A COMPARISON OF THE MORAL JUDGEMENTS OF
MALES AND FEMALES AS A FUNCTION OF
MERGING SEX ROLES

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
North Texas State University in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

By

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Denton, Texas
August, 1976

Factors which influence severity of moral judgement in men and women were investigated in this study with 94 male and 89 female undergraduate students as participants. Effects of "sex of judge," "sex of transgressor," and "value orientation" variables were examined across five diverse story conditions. A measure of identification was also obtained.

As hypothesized, a significant main effect was found for "value orientation," but not for "sex of judge" or "sex of transgressor" variables. The hypothesized disappearance of a "sex of judge" by "sex of transgressor" interaction was found. Hypotheses concerning a permissive trend and the effects of degree of identification were not confirmed.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Analysis of Variance - Story Condition 1</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Analysis of Variance - Story Condition 3</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Analysis of Variance - Story Condition 2</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Pearson's r for Level of Severity of Moral Judgement as Related to Level of</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reported Identification</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Analysis of Variance - Story Condition 4</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Analysis of Variance - Story Condition 5</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Means and Standard Deviations for Male and Female Judges Across All Five</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Story Conditions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A COMPARISON OF THE MORAL JUDGEMENTS OF MALES AND FEMALES AS A FUNCTION OF MERGING SEX ROLES

Throughout the history of psychological research there has been demonstrated a great interest in the psychology of sex differences. Maccoby and Jacklin (1974) report that while many differences held to exist between the sexes are myths, there are a great number of true discrepancies. The investigation of psychological sex differences has included a multitude of both broad and specific topics and in many cases has led to a variety of disparate findings. One area that has been the topic of much research is individual morality as expressed in moral judgements elicited from both male and female subjects. A moral judgement involves the degree to which a subject agrees with or takes opposition to a given action, utilizing his values for what is right and what is wrong.

The purpose of the present study was to investigate certain factors influencing the severity of moral judgements, i.e., the extent to which a subject condones or opposes a given action with moral implications. More specifically, an attempt was made to determine the effects of, or relationship among: (a) sex of the judge, (b) sex of the transgressor, (c) the situational context in which the transgression occurs,
(d) the degree to which the judge identifies with the transgresser, and (e) value orientation of the judge. Further, the degree of severity of moral judgement was analyzed in light of influences from a changing society. Has there been a change in the level of severity of moral judgement during recent years, and, if so, is this change consistent for both sexes?

A review of the literature in the area of moral judgement reveals that a large portion of the research has focused on the developmental aspects of morality as expressed in the reported judgements or actions of a subject (Bandura, 1969; Kholberg, 1963, 1967; Mischel & Mischel, 1971; Piaget, 1948). Among adult subjects, interest has been focused on the differences between the sexes regarding the severity of moral judgements in a variety of situations. A major contention in comparison of the sexes is that differences in severity of moral judgements do exist (DiVesta & Bossart, 1958; Edwards, 1941; Gorsach & Smith, 1972; Kitay, 1940; Shaw & McMartin, 1975; Walster, 1966; Ziv, Shaw & Hebenhaus, 1975). The findings seem to indicate that women are the more severe moral judges.

A relevant study by DiVesta & Bossart (1958) consisted of presenting a written story to male and female subjects in which some clear transgression, committed by a male, occurred in the presence of mitigating circumstances. Findings clearly indicated that women judged the transgression with greater
severity than did men. Klinger, Albaum and Hetherington (1964) replicated the DiVesta and Bossart study with some important alterations. Paramount among the changes was the varying of sex of the transgressor. Using the same story that DiVesta & Bossart had utilized in their earlier study, Klinger et al. (1964) exposed one-half of their subjects to a same-sexed transgressor and the other half to an opposite-sexed transgressor. No main effect for sex of judge was found, although a significant interaction was evident between sex of the judge and sex of the transgressor. Each sex was more lenient in judging his own sex than in judging the opposite sex. Klinger et al. maintained that identification of the judge with a same-sexed (and thus similar) transgressor was the source of the difference in severity of moral judgement between the sexes found in previous studies. If same biological sex is a basis for identification of the judges with the transgressor, and if degree of identification can be assumed to be inversely related to severity of moral judgement, then the DiVesta and Bossart findings are to be expected. Since both male and female subjects were judging a male transgressor, women subjects, identifying less with the story character, would be expected to judge more harshly than their male counterparts.

