FROM FREEDOM TO SELF-GOVERNANCE: COMPLEMENTING HUMAN NEEDS WITH RESPONSIBILITIES. A CRITICAL APPRAISAL

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From Freedom to Self-Governance: Complementing Human Needs with Responsibilities, A Critical Appraisal

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at George Mason University

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DEDICATION

This is dedicated to Myra, my parents, my wife, and my family.
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ABSTRACT

FROM FREEDOM TO SELF-GOVERNANCE: COMPLEMENTING HUMAN NEEDS WITH RESPONSIBILITIES, A CRITICAL APPRAISAL

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“Where do we go from here?” is a question recently posed by prominent conflict scholar-practitioners. The following study locates the writings of John W. Burton and human needs theory in relation to broader currents in social and political thought. This study does not discard human needs theory but attempts to complement human needs theory with human responsibilities to present a more robust human social ontology. By complementing human needs with human responsibilities an array of possibilities and challenges become available as the human agent and human social reality are placed at the center of analysis. The following attempts to synthesize the accomplishments of a range of social and political insights that support the goal of self-governance, and thereby acknowledging the role of human social responsibilities in this task. Briefly, answering the question where do we go from here involves going beyond meeting needs to an exploration into what is required of self-governance.
1. Introduction

The following study is an exploration into social and political theory with two main purposes: first, to locate John W. Burton’s human needs theory in relation to social and political theory and, second, to address possible limitations of needs theory. When John W. Burton claims that conflict resolution is a political theory (1993), what kind of political theory is it? When Burton suggests changing social structures to satisfy human needs (1979, 1990), what kind of social theory is he suggesting? More specifically, what kind of socio-political theory is needs theory? The following study will argue that the underlying ontological assumptions of needs theory, while successfully serving to identify the causes of conflict and sustain a hermeneutic of critique directed at oppressive social structures, are ultimately unsuccessful in constructing the social institutions required to transform and sustain the move from violence to politics. The larger goal of this research is to point to directions for future conflict resolution research in both theory and practice by complementing human needs with human responsibilities.

John Burton focuses on analyzing the causes of conflict — unmet human needs — and Burton’s ultimate goal is conflict prevention — removing the sources of conflict by promoting conditions in which collaborative behaviors guide relationships (1990, 18). This study begins with the assertion that there is no necessary relationship between removing the original causes of conflict or structural violence and establishing ongoing
peaceful relations. Underpinning this assertion is the belief that social institutions are (re)created during conflict scenarios through ongoing patterns of individual behaviors and social structures (Jabri 1996), and that reframing conflict resolution in terms of self-governance informed by individual responsibilities, rather than emancipation, illuminates a constellation of challenges and opportunities that are not treated within a needs theory perspective. To this end, this study will complement human needs theory with a theory of human responsibilities as a possible way to resolve and transform conflict by creating the desired end in the process of social change itself. This requires an exploration into social and political theories and especially into the ontological assumptions that inform them. This study concludes by proposing that the prosocial behavior of self-governance advocated in an ethics of responsibility is both ontologically consistent with a robust account of human social and political life and, at the same time, enlivens the capability of marginalized and oppressed individuals and groups to participate in the movement from violence to politics.

This study utilizes the umbrella terms conflict studies, conflict resolution, peace studies and peacebuilding as an ordering device to categorize the multiple terms described in moving from social violence to politics (see also Botes 2001). The term positive peace, or more recently, peacebuilding — “initiatives which foster and support sustainable structures and processes and processes which strengthen the prospects for peaceful coexistence and decrease the likelihood of the outbreak, recurrence, or continuation of violence” (Bush 2005, 25) — captures the goal of this study. The approach taken in this study, summarized by Bush, is that conflict resolution is:
…not about the imposition of ‘solutions,’ it is about the creation of opportunities. The challenge is to identify and nurture political…and social space, within which indigenous actors can identify, develop, and employ resources necessary to build a peaceful, prosperous, and just society. (2005, 25)

Bush cautions that sometimes conflict resolution initiatives not only have little impact but may in fact have negative impact, worsening an already troubling situation. ¹ If it is true, first, that “the practice of peacebuilding has been running ahead of peacebuilding theory” (Knight 2005, 355); second, that there exists a “decreasing interest among…‘professionalized’ peacebuilders to engage in truly critical reflections on their work” (Bush 2005, 26), and, finally, that “on the whole peace and conflict research seems to lag behind International Politics in [incorporating insights from recent developments in critical social theories], an uncomfortable thought for an area of study that has always regarded itself as the more radical,” (Ryan 2003, 78) then an exploration into the underlying assumptions guiding conflict studies is important (Burton 1979).

