



# Moral Development and Reality: Beyond the Theories of Kohlberg, Hoffman, and Haidt

By John C. Gibbs

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## Moral Development and Reality: Beyond the Theories of Kohlberg, Hoffman, and Haidt By John C. Gibbs

*Moral Development and Reality* explores the nature of moral development, human behavior, and social interconnections. The exploration elucidates the full range of moral development, from superficial perception to a deeper understanding and feeling through social perspective-taking. By comparing, contrasting, and going beyond the key theories of preeminent thinkers Lawrence Kohlberg, Martin Hoffman, and Jonathan Haidt, author John C. Gibbs tackles vital questions: What exactly is morality and its development? Can the key theoretical perspectives be integrated? What accounts for prosocial behavior, and how can we understand and treat antisocial behavior? Does moral development, including moments of moral inspiration, reflect a deeper reality?

This third edition of *Moral Development and Reality* is thoroughly updated, refined, and expanded. A major addition to this volume is the attention to the work of Jonathan Haidt, a prominent theorist who studies the psychological bases of morality across cultures and political ideologies. Gibbs is authoritative with respect to Kohlberg's, Hoffman's, and Haidt's theories, thanks in good measure to his privileged position, having worked or been acquainted with all three of these key figures for decades. A new foreword by David Moshman introduces the third edition, calling it "the most important contribution to the study of moral development since the turn of the century." *Moral Development and Reality* will have broad appeal across academic and applied disciplines, especially education and the helping professions. With its case studies and chapter questions, it also serves as a text in advanced undergraduate and graduate courses in social/developmental psychology and human development.

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#### Review

"A fascinating and provocative book with an original perspective. The analysis of the theory and contributions of Lawrence Kohlberg is far more sophisticated, well-grounded, and balanced than one finds in most other texts." -- Carolyn Pope Edwards, Willa Cather Professor, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

"The most comprehensive and convincing account of moral experience available today. The book is masterful-and an essential read for students and seasoned scholars alike." -- Mary Louise Arnold, Associate Professor of Applied Psychology and Human Development, University of Toronto

"A penetrating examination of moral development [that] challenges all of us to think more deeply about the moral landscape." -- Darcia Narvaez, Professor of Psychology, University of Notre Dame, and Editor, *Journal of Moral Education*

"This is the most sensible and insightful book on moral development that I have seen in over twenty years. In this masterful treatment, John Gibbs examines the recent trends in moral psychology with a deep understanding of the classic questions and controversies in the field. The book is both intellectually satisfying and exciting to read."-William Damon, Professor of Education, Director, Stanford Center on Adolescence

#### About the Author

**John C. Gibbs, PhD**, is Professor of Developmental Psychology at The Ohio State University. His research interests include cross-cultural sociomoral development, parental socialization, empathy, prosocial behavior, and antisocial behavior. Dr. Gibbs innovated a major intervention program for antisocial youth and has developed assessment measures of moral judgment, moral identity, social perspective-taking, self-serving cognitive distortions, and social skills. In addition to his books, Dr. Gibbs has authored or coauthored over 80 book chapters and articles on the topics pertaining to moral development and reality.

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