Several investigators state that biological sex is indeed a major factor which promotes identification of a judge with a transgressor (Byrne, 1971; Byrne, Clore &
The theory that identification with same-sexed models is a key factor influencing development of sex-typed behavior is integral to the identification theory espoused by the psychoanalytic school of psychology (Liebert, Poulos, & Strauss, 1974). The psychoanalytic school holds that the neonate is without moral values. This theory offers a view of moral development rooted in the emergence of the superego. The superego is said to develop as the child "takes in" the values of his parents at about the fourth or fifth year of life (Liebert et al., 1974). The formation process itself, intimately linked to the resolution of the Oedipal conflict, is explained in terms of identification. It can be hypothesized that identification is a major contributing factor to whatever differences, if any, exist between males and females with regard to moral judgement. It has been demonstrated (Brown, 1957; Diamond, 1975; Pauls & Smith, 1956; Gray & Klaus, 1956; Schaffer & Shoben, 1956) that boys identify more with their fathers and girls more with their mothers. This leads to cultivation of differences in male and female children since the parents, via their interaction with society, have developed differential modes of responding in accordance with what the culture deems appropriate behavior for each sex.

Although the term "identification" is commonly used almost exclusively in connection with the child's imitation of certain prominent figures in his social environment, the
same process plays a part in virtually every instance of social learning. For example, Grusec and Brinker (1972) found that young children were better able to recall the actions of characters viewed in movies if the character and viewer were of the same sex. Presumably, this difference in recall was due to better identification with the same-sexed model. Minuchin (1965) found that girls from home environments which emphasized individuality rather than identification and imitation were less likely to display and adhere to conventional sex-role standards than were girls from more traditional backgrounds. So pervasive is this role of identification in sex-role typing that Freud explained almost all facets of social development through the process of identification with the same-sexed parent. It is through this process of identification that the individual learns responses appropriate to his own sex in his particular society. Cultural customs and societal influence dictate in large part the personality traits, social and emotional behavior, and attitudes characteristic of males and females (Honigmam, 1954; Mussen & Conger, 1956).

The process of sex-role differentiation is, therefore, a gradual one and recent research indicates that defining it as identification with any one source (same-sexed parent) may be an oversimplification. Rosenberg and Sutton-Smith (1968), for example, found that sex-role preferences vary as a complex interaction of the family structure, i.e.,
sibling affects sibling and children affect their parents' sex-role behaviors just as parents influence their children. As the child grows older, school, peers, and significant others outside the family setting contribute further to the achievement of appropriate sex-role identification. It can be assumed from the well-established social norms that an individual's peers will reinforce behavior consistent with their expectations of sex-appropriate behavior. Thus, through a highly systematized process of cultural influence, an individual is subject to a continuous process of conditioning by which he learns to identify with same-sexed models.

Maccoby and Wilson (1957) identified several factors influencing the degree to which an individual identifies with a model: (a) attractiveness of character's actions, (b) perceived similarity to self, and (c) the extent of the individual's anxiety about the actions which the character portrays. Based on Maccoby and Wilson's observations, it may be hypothesized that moral judgements of an individual will vary depending on the attractiveness of the transgressor and the extent to which the transgressor is perceived as similar by the individual, with identification greatest for same-sexed models (Bandura, 1969; Brown, 1957; Liebert, Poulos & Strauss, 1974; Tauls & Smith, 1956). More specifically, the greater the perceived similarity between the
judge and the transgressor, the more the identification and empathy and, thus, the less severe the moral judgement.

The study by Crissman (1942) is representative of studies reporting sex differences in moral judgement in which identification between judge and transgressor may have clouded the findings. Crissman used a list of 50 situational or behavioral items and had his subjects rate each item on a 10-point scale of "rightness" or "wrongness." Of the 50 items, 40 were rated more severely by women and 10 were rated more severely by men. It would appear from these findings that women are more severe moral judges than are men. However, closer examination of the items reveals that although the sex of the character in each behavioral item is not actually stated, a male character is clearly implied—providing differential opportunity for identification.

Using Crissman's moral behavior scale, Gorusch and Smith (1972) found similar results, i.e., women were the more severe moral judges. Again, the implied character sex of each item provides a valid basis for criticism.