Howon Jeong assesses the field of conflict studies and determines that conflict studies lacks an adequate framework to synthesize different problems and successes of the field (1999, 5). Without detailing the framework required, Jeong does suggest the general contours that a synthesizing framework would follow, noting especially that “very little attention has been devoted to understanding the underlying conditions required for building peaceful societies” (1999, 5). Implicit in his assessment of peace
studies is the qualitative difference between analyzing oppressive features of social systems and in designing a formative project that constructs a sustainable, peaceful social system. For Jeong, proper analysis and prospects of change require an investigation into the conditions of repression and exploitation advanced by political and social systems and the values prompting and promoted by those systems.

While Jeong is correct to notice the importance of investigating the values of the socio-political system itself, however, he does not inquire into the social or political theories of those performing the analysis of conflict. Evidently, in terms of the analysis of conflict, not enough energy has been directed towards examining the systemic features at the root of conflict and the corollary values that uphold systems of domination. However, rather than suggesting that conflict studies should proceed further in its framework, what if Jeong’s own statement, that conflict studies “lacks a framework for synthesis in linking different issues together” (1999, 5), were taken more seriously and energy were devoted to examining what is lacking in conflict studies? Perhaps the answer lies in the direction of Jeong’s second critique of conflict studies, that “Very little attention has been devoted to understanding the underlying conditions required for building peaceful societies” (1999, 5). These two statements can be linked in such a way as to suggest that a new direction in conflict studies is to rebuild or amend a conflict studies framework that devotes attention to building peaceful societies. Such a framework is qualitatively different than examining only the socio-political dimensions of systemic exploitation. One way to begin this reconstruction of the conflict studies framework is to link the successes and problems of a conflict studies framework to issues
of building a more peaceful society. A new conflict studies framework would broaden from analyzing aspects of domination to include dimensions of the formation of peaceful societies.

The same urge towards re-evaluation is coming from peace research. Following some successes, such as peace research leading to the end of the Cold War and Gorbachev’s “new thinking”, Heikki Patomaki suggests that in peace research “there is a constant need to reflect upon the grounds, meaning and methodology of this emancipatory project…What is needed, therefore, is a redefinition of its task” (2001, 724, 726). In his earlier work, Johan Galtung, defining peace research as an applied science (1975, 170-172), sought to find invariances and attempted to find ways to break with them:

What are the crucial variables and conditions, and what relation do they have to the conscious agents of actions? Are not these variables and conditions subject to (other) invariances and thus already determined? (Patomaki 2001, 727-728)

This is the normal science of peace research as has been practiced in the mode of “soft or ‘pragmatic’ positivism” by many institutional peace researchers. In this approach, peace studies has much in common with structural-functional analysis in social theory whereby the overall structure is examined to determine its impact upon human consciousness and behavior. However, Patomaki continues:
On the other hand, if there are even conditional, contextual regularities, what produces them? What exists, and does that which exists actually change? Where does the human freedom to act otherwise come from?

(2001, 723)

This is the point in which various theories pose an ontological and methodological challenge to peace research. For example, critical theory takes the position that positivist attempts at scientific explanatory laws with the aim of manipulating the nature of society tend to reproduce the status quo. Therefore, what is needed is an understanding of human ideas and concepts, “facts” as historically positioned by relational human actors both in the reproduction and transformation of “societal facts” (Horkheimer 1989, 199, 204-205).

