kierkegaard's thesis that man's essence is created by his existence in the process of making decisions. This is not because man is free to decide, for all creatures are free to make decisions within the context out of which they live. It is because man is the one who is conscious that those decisions create not only his environment but also his relationship to that environment. They constitute his being. Unlike the creatures who act out of instinct or react unthinkingly out of pre-conditioned reflexes, man decides out of a social memory which has access to the whole of human history and predictive capacities concerning the far-reaching consequences of a particular course of action. It is not merely the freedom to decide out of a larger context that constitutes the uniqueness of humanness, but the consciousness of the self as the one who is free to decide.

20. "No man is an island" was Milton's poetic expression of the interrelatedness of all being. "If a single clod be washed into the sea, Europe's the less." This inward reality is outwardly manifest in man's drive to care. At full flowering, it becomes care for the world.

21. Man is the animal who transcend care for self, or self and young, or self and community, even self and species, to a care for the whole of creation. Care is agape, the love which is concerned for the wellbeing of the other. This care is exhibited first of all as gratitude, as appreciation for life and acknowledgment of the gift that life is. It is that concern which is compassion for the wounds of the world, recognizing them as his wounds. It is the decision to take responsibility for that world. And it is the motivating power that comes as that responsibility is executed. The journey from gratitude through compassion and responsibility to a sense of empowerment is the work in each case of love as that force which brings the separated together for the betterment of both.

22. The social process can be depicted as the dynamical interrelating of economics, politics and culture. Care for the world is given political expression in the expanding circle of human relatedness, growing from tribe to state to nation, and finally towards the multi-national or international. It was first seen in man's desire to explore and make the whole world his own. Economically it is manifest in the growing interdependence of each man with all other men of the

globe. Culture now knows few boundaries. We are in a "global village" on "spaceship earth." The popularity of ecology as a human cause may have less to do with the preservation of nature than with its use as a focal point for the expression of that care for the world which has been frustrated in so many other specific areas.

23. For Teilhard de Chardin, the love which is "the affinity of being with being" is the drive effecting this care.⁵ This affinity is present in all being, but is revealed to self-conscious life as it empowers that life to caring. Chardin traces this concept back to Plato's Dialogues through Nicolas of Cusa. Likewise Paul Tillich, under the same influence, defines love as "that force which drives toward the reunion of the separated."⁶ An attribute of all being, it is present in man. But for man alone is the possibility of moving toward reunion on the level of the consciousness of consciousness. Man who is conscious of his own consciousness recognizes that very capacity as his gift, and that bringing it to all mankind is true caring. The essence of this care is thus to share man's essence.

24. Teilhard has given the name noosphere to that inter-meshed human consciousness which has circled the globe, just as in an earlier age life came to circle the globe in an interacting network we know as the biosphere. From this inter-meshing of consciousness has come the realization that man is not born into a family or a nation, but into the family of man inhabiting spaceship earth.

25. The counter force to this corporateness is individualism. In economics it appears as laissez-faire. In politics as reliance on charismatic leadership. In culture, it takes the form of the idolization of the individually-great and the neglect of the dynamics through which a corporate body trains and empowers the individual to objectify its self-consciousness.

26. History has debated the importance for human fulfillment of exploration or achievement, or the search for truth versus the possession of truth. The twentieth century, in the midst of abundant achievement is moving toward a consensus, linking fulfillment with fully expending life in a style which could be called raging tranquility or problemlessness. Life is endless for those who are conscious of embodying at one specific moment the direction of the total stream of mankind reaching from its distant beginnings into the far future. Man is that fulfillment which is his relationship to his total life.

27. Man has one great life to live, and the characteristic of this aspect of humanness is delight with life as it is, with its suffering and joy, its tragedy and victory. This strange certitude Plato expresses in his analogy of the cave where the courage to stare into the blinding light is a knowing, yet not knowing, a certitude that there is greatness in being one's own being rather than attempting to derive being from the shadows of illusion. Man is not his possessions, or his achievements, or even his relationships, but is his life. This humanness is the unknowable peace where every problem of his life fades into complete insignificance beside the unleashed drive of life toward its goal of being life each and every moment. It is the unspeakable joy of knowing the way life really is, or experiencing the deep contentment of flowing with life and participating in life. Living the one great life is that humanness which dares to let go of life, which has plunged to the depths of life and known the ever-lastingness which is there.