Banikiotes and Banikiotes (1972) had 30 male and 30 female subjects read attitudinal statements of four hypothetical persons indicating preference for liberated or conservative sex roles. Sex of the judged individual was balanced for male and female judge groups. No sex differences were found in expressed level of agreement. Again,
the difference between the Banikiotes and Banikiotes study and those which have reported sex differences in moral judgements (Crissman, 1942; DiVesta & Bossart, 1958; Edwards, 1941; Gorasch & Smith, 1972; Kitay, 1940; Shaw & McMartin, 1975; Walster, 1966; Ziv, Shani, & Nebenhaus, 1975) is the control for similarity between judge and judged. It thus seems that when opportunity for identification for male and female judges is held constant, sex differences are eradicated. In light of this impressive pool of evidence, the conclusion drawn in the Klinger et al. (1964) and other studies seems to be well established—that degree of identification affects degree of severity of moral judgements. Since the Klinger et al. study was undertaken, however, changing trends in American society call into question the ability to predict, based on biological sex, the degree to which a subject will identify with a given character or situation and, thus, the degree of severity of moral judgement. These trends suggest that there may be a decreasing differentiation between the sexes with respect to sex-appropriate behavior. Although Klinger et al. and others have shown judges to be more lenient toward their own sex, this decreasing differentiation may well be providing more opportunity for cross-sexual identification. This blurring of the sex roles in our society is intuitively evidenced by, 1. More women pursuing what were previously considered to be exclusively male endeavors (corporate executives,
police workers, truck drivers, R.O.T.C. involvement, etc.). Similarly, men are often seen in what were previously considered to be exclusively female positions such as secretary, nurse, and telephone operator.

2. A decreasing double standard with regard to sexual freedom as evidenced by widespread use and acceptance of birth control pills premaritally, and more sexual freedom for females without social stigma.

3. The emergence of unisex fashion (i.e., women wearing fewer dresses and more pants; men accepting more feminine styles including long hair, bell bottom trousers, silk patterned shirts, high heel shoes, and purses.

4. A changing attitude toward domestic roles (men assuming the homemaker role, and courts awarding children to the father instead of the mother in divorce cases).

5. An increasing involvement in equal rights issues (E.R.A. and other political action groups in which women are organizing in an attempt to achieve an equal place in society).

In a more experimental vein, Maccoby and Jacklin (1974, chaps. 8 & 9) report the consensus of recent research regarding differential sex-role behavior. After reviewing both Kholberg's developmental approach to sex-role differentiation and Mischel's reinforcement approach, the authors conclude that common to both theories is the recognition that direct and vicarious societal reinforcement acts to influence
differential sex-role behavior. While not giving the con-
tention a major role in their accounting, Maccoby and Jacklin
(1974, p. 303) do acknowledge that social attitudes are
changing and may well be acting to diminish the differences
in sex-typed behavior. Additionally, the authors state
that their review of recent data revealed a remarkable degree
of uniformity in the socialization of the two sexes. Thus,
to the extent that males and females are now being exposed
to a more common range of experiences, so might their scope
of identifications with various others be moving in a less
differentiated direction.

It is thus recognized that while degree of identifica-
tion of a judge with the transgressor is an important factor,
the differential identification of the two sexes based pri-
marily on biological sex may well be a phenomenon on the
decline in present society. Consideration must now be given
to the changing society's influences which provide the basis
for a blurring of the sex roles and sex-typed behaviors,
especially with respect to women's expanding roles into
what were previously considered male endeavors. In light
of the trend toward less differentiated sex roles, predic-
tions as to degree of identification must now take into
account complex situational factors, since biological sex
may no longer be a valid index of degree of identification.
In addition to a trend toward declining differentiation between appropriate male and appropriate female behaviors, there is a societal trend toward a more permissive attitude about "moral" behavior in general. This liberalization of attitudes toward many behaviors with "moral" connotations is evidenced by,

1. Changes in clothing which are in general more revealing (bare midriff, shorter skirts, the "braless" look, as well as the open-shirt styles for men).

2. The greater number of couples cohabiting premaritally.

3. A pronounced trend toward protecting the rights of the criminal, as well as greater leniency exhibited by the courts in administering punishment.

4. The openness with which the homosexual community (at least in part) is functioning with less persecution and ridicule.

5. The legalization of abortion in a majority of the states.

6. The lowering age requirements regarding voting and possession of alcoholic beverages.

7. The increased use of various narcotic substances by people of all ages.

8. Liberal display of sexual behavior and use of profanity in the motion pictures.
As well as being intuitively evident, these and other related trends are also evidenced empirically by a multitude of recent studies. For example, Scanzoni and Scanzoni (1976) have an excellent chapter citing research findings highlighting permissive trends regarding moral behavior as far back as 1900. Kinsey (1953) reports that of the women born prior to 1900, only 25% had experienced premarital sex as compared to those born after 1900, 50% of which had experienced sex premaritally. Additionally, 98% of the males (percentage declining with increasing education) reported having experienced premarital sex. While Kinsey's findings came under some pointed methodological criticisms, other studies report similar findings (Burgess & Wallin, 1953; Terman, 1938).

While the changes in moral and sexual behavior immediately following 1900 were revolutionary in nature, Reiss (1960, chap. 3; 1976, chap. 9) reports that subsequent changes in morality and sexual behavior have taken the form of an ongoing evolutionary trend toward greater attitudinal permissiveness. Bell (1966), Ehrmann (1957), and Zelnik & Kanter (1972) report similar findings. In a more general vein, Portune (1971) reports this air of permissiveness in other areas of behavior ranging from law enforcement to such areas as school curriculum and discipline.