The second point, “freedom to act otherwise,” needs further exploration in both peace and conflict studies, since the conditions for successful transformations are not only reflexively contextual but also present real impacts in daily life (Harre 1979, 362-265; Bhaskar 1986, 127-129). Johan Galtung also acknowledges the limits of knowledge, socio-cultural differences, and the importance of the dialogical insight (1990, 1994, 1996) in addressing issues of peace. It is in this context that Potamaki calls for peace research to “articulate an emancipatory social ontology” (2001, 728) and suggests that rather than pushing subjects to the background of analysis, political agents must be brought to the foreground of analysis. However, as Potamaki affirms, “as long as there is no decent theory about how the subjects are structured and positioned” (2001, 733) these important insights remain gaps in peace research.
Potamaki’s suggestion is to incorporate an ontology geared towards emancipation that is consistent with a properly understood subjectivity and the potentials and means of transformation (2001, 733). What this requires is a conception of subjectivity with the capability of participating in emancipation. It is crucial to develop this emancipatory ontology in conflict and peace studies, especially since they are more firmly grasped in the disciplines of international relations and global political economy (Potamaki 2001, 734). In fact, Potamaki challenges peace and conflict studies because “often it seems as if [they are] seeking to slow down change and metatheoretical reflections, holding on to positions from the 1960s” (2001, 734).

If it is true that conflict and peace studies seek to transform violence into politics and prevent politics from becoming violence, then emancipation cannot be linked too closely to instrumental politics in which “our aim must therefore be to compel you to do our will” (Clausewitz 1976: book 1, ch.1 para. 2). Emancipation in a universal sense is not simply to exchange places between the oppressed and the oppressor (Habermas 1996). Rather, from the positive peace tradition, it is to sustain liberty. The goal is not elimination of the enemy but rather transformation of the enemy and the self that is oppressed (Freire 1970; Lederach 2005).

John Paul Lederach acknowledges that the field of conflict and peace studies has accomplished an increased capacity to develop mechanisms to reduce violence. However, he cautions:
We are still in our infancy in reference to shaping and sustaining a positive justpeace, the rebuilding of genuine community in areas that have suffered from great division and violence. (2005, 41)

He continues, the difficulties of achieving sustainable peace suggest that “we know more about how to end something painful and damaging to everyone but less about how to build something desired” (2005, 41). He then raises a host of fundamental concerns, including “how do we view desired change?” and “How exactly does a whole society move from cycles of division and violence to respectful engagement in a way that the change is experienced as genuine?” (2005, 54) Without providing a set of answers, Lederach advices that “we must turn our attention to resources and processes in arenas that to date have been mostly seen as peripheral to the core of peacebuilding and conflict resolution” (2005, 63). This leads in the direction to the “surprising land of the moral imagination and will require that we explore things not typically part of our technical skills manuals” (2005, 63). For Lederach, this requires a deep understanding of social change.

Lederach challenges the field of conflict and peace studies, recalling that many from outside the conflict and peace studies field argue that the field suffers from “an exaggerated rhetoric coupled with an overly optimistic, and therefore unrealistic, understanding of how the world really works” and realizes that what is needed is a “critical reflection at the core” of our profession (2005, 22). For Lederach, many social movements that find it easier to articulate and mobilize around what they are opposed
than to what they wish to build (2005, 88). Without providing answers to the questions and concerns he raises, he suggests that the key is relationships, since they “are at the heart of social change” (2005, 86) “as the center and horizon of the human community.” (2005, 61).

Lederach suggests that the solution lies in “our moral imagination” which he defines as the “capacity to imagine something rooted in the challenges of the real world yet capable of giving birth to that which does not yet exist” stimulated by a “paradoxical curiosity” (2005, 37). For Lederach, four disciplines build the moral imagination: “the capacity to imagine relationship,” the refusal to engage in “dualistic polarities;” “the creative act;” and, finally, “the willingness to risk” (2005, 98). Lederach, however, does not provide systematic treatment of any of these dimensions, relying instead on metaphors of “critical yeast” and “the artist” for persuasion. The following study will examine the dimensions of what Lederach calls the moral imagination in terms of an ethics of responsibility. The following study hopes to add to the understanding of social change by emphasizing human relationships and social practices at the center of social change.

One reason for Lederach’s unsystematic account of moral imagination, relationships, and the creative act is that he believes “skills and training can easily contribute to a form of tunnel vision” and he counters at how “un-tunnel-like the experience of peacebuilding really is” (Lederach, 117). Peacebuilding escapes systematization for Lederach, since the unexpected is a permanent feature. Implicated in his critique is the systematic nature of social science in general, and especially the
application of resolution “skills” that miss the “core of what creates and sustains constructive social change” (2005, 70).