28. This is not the stoical determination to delight in life, no matter what fate may fling into the path. Nor is it a gnostic reliance on knowledge of life's secrets to give one mastery over its vagaries. Determination is worn down in time, and intellect is ultimately powerless before the passions which drive up from the human deeps. It is rather the stance of the hero of the Camus novel, The Happy Death, who delights in retaining consciousness and living each moment, even of one's own death.⁸

THE COMPREHENSIVE DECISION-MAKING CONTEXT

29. We have been describing the human indicative, the isness of man. We turn now to the implications of this ontological anthropology for man's decision-making methodology. It is the concern of an ethic that society operate out of an anthropology which is a comprehensive and accurate model of man at the ontological level. It is likewise a fundamental presupposition that the methodology which man uses incorporate the same comprehensiveness and depth. This requires, first, a decision as to the meaning of comprehensiveness, and second, a concrete specific methodology for determining the comprehensive context and making ethical decisions within that model of reality.

30. We need to clarify at the beginning the precise way in which an indicative ethic could be more comprehensive and distinct for a situation or dialogical ethics. One approach would be to substitute "reality" as a word that points to all of life for the word "love" was used in a situation ethics context.

31. Joseph Fletcher has summarized Situation Ethics in terms of six propositions:⁹

- (i) Only one 'thing' is intrinsically good; namely, love: nothing else.
- (ii) The ultimate norm of Christian decisions is love: nothing else.
- (iii) Love and justice are the same, for justice is love distributed.
- (iv) Love wills the neighbor's good whether we like him or not.
- (v) Only the end justifies the means; nothing else.
- (vi) Decisions ought to be made situationally, not prescriptively.

32. Let us replace the word love by the word reality, defined by the four aspects of humanness as being one's mystery, freedom, care and greatness, and observe the implications for a new ethic.

33. Situation ethics says only one thing is intrinsically good, namely love. The new ethics would say that reality is good. Reality includes tragedy and rejection. To say only love is good leads to a program of maximizing love and minimizing tragedy and pain. Moments of pain and tragedy are declared meaningless islands set off from meaning-filled times of love. An ethic of reality, on the other hand, implies that pain, tragedy and separation as constituent and ever-present elements of existence do have meaning. It can say that being, not just one aspect of being, is good.

34. This in no way implies approval of malice, or permission to passively permit pain, for reality is not less than love but more. To say reality is good, which implies that life is good, is to express the determination to be humanness in the midst of pain as well as joy, in the midst of dark separation as well as illuminating reunion. It is the determination to be love, but beyond that, to

accept hate as a part of reality which must be dealt with, not only in others, but in the depths of one's own being.

35. Fletcher's first proposition can also lead to the opposite perversion. Visioning pain and tragedy as the enemy can lead to an overemphasis on their importance. The temptation is to deal with one's agony in order to prepare to deal with the situation of the agony of the world. When pain and hate and separation appear and are pronounced not good, then all loving activity tends to cease until they are dealt with. This has resulted in the over-individualistic emphasis of both fundamentalism and liberalism as well as psychologism. In actuality, they can never be eliminated and their minimization may absorb all available energy leaving none for love. The overall result of the new ethics is to give permission to be the pain in joy and the joy in pain, to live the tragedy that life is, and embody reality as the separated one striving for reunion.

36. In the second proposition, situation ethics espouses love as the ultimate norm of decision. To place reality as the norm is to expand the horizon of activity from the individual to the corporate. Love as agape labors for the fulfillment of the other, the completion of that personality, raising it up to what it should be in order to take its place in society and stand as a man among men. Reality, in calling the individual to participate in the whole, gives wholeness in return. Reality or "life as it is" as the decisional norm is in essence an expression of the paradox, "to die is to live." The death which comes from making life the idol, is the enemy, and this is the perversion ready at hand in setting love as a norm. The life which comes on the other side of dying to one's illusions about the way life is, is the miracle of life. This is life within life. This is reunion with all of life.