Particularly germane to the present study is a specific examination of the DiVesta and Bossart data (1938) in comparison to that of Klinger et al. (1964) indicating this
permissive trend in a period of only five years, though not yielding significant differences.

Another important consideration that should be taken into account regarding moral judgement concerns the problem of stability. The issue lends itself to two important questions: (a) Do individuals possess a stable moral code independent of the situation in which the measure is taken?, and (b) Will individuals display a consistent morality as indexed by moral judgement across different types of transgressions (e.g., stealing versus cheating on an exam) if the measures are all taken in the same situation? An extraordinarily extensive and sophisticated study conducted by Hartshorne and May (1928) and followed up by Hartshorne, May, and Shuttleworth (1930) yielded relevant findings regarding the first question. The study, entitled "Character Education Inquiry," exposed thousands of children to various situations in which they could cheat, lie, and steal in diverse settings, including home, party games, and athletic contests. Contrary to their original expectations, the investigators found little consistency in the actual performance of individual children. From these findings, then, we could not predict that if Child A cheated in Situation 1 and Child B did not, that Child A would also cheat in Situation 2 and Child B would not. Ironically, however, the investigation revealed a good deal of consistency in the children's responses to queries conducted in their classrooms about their moral values and
opinions. However, verbally expressed moral values appeared to have little to do with action; often those children who cheated expressed as much or more disapproval of cheating as those who did not. It also appeared that external factors such as peer influence had a stronger influence on morality than did any hypothesized internal code. Hartshorne and May have, it seems, uncovered an important independence between moral behavior as defined by action and moral behavior as defined by verbal report. It should be stressed that whenever self-reported opinions were elicited in a fixed situation, such as the classroom, substantial consistency was found. If the situation were varied, such as moving from a home setting to a Sunday School setting, the level of consistency dropped, with similarities between self reports declining as the situations became more diverse. The experimenters concluded that the subjects vary their opinions to "suit the situation" in which they are elicited and have no generalized moral code.

Mischel (1962) pointed out that this discrepancy between moral behavior and self-report of moral attitudes may be in part accounted for by the difference in the topography of the response being measured. Mischel goes on to point out the general lack of correlation between questionnaire behavior and non-self-report behavior. Hartshorne and May, as stated, conclude that the individual has no general moral code; however, they also report a high degree of consistency
within a given situation. It would thus seem that individuals respond to what are perhaps subtle discriminative cues, present in the situation, which at least in part dictate their level of morality for that particular situation. As these cues vary from situation to situation, so does the subject's moral behavior.

In keeping with this hypothesis, Johnson (1962) found that moral judgements across situations tend to be highly specific and even discrepant. On the basis of these findings, there appears little doubt as to the specificity of morality across discrepant situations. The second point of interest, namely the consistency of self-reported morality within a situation, appears to be supported in the direction of an existing consistency. It is believed, however, that this support is somewhat superficial. From the literature previously reviewed, it would seem that morality is situation-specific and remains constant only when the situation of elicitation is held constant. The question must now be asked: If ethical transgressions of diverse content are presented intrasituationally, will this also result in a breakdown of moral consistency? If the factor controlling the level of expressed morality is, in fact, certain discriminative cues which elicit specific moral reactions, then these cues to a greater or lesser degree should operate to elicit varying levels of morality as a function of the degree
to which they are divergent, intrasituationally as well as cross-situationally. Although research relevant to this specific question is scarce, Butter and Seidenberg (1973) cite some applicable findings. Their study investigated the influence of the frequency of occurrence of specific conflict areas on the level of moral development as measured by Kohlberg's moral judgement scale. The investigators conclude that different moral conflict areas have differential effects on the level of expressed morality. Therefore, to the extent that the moral behaviors being judged vary, so will the individual's level of moral judgement.

Another factor considered in the present study was the effect of an individual's value orientation on severity of moral judgement. Early studies (Bruner & Tagiuri, 1954; Postman, Bruner, & McGuinnies, 1948; Sherif, 1936) indicated that individuals interpret a situation in terms of their needs or values. These early findings were specifically supported in the Klinger et al. study (1964). In this study, subjects were administered the Allport-Vernon-Lindzey Study of Values scale. Results of the scale allow categorization of subjects into theoretical, economic, aesthetic, social, political, or religious value areas. Differences in the degree of severity with which subjects of differing value orientations judged a situation were found to be significant. Results indicated that of the orientations included in the final analysis, those of religious orientation were
the most critical judges and those of political orientation, the most lenient. In light of these significant findings, it may be concluded that the value orientation of an individual is another factor influencing moral judgement.