Perhaps another reason Lederach is not systematic in his approach is found in his understanding of theory. For Lederach, “theory is not writing perfectly defined but intangible explanations of social realities;” rather, theory is about “common sense.” (2005, 125) It may be more revealing of Lederach’s whole approach that he prefers quoting poetry to referring to social theory. For example, in “On Space: Life in the Web,” (2005, 75-86) Lederach begins with “The Second Coming” by W.B. Yeats and moves to an account of lessons learned from “the study of spiders and their webs” (2005, 78). What does it mean when the only quotations in the chapter on the spatial dimension of social life come from those who study spiders? For example, Lederach’s work ignores the whole body of literature on time geography, as well as Anthony Giddens’ (1984) work on the time-space dimensions of social life. Lederach, a trained sociologist, goes so far as to state “I was introducing the idea of the web approach” but fails to mention either Georg Simmel’s earlier publication, “The Web of Group Affiliations” ([1922] 1955) or John Burton’s “web theory” of transnational relations in World Society (1972).

This study is directed first at examining the underlying theoretical rationale of needs theory. Theory incorporates a set of orienting assumptions about what a human being is and a set of orienting assumptions about how the social world works (Giddens 1984) and directs attention to what are considered by the theory to be more important aspects (Barnes 1986). Sandra Cheldelin et al begin Conflict: From Analysis to Intervention (2003) with an examination of the crucial role of theory — “a framework
that distinguishes between relatively important and unimportant variables,” (2003, 19) — since, “Different theories of conflict will determine what sorts of processes are designed to deal with its management, resolution, or transformation” (2003, 11). Cheldelin et al start with the basic assumption that intervention designs are based upon conflict analysis. However, as the editors of Conflict recognize, in designing interventions, most likely “the underlying theoretical rationale, its research underpinnings, or the systematic practice are unclear” (2001, 13). This study attempts to examine and clarify the underlying theoretical rationale of needs theory. If it is true that conflict intervention designs can vary according to underlying theoretical commitments, and if the underlying commitments are unclear, then clarifying those commitments could aid in the analysis and resolution of conflict.

The goal of this study is to examine the ontological orientation(s) of John Burton’s needs theory and to offer suggested complements to address the perceived limitations of this theory. First, this study locates John Burton’s needs theory in terms of an underlying commitment to a specific form of social and political thought — liberalism — and examines liberalism in terms of the ontological claims it makes. Second, this study attempts to challenge those assumptions by drawing on insights from other perspectives of political philosophy — such as civic republicanism — and from other perspectives of social theory — such as Anthony Giddens’ theory of structuration. Third, this study attempts to complement Burton’s human needs with human responsibilities — incorporating Max Weber’s ethic of responsibility — and to provide the concept of structural violence with a more robust conception of individual agency found in the
theory of structuration. Fourth, this study demonstrates the irony, albeit sincere, that Burton’s liberal concern for individuals in conflict situations actually limits or even removes the agency (power) of individuals to deal with their own conflict. I will argue that Burton overemphasizes the role of the elite, society, and the state and thereby discounts and further disempowers the agency of individuals who are oppressed. Fifth, this study complements conflict studies more generally by drawing on the constructive features of civic republicanism and structuration theory. Incorporating sacrifice and civility through the example of Gandhi’s nonviolent response to conflict and oppression provides insights towards Burton’s desire of preventing conflict by building civil society in the process of transformation itself. This study is not attempting to determine a causal trajectory between liberalism and the foundational texts of conflict studies nor does it suggest that all conflict resolution scholar-practitioners are disciples of Burton. This study is not intended as a wholesale criticism or rejection of the insights of John Burton or the field of conflict studies, and, does not offer an encyclopedic, comprehensive history of the filed of conflict studies. This research will focus on “grand debates or ‘isms’” because disciplines themselves are characteristically divided into paradigmatic arguments (such as Marxism, socialism, individualism, functionalism, and so forth) within social and political theory (Mansfield and Sisson 2005, 35). Liberalism is a primary focus in this study because, if it is true that liberalism has become “so hegemonic that [it] hardly needs a defense in American political theory” (Mansfield and Sisson 2005, 35), then a critical examination of those assumptions may lead to insights that can better address unsolved social problems (Mouffe 2004).
An underlying question addressed here is whether energy should be expended in pursuing human needs theory further or if Burton’s interdisciplinary “problem solving” approach (discussed in Chapter Two) provides a more constructive way to address the concerns of Jeong, mentioned earlier, and to examine the ontological commitments of needs theory itself. The assumption of this study is that provention, establishing and maintaining social institutions that satisfy human needs (Burton 1993, 1990), must be built into civil society through the processes of change and transformation.