37. Proposition three, that 'love and justice are the same, for justice is love distributed,' is a definition of love which pushes past the personal to its structural nature. It implies the imperative that each man be given his just share of care, whether it be according to a doctrine of equal share or needful share. This is helpful. What is helpful is the implication that a man treated unjustly is also unloved. When reality and justice are equated (or life and justice) all excuse is taken away from the unloved man for not living his life. Moreover he is empowered, not only by love as the activity by another for his betterment, but also by those deserts where one is left alone to live life as the mystery forever unknown even by oneself. To stress love, dialogue, communication, interaction is to isolate loneliness as the great demonic force to be overcome, not recognizing in aloneness a seedbed of creativity where each man confronts the mystery which is his essence.

38. The trans-personal character of love is stressed in the proposition: "Love wills the neighbor's good, whether we like him or not." The new ethic agrees with this trans-personal character of love. It says that there is in reality the potential for structures which not only sustain those who build them but all who relate to them. The trans-personal group, rather than the impersonal individual, is thus recognized as the operating entity.

39. Principle five says "Only the end justifies the means." In the context of reality, each means takes its place as a part within the whole, and has its meaning only in the whole. Man as mystery transcends known reality, and therefore

so do his ends. Man as consciousness is inextricably connected to all consciousness, and is in turn conscious of that. Man as care moves beyond any particular obligation which confines that care towards obligation not only to being but the ground of being as well. It is only the comprehensive which is capable of demanding the total expenditure of man's one life, which alone creates the deep tranquility which is humanness.

40. "Decisions ought to be made situationally." The requirement of a life ethic for comprehensiveness requires the creation of methodologies to ensure that comprehensiveness with respect to each situation. This is the crucial factor in formulation an ethic which can move beyond the theoretical into practical implementation, and will be dealt with in the next section.

41. At this point the question should be considered of whether the use of an "ought" statement necessarily means that one has reverted to an ontological or teleological system of ethics.

42. There has been a great deal of discussion in philosophy recently of the propriety of moving from "is" or indicative statements to "ought" or imperative statements.¹⁰ One of those who has participated in this debate, Robert V. Hannaford, shows clearly how a situation a, if it is what you want, implies that fulfilling the conditions which make a possible produces imperatives.

If you want a (any human activity) then you ought to preserve b (the conditions or relationships shown to be essential to a). If you want to preserve b, then you ought to preserve c (the conditions essential to b), and so on . . . ¹¹

He goes on to point out that this process could be pursued for any standard human activity a until all the conditions and freedoms essential to it were listed. This applies only if the activity a is something I want. If there is no initial "want" there is no "ought".¹² Thus "ought" statements are not inconsistent with indicative, but flow out of a vision of the future.

43. Hannaford's method is contentless, wants are authentic or inauthentic depending on whether they reflect a comprehensive anthropology in its fullness or in some reduced form. For the first time in human history the possibility exists of providing whatever material device, politico-economic structure or cultural invention that are truly wanted by man. Missing is agreement as to what is wanted. Since Plato we have known abstractly that man wants life, he wants to be man, and he wants to participate in the reality which is his fellow man and his surrounding universe. The importance of anthropology is its answer to the question of what is man and what is life. The process of model building, which includes all aspects of the sciences and humanities and to which we now turn is developing an increasingly realistic appreciation of the decision-making process.

THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

44. At the core of an ethical system is its decision-making process. Man always begins to deal with his situation by building a model or screen to represent reality as he apprehends it. That model is then modified depending on the flow of information which comes from the continual exploring of the situation. As confidence

increases that the model does truly represent reality, action is based more and more on that model.

45. In a particular situation data is received by the mind where it triggers the recall of a number of alternative courses of action. The mind enters into a dialogue with the situation through a process of model recall and comparison of that model with the actual situation. This is similar to the common law process where legal precedents are sought in order to make a consistent ruling. Other courses of action are filtered out by the conscience as being contrary to the opinions of parents, community or peers. The volitional screen, what I want to happen, eliminates other activities, while admitting, as Hannaford pointed out, all those activities necessary to achieve the primary goal. Yet other activities are rejected by reason as unsuitable because of theories of action and interaction, principles, availability of tools or materials. Others are ruled out by circumstances.