The present study was specifically designed to investigate the following hypotheses.

1. There will be no difference between males and females regarding severity of moral judgements. This hypothesis is in line with the findings of Klinger et al. (1964).

2. An individual's value orientation will influence the severity of that person's moral judgements. This hypothesis is suggested by the significant results of the Klinger et al. study (1964).

3. Subjects will not be found to judge same-sexed transgressors more leniently than opposite-sexed transgressors. This prediction is at variance with the earlier findings of Klinger et al. (1964). However, in accordance with the changing societal influences detailed earlier, it is believed that cross-sexual identifications will now eradicate the interaction found highly significant in the 1964 study.

4. Moral judgements across both sexes will be generally less severe than the Klinger et al. study (1964).

5. The degree of severity of moral judgement will show an inverse relationship to the degree of identification with the story condition in which the transgression occurs.
It should be noted that the investigation of the factors involved in these hypotheses was confined to samples drawn from the college undergraduate population. Although this certainly restricts the extent to which the findings may be generalized, the experimenter observed an unexpectedly high percentage of the subjects to be considerably older than the expected age (an estimated 20%-30%).

Method

Subjects

The subjects in this experiment were 183 undergraduate students, enrolled in Texas state universities, who volunteered to participate. Of the participants, 94 were male and 89 were female.

Procedure

The test material was administered to all subjects in a single session. Two days were required for data collection. Subjects were first given the Allport-Vernon-Lindsey Study of Values test. Each person scored his own test, with the experimenters checking the scoring as the tests were turned in. Based on these scores, subjects were categorized into one of six value areas: (a) theoretical, (b) economic, (c) aesthetic, (d) social, (e) political, or (f) religious. The value area was determined by the individual's highest scale score. In cases where there were equally high scores in two or more areas, he/she was placed in the value group which had the least representation. Test booklets were
censored with black crayon so that subjects were unable to interpret their own scores during the self-scoring process.

The second part of the experimental session involved the presentation of one of two variations of five different stories. Each story involved some clear moral transgression with mitigating circumstances. Of the five stories involved, Stories 1-4 were written by the examiner and Story 5 was taken from a previous study (DiVesta & Bossart, 1958). The stories were constructed in an effort to reflect a variety of "everyday" situations and an effort was made to avoid what were subjectively felt to be overexposed topics. The only difference between the two sets of stories involved varying the sex of the story characters. One-half of all male subjects were presented stories in which the transgressor was also a male, while the other half of the male subjects were presented stories in which the transgressor was female. The variation of the transgressor's sex was also applied to the stories presented to the female subjects, with one-half being exposed to same-sexed transgressors and one-half to opposite-sexed transgressors. Aside from this one difference, the two sets of stories were identical. Each of the five stories is reproduced in Appendix A.

Distribution of the stories was accomplished by arranging two stacks of story booklets, alternating male and female transgressor booklets in each stack. One stack of booklets, identified by odd numbers, was distributed to the male
subjects. Female subjects received booklets identified by even numbers, taken from the second stack.

The initial presentation of the five stories was accompanied by the simple instruction:

Please read each of the following stories carefully and select from the statements that follow the one which comes closest to representing your opinion about the situation. Select only one statement and indicate your choice by circling the number of the statement. Read each of the stories in order and do not skip any.

The measure of attitude toward the situation required the subject to select one of six alternatives in terms of the degree to which each represented the subject's own opinion. A high score indicated judgements of a greater degree of moral severity, while low scores indicated a greater degree of leniency. The six alternatives and their respective numbers were,

1. I am completely in favor of the subject's action.
2. I am mostly in favor of the subject's action.
3. I am slightly in favor of the subject's action.
4. I am slightly opposed to the subject's action.
5. I am mostly opposed to the subject's action.
6. I am completely opposed to the subject's action.

Numerical scores of the subjects' choices were used in the analysis, and a more descriptive label of the transgressor to be judged was substituted for "subject's."
In the third and final phase of the experiment (after all five stories had been read and rated by all subjects), a measure of identification was taken. Subjects were requested to rank their degrees of identification with each of the five stories with instructions as follows.

Listed below are the situations described in each of the five stories you have just read. Please indicate the extent to which you can see yourself in each of the situations. In other words, how likely is it that something similar might happen to you? Indicate your choice by circling the number of the statement which best reflects your opinion. (Note: This is not necessarily an endorsement of the decision expressed.)

The six alternatives and their respective numbers were:

1. Yes, this could happen to me very easily.
2. Yes, this could happen to me fairly easily.
3. Yes, there is a slight chance this could happen to me.
4. No, it is doubtful that this could happen to me.
5. No, it is not probable that this could happen to me.
6. No, this could never happen to me.

Subjects were not required to identify themselves on either the Allport-Vernon-Lindzey test or on the judgement and identification measures. A number was assigned each subject and was recorded on all sets of papers. Again, odd
numbers were assigned to the males, even numbers assigned to the females.

The statistical analysis of the data included five 2 X 2 X 6 unweighted means analyses of variance with degree of severity of moral judgement as the dependent measure. In each set of five analyses of variance, one complete analysis was made on all subjects' responses under each of the five story conditions. Additionally, five Pearson's product moment correlation coefficients were calculated in connection with Hypothesis 5 and a t test was calculated in connection with Hypothesis 4.

Results

Analysis of the data for the 89 males and 94 females included in the final sample revealed no significant main effect for the "sex of judge" variable in any of the five analyses done. This finding supports Hypothesis 1 and is consistent with the previous Klinger et al. (1964) findings.

Additionally, no significant main effect was indicated for the "sex of the transgressor" variable in any of the five analyses. This finding is also consistent with previous studies (DiVesta & Bossart, 1958; Klinger et al., 1964).

A significant main effect for the "value orientation" variable was found in two of the five analyses. For Story Condition 1, analysis indicated a significant main effect at the .001 level. (See Table 1.) Post hoc comparisons of the group means were done using the Newman-Keuls tests, and
showed that the mean for the theoretical orientation group was the lowest (indicating least severity) and significantly differed from all other groups. The remaining five groups were not found to be significantly different from each other.

Table 1
Analysis of Variance
Story Condition 1

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<tr>
<td>Sex of Judge (SJ)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.05</td>
<td>2.90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sex of Transgressor (ST)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6.54</td>
<td>2.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value Orientation (VO)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>13.42</td>
<td>4.30*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SJ X ST</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SJ X VO</td>
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<td>0.45</td>
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<tr>
<td>ST X VO</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>0.49</td>
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<tr>
<td>SJ X ST VO</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Within</td>
<td>159</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>3.34</td>
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</table>

*p<.01

The analysis for Story Condition 3 showed the effects of the "value orientation" variable to be significant at the .04 level, as shown in Table 2. The Newman-Keuls test showed the aesthetic group mean to be the highest (most severe), although it did not differ significantly from the other five
group means. This finding is, however, only in partial support of Hypothesis 2, as the content of the situation being judged appears to effect whether value orientation will produce differences in judgemental severity.

Table 2
Analysis of Variance
Story Condition 3

<table>
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<th>Source</th>
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<td>Between</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sex of Judge (SJ)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.10</td>
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<td>Sex of Transgressor (ST)</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Value Orientation (VO)</td>
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<td>SJ X VO</td>
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<td>3.18</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST X VO</td>
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<td>.37</td>
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<td>SJ X ST X VO</td>
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<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>2.47</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p<.05

As shown in Table 3, in the second analysis the "sex of judge" by "sex of transgressor" by "value orientation" interaction was found to be significant at the .02 level. Interpretation revealed that within the theoretical, economic, and political value orientations a similar pattern occurred, with
both sexes showing a higher degree of judgemental severity when judging opposite-sexed as opposed to same-sexed transgressors. However, within the social and religious value orientations the pattern reversed with both sexes showing a lower degree of judgemental severity when judging opposite as opposed to same-sexed transgressors. In the remaining aesthetic value orientation group, male subjects showed a higher degree of judgemental severity for opposite-sexed transgressors, while females again showed a lower degree of judgemental severity for opposite-sexed transgressors.

Table 3
Analysis of Variance
Story Condition 2

<table>
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<td>Sex of Transgressor (ST)</td>
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<td>.01</td>
</tr>
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<td>Value Orientation (VO)</td>
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<td>.50</td>
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<td>SJ X VO</td>
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<td>.29</td>
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<td>ST X VO</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>.33</td>
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<td>SJ X ST X VO</td>
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<td>Within</td>
<td>159</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>2.89</td>
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*p<.05
While this interaction neither supports nor refutes Hypothesis 3, the absence of any significant "sex of judge" by "sex of transgressor" interaction in the other four story conditions tends to support the hypothesis.

In connection with Hypothesis 4, a post hoc comparison was made between the overall level of judgemental severity as measured under Story Condition 5 in the present study and as reported by Klinger et al. (1964). The comparison yielded no significant differences, $t(190) = .57$, $p>.05$. Story Condition 5 was used in this comparison because the story was common to both studies. Hypothesis 4, therefore, was not supported.