46. If all courses of action save one are filtered out as these screens are used, this action is generally carried out. If two or more alternatives remain, some can be eliminated by an increasingly rigorous application of the screens. If all alternatives are eliminated, either the screens must be applied with less rigidity and rejected activities reconsidered, or else the mind must be creative and originate new modes of response. This creativity can lead to the paradigm shift in which old models of reality and ethical norms are seen as inadequate and new models and norms adopted.

47. There is nothing unusual about this process. It is used by the sophisticated scientist and the small child alike. What varies is the precision, the refinement, and the correspondence to reality of the various screens. It is both an art and an exact science. It is as complex as life itself, for it is a life process. It is in no sense automated or automatic, for each decision is finally made by the individual within the recesses of his own mind out of those screens which he alone has decided to adopt.

48. In dealing with any situation, reason is brought into full play through a framework of grid, analysis, problemat, goal, strategies, tactics and time-line. These encourage detached and detailed observation of the situation and a self-conscious application of ethical screens. The grid is that imaginal map which locates the elements of the situation in their spacial relationship. To be comprehensive any grid of the particular situation must see itself located ultimately within a grid of the world. Analysis of the situation proceeds by means of a social process model through which elements are located as they relate dynamically to one another. The problemat is a list of all the individual problems, the spacial disrelationships or points of malfunction in the social process, which prevent life from being creative, useful expenditure. Once the problems are isolated, goals follow immediately. Creative energy is required to invent the strategy which will accomplish the goal. Tactics lay out the activities necessary to effect this strategy, and include the forces and instruments. Finally, these individual tactics are placed on a time line which now constitutes a plan of action.

49. Although each step in this methodology is important, identifying the problem is particularly crucial. The problem is located at the point at which specific action can be taken. To identify it is to accurately locate the ultimate target of each tactic. To miss the problem is to aim every tactic, no matter how

effective it may be, at the wrong target. A way of identifying the problem is to look for innocent suffering. It is a question of listening for the cry of the situation, analyzing the response to trial balloons, being attuned to the spirit struggle of the times, of hearing the scream behind every superficial statement of the problem. It is observing the life dynamics at the point where man tries to escape through fight (belligerence, criticism, attack) or flight (falling asleep, running away, changing the topic).

50. To achieve a particular goal, either direct or indirect tactics can be used. Direct tactics apply to a goal which can be achieved with an available number of people in a limited length of time. Indirect tactics become increasingly necessary as the goal is found to be beyond the ability, competence or power of those who have identified the problem and decided to assume responsibility for its solution. When operating indirectly at the strategic level, the responsible person or group becomes a catalytic agent, using the forces which are present in the situation to move it in a creative direction. This can be done by identifying the creative trends which are present and then enabling these to reach fruition by removing that which blocks or deters their growth.

INDICATIVE ETHICS STYLE

51. The creativity required by this ethic is evident both in its anthropology and in its methodology. The ontological model of man and the methodology have had to be invented. Analytical screens have to be created. Strategies have to be invented. Creativity occasions awe. Prometheus knew that to touch the fire of creativity meant being marked. In the realization that "I decide the right," the awesome power of creativity is unleashed within man and both awakens within him a fear of his own power and enlivens him with the desire to use it.

52. An ethic of the indicative creates an aggressive style. It unleashes man's primal drive to actualize his being by being his mystery and caring for creation. It listens aggressively, plans aggressively, and enacts decisions aggressively for it becomes clear that man is not being his humanness until all men are their humanness. I cannot effectively be my mystery unless my neighbor gives me permission to do so by being his mystery.

53. Indicative ethics is transcendent. The meaning of life comes from the deeper transcendent level. Each tension takes its balance from that which is deeper and is its ground. Meaning occurs as the past relates to the whole, and it is from the ground of being that the ontological structures of reality are held in the balanced tension that gives them wholeness.