Table 4
Pearson's $r$ for Level of Severity of Moral Judgement as Related to Level of Reported Identification

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<td>183</td>
<td>.3109*</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>.3173*</td>
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</table>

*p<.05

Table 4 summarizes the five Pearson product moment correlation coefficients used in connection with Hypothesis 5.
Of the five correlations calculated, none reached significance in the predicted negative direction and those calculated for Story Conditions 1 and 5 were actually significant in the opposite direction. Hypothesis 5, therefore, was not supported.

The summary tables for the analyses of variance done on the data from Story Conditions 4 and 5 revealed no significant effects. They are presented in Tables 5 and 6 which are contained in Appendix B.

Discussion

The results make possible some interesting observations not available from previous similar studies (DiVesta & Bossart, 1958; Klinger et al., 1964). While the effects of "sex of judge," "sex of transgressor," and "value orientation" have been investigated, singularly or in combination, the designs have allowed only isolated contextual observations. By including in the present study five different contextual situations, it was possible to examine these variables for degree of consistency cross-situationally.

The conclusion drawn by Klinger et al. (1964) that men and women do not differ in severity of moral judgment seems to hold across a diverse range of situations. This finding supports Hypothesis 1. Similarly, manipulation of the "sex of transgressor" variable does not produce judgemental differences cross-situationally.
In contrast, the Klinger et al. (1964) conclusion that a judge's value orientation will affect severity of moral judgement does seem to hold, but with some qualification. Apparently whether or not a person's value orientation will affect his expressed severity of moral judgement depends on the content of the situation being judged. A significant main effect for the "value orientation" variable was found in relation to two of the five story conditions. For Story Condition 1 (the "abortion" situation), the theoretically-oriented group was shown to judge the transgressor significantly less severely than any of the other five orientation groups. It appears that the content of this "abortion" story had a differential effect on those judges with a theoretical orientation, as the other five groups judged the situation essentially the same. By contrast, under Story Condition 3 (the "car purchasing" situation), those of political rather than theoretical orientation were the most lenient moral judges. It is clear that while a judge's value orientation can affect level of severity of moral judgement, it does not do so in all circumstances. When it does contribute significantly to the judge's level of responding, it is not consistent cross-situationally. It should also be noted that the judge's expressed level of moral judgement is not necessarily related to his actual behavior in similar circumstances. Hypothesis 2, therefore, is conditionally supported.
The data also supported Hypothesis 3 which, counter to the Klinger et al. (1964) findings, stated that due to societal changes the "sex of judge" by "sex of transgressor" interaction would not be found to exist at a significant level. As indicated, this was true for all story conditions with the exception of Story Condition 2 (the "job discrimination" situation). Even for this story condition, the pattern of the interaction when plotted against the different value orientations showed no clear trend across all orientations. The findings clearly suggest that predictions of a subject's relative level of judgemental severity may no longer be based on whether that subject is judging a same- or opposite-sexed transgressor. Perhaps the societal changes resulting in a merging of the sex roles have acted to provide members of both sexes with a greater insight into, and empathy for, the variety of situational demands imposed on the opposite sex. It might alternately be hypothesized that a general lessening of the overall level of moral judgements might have occurred and eradicated the differences through a reverse ceiling effect. However, the data suggest otherwise. As stated, the comparison of the mean level of judgemental severity between Story Condition 5 in the present study and in the Klinger et al. (1964) study yielded no significant difference. The data suggest, therefore, that other factors have acted to lessen this "sex of judge" by "sex of transgressor" interaction. It is believed that the
merging of the sex roles, discussed above, is responsible for the disappearance of this interaction reported at a high level of significance by Klinger et al. (1964).

The finding that the judges were not significantly more lenient in their moral judgements than in the 1964 sample was contrary to the expectation set forth in Hypothesis 4. It may be that level of moral severity could have followed a curvilinear pattern over the last 12 years. The Klinger et al. (1964) data was collected in 1961, prior to the "hippy era" which manifested some of the most overt signs of the college population's attitudes moving in a liberal direction. This era, continuing throughout the 60's, included a great deal of social protest which preceded, if not precipitated, an era of greater national reform. A swing toward condemnation of national and individual immorality was highlighted by much of the nation's reaction to the Viet Nam war and the Watergate scandal. This lack of tolerance for behavior considered by many as immoral has continued into the present, as evidenced by current media coverage of national outrage over Washington "sex scandals." It would thus appear that the two measures involved in this comparison were at the ends of a conservative/liberal/conservative continuum.

The failure to obtain significant correlations in the predicted direction between level of moral severity and
degree of identification may well be a function of the measure used. It was the investigator's intent to measure the subjects' degree of identification with the transgressor in each story. It is possible, however, that the judges were instead projecting themselves into the role of the victim or institution being transgressed against. If this were in fact the case, the results are not surprising. It would be expected that the more a judge could imagine being transgressed against personally, the more severe the judgemental behavior would become. Inasmuch as the directions on the identification questionnaire refer to "the situation" and not explicitly to "the transgression," the confusion is possible. In light of the evidence supporting the identification theory, it is believed that it is possibly this methodological flaw, rather than a breakdown in the theory, which resulted in the failure to find data supporting Hypothesis 5.

Although experimental data did not support all five of the hypotheses (4 and 5 were not confirmed), the basic design is believed to be sound. Future research could better define the relationship between level of severity of moral judgement and degree of identification. Care should be taken to make explicit to the judge those elements of the situation to which a measure of identification refers. Additional research is also needed to determine the relationship between the various value orientations and the types of situations commonly encountered, i.e., based on a subject's value orientation,
can we predict what moral situations, if any, will elicit consistently high or low levels of judgemental severity? The question should be asked: If such a relationship exists, is it consistent for both sexes? The answer to these questions can and should be found by future research. Such investigations might include systematic variation of the type situation to be judged—specifically, the victim of the transgression might be varied along a personal/impersonal continuum, i.e., institution versus individual.
Appendix A
Sample of Story Content

Story 1

A man and his wife have just learned that they are going to have a baby. Both feel that the other is very much against having a child at this time and several discussions have brought no understanding between them as to what should be done. The situation is causing frequent arguments and hard feelings. After some very serious consideration, the husband (wife) agrees to let his (her) wife (husband) make the decision, and agrees to abide by the decision whatever it may be. Realizing the decision is an important one, the wife (husband) also gives it serious consideration and finally decides to check into the local hospital and have an abortion performed by a competent physician.
Story 2

A middle-aged man (woman) owns a small neighborhood grocery store which has a very constant, loyal clientel. The man (woman) is not rich, as the store is expensive to run. He (she) does, however, manage to meet his (her) bills and provide for his (her) family based on his (her) steady business. The clerk who had been with him (her) for a long time moves away and now he (she) must hire someone new. After placing an ad, he (she) gets 2 qualified applicants. One is a clean-cut young person of adequate ability and the other is somewhat hippie type who is really better qualified for the job. The man (woman) feels his (her) customers would be opposed to a hippie-type person working in the store and is afraid that business would suffer if he were to hire help of this nature. The man (woman) hires the less qualified individual to avoid the possible loss of business.
Story 3

A young man (lady, girl) has purchased a car from an individual who was moving away. Unfortunately the car was not as represented and continually stalls after running for a short time and is difficult to restart. The mechanic informs the man (girl) that it would cost a substantial amount to repair the auto. The man (girl) must have an automobile that is reliable or he (she) will lose his (her) job which requires the use of his (her) car. He (she) places an ad in the paper to resell the car. After losing several prospective buyers due to telling them of the problem, he (she) sells the car to an unsuspecting buyer inasmuch as he (she) must recover his (her) money to purchase another car or lose his (her) job.
Story 4

A man, his wife, and their child live in a town somewhere in the midwest. The father (mother) feels the child should be active and have varied interests and insists that the child not be allowed to watch T.V. after school under any circumstances. Both parents work, but the babysitter faithfully carries out the father's (mother's) wishes and does not permit the child to watch T.V. One day, however, the mother (father) stays home from work due to illness and the babysitter is told not to come. The weather is bad and the child pleads with the mother (father) to be allowed to watch T.V. "just this once." The mother (father), who was never really as negative about the T.V. as her (his) husband (wife) and who is feeling pretty sick anyway, tells the child that it is okay to watch T.V. as long as the father (mother) doesn't find out. The child agrees not to tell and turns on the T.V.
Story 5

A middle-aged man (woman) and his (her) teenager live in a public housing development. Their house is adequate for their needs and is superior to anything that they could obtain on the open market at the same price. This development was built by the government to provide housing for underprivileged families and, in order to assure that this low-cost housing is properly used, the regulations require that the resident families have an income under the figure of $4200. The man (woman) mentioned above has an income just under this amount and his (her) entire income is used in running his (her) household. He (She) has, however, a strong desire to send his (her) child to college and finds that he (she) can obtain a job on weekends with a relative which would provide enough money for his (her) child's education. This additional income, however, would require his (her) moving from the housing development and the increased rent would absorb most of his (her) increased income. To provide for his (her) child's education he (she) takes the job, but makes arrangements for this additional income not to be reported. Thus he (she) is able to stay in the low-cost housing and also secure the desired education for his (her) child.
### Appendix B

#### Tables

**Table 5**

**Analysis of Variance**

**Story Condition 4**

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Table 6
Analysis of Variance
Story Condition 5

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Table 7
Means and Standard Deviations for Male and Female Judges
Across All Five Story Conditions

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