54. An indicative ethic is liberating. It embodies the freedom to decide the future and the freedom to be the future which is decided. This liberty comes from its unity just as radical monotheism was experienced as liberation from polytheism. It is a way of overcoming the dichotomy between the ego and the altruistic, the tension between my desires and the needs of the world. Man is care for the world. When model building procedures give concrete expression to this care, then to respond to the needs of the world is to be man. To use Tillich's categories this is neither autonomous or heteronomous but theonomous where the will of the ground of being and man's will unite.¹³

55. An ethic of authenticity enables life to be integrated to be one happening within being, one deed in history. To be many happenings, many deeds, is to participate in the schizophrenia which puts deed against defeat, achievement against destruction with volitional fibrulation and self-disintegration the result. Joseph Campbell points out that at the level of its mythology all mankind is on one journey¹⁴ and that the journey to the center of being is a search for integration. Overcome is the dichotomy between reward and punishment. It is a recovery of the ancient stoic insight that virtue is its own reward. The virtuous act is the life-giving act, and in creation of new life, new life is given the creator.

CONCLUSION

56. Law prescribes the appropriate action for a particular set of circumstances. Goals focus action on its end product. Principles and norms act as guides to that activity which is most fitting in any particular situation. Wants act as motivating forces. The model of reality becomes for man representational of that living entity of which he is a functioning part. All these factors have their place in a comprehensive ethic. The movement from ontological to teleological to situational to indicative ethics is not a move from blind obedience through adopting norms to the free actualization of enlightened wants, and finally to a comprehensive ethics, it is a voyage of ethical discovery. A new ethic is less a discarding of the past than a movement toward unifying law, goals, principles, norms, wants, insights into humanness, and methodological clarity into an organic whole, each with a clearly defined function within the realm of its competence. Some of these functions have been described, others implied. The unique contribution of indicative ethics is that it undercuts every attempt by man to build a system which will remove the responsibility for his decision from his shoulders. He must respond to a situation he can never fully understand, utilizing a methodology he knows can never be perfect, out of an understanding of humanness which is never complete. And though he utilize all the insight available, he knows that only history will indicate whether or not it was the right decision.

NOTES

1. "Living with the New Biology," The Center Magazine, Vol. V, No. 4, (July/August 1972), p. 8.
2. Jean Paul Sartre, Intimacy, (New York: New Directions, 1948), pp. 59-80.
3. See Magda King, Heidegger's Philosophy, (New York: MacMillan, 1964), p. 78 for a discussion of Geworfenheit.
4. Wolfhart Pannenberg, What is Man? Chapter 1.
5. Soren Kierkegaard, Concluding Unscientific Postscript, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1941), pp. 90 ff.
- 5*. Teilhard de Chardin, The Phenomenon of Man, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1959), p. 264.
6. Paul Tillich, Love, Power and Justice, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 25: "Love cannot be described as the union of the strange but as the reunion of the estranged."
7. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Letters and Papers from Prison, p. 164.
8. Albert Camus, A Happy Death, (New York: Random House, 1972).
9. Joseph Fletcher, "The New Look in Christian Ethics," Harvard Divinity Bulletin (Oct. 1959). See also Fletcher, Situation Ethics,
10. W. D. Hudson, ed., The Is-Ought Question: A Collection of Papers on the Central Problem in Moral Philosophy, (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1969).
11. Robert V. Hannaford, "You Ought to Derive 'Ought' from 'Is'," Ethics, Vol. 82 (Jan. 1972), p. 157.
12. Ibid, p. 158. For a slightly different approach, see Glen O. Allen, "The Is Ought Question Reformulated and Answered," Ethics, Vol. 82, No. 3, (Apr. 1972), pp. 181-199. All ought statements including the moral statements, belong to the same genus, and "project relevant past experience to future occasions," they are "our means of moving around conceptually within the framework of causal laws." (e.g. If you want your house to last, you ought to paint it every five years.) Moral ought statements, in addition, "designate possible choices, means or courses of action which are morally appropriate." The criteria for moral appropriateness is another question.
13. Paul Tillich, Love, Power and Justice, pp. 76 ff.
14. Joseph Campbell, The Hero with a Thousand Faces, (New York: The World Publishing Company, 1956).
15. Joseph Campbell, Myths to Live By.