**Question Guiding the Research**

“Where do we go from here?” is a question posed recently by scholars in the field of conflict studies. One approach to addressing this question raised by Rubenstein (2001, 51-58), Dunn (2001, 23) and Burton (2001, 69-73) is to explore if the field of conflict studies is related to a specific tradition of socio-political theory. However, to begin to answer “where do we go from here?” requires first, an understanding of where we are.4

It is time for self-reflection and self-assessment of the field of conflict studies. Scholars are answering this question in a number ways; however, none to date have examined the socio-political orientation of the field of conflict studies.5 How this question is answered is of paramount importance, since, as Stephen John Stedman recognizes, the choice of appropriate conflict resolution strategy requires correct diagnoses of the conflict and making good diagnoses may require “overcoming organizational blinders” (Stedman 2000, 179). Could one such “organizational blinder”
be a commitment to a particular socio-political perspective? Social and political theories differ in a number of ways, with different implications for analysis and intervention. Said another way, these differences are based in ontological assumptions, in assumptions about what a human being is and how the social world works.

One way to address the question, where do we go from here, is to reexamine traditions in social and political thought as well as the fundamental categories of individual and society and how they are related. What are the general orientations in the framing of conflict analysis and intervention designs? For example, are they individualistic, structural-functional, rational-choice, agent-based, deterministic? What is the role of the state and the individual and how are they related? Said another way, who is responsible to do what? These are paramount categories in social and political thought and are categories to be examined in the writings of one of the founders of conflict studies, John W. Burton. It is well known that Burton developed human needs theory for addressing conflict and incorporated structural violence as one of the primary mechanisms for driving conflict (1979). This research asks whether satisfying needs and removing structural violence are enough to adequately account for the richness of human social life and suggests that human responsibilities should be added to human needs to provide a more complete, or robust, human social ontology.

Consider, for example, the civil rights movement in the United States. Transitioning from slavery to civil rights in the United States is a long, complicated series of events, involving changes, policies and actions at numerous individual and social levels. From the writing of the US Constitution through the American Civil War, the
question of slavery in the United States was always lurking in the background (Chong 1991). Through a series of legal adjustments and accommodations, such as the “separate but equal” response to the Fourteenth Amendment to the US Constitution (Levy 1998) structures in the American South remained oppressive to the black population (Chong 1991). These are clear examples of structural violence and instances in which, as needs theory correctly recognizes, policies and institutions must change. But how did the change happen?

How is the transition from slavery to civil rights to be understood? In terms of human needs theory, two primary points are defined: first, blacks in the American South are denied human needs — such as security, identity, or participation — and, second, blacks protest unjust systems requiring social structures and institutions to change to accommodate the satisfaction of human needs. Within Burton’s needs frame people are oppressed, people protest and will not be subdued as long as their needs are unsatisfied, and therefore institutions and systems must adjust policies to overcome oppression and structural violence (Burton 1990). Is this the best way to understand the Civil Rights Movement? How are the Nashville, Tennessee lunch counter sit-ins to be understood within a needs framework? Or how are the bus boycotts and marches in Montgomery and Selma, Alabama to be understood? Did the nonviolent component of the social movement make sense, or were these people just subjecting themselves unnecessarily to be victimized by elites controlling the policing arm of the state? In the needs framework, essential details of the type of the daily life of struggle and creation are missing that were crucially involved from moving from oppression to justice. The oppressed actively
participated in civil disobedience to overturn the structures of oppression, they did not passively wait for change (Chong 1991). Moreover, it is not clear whether or how needs theory can explain their choice of this form of protest. This study will attempt to show that complementing human needs theory with a theory of human responsibilities adds clarity not only to the civil rights movement specifically but to the more general movement from violence to politics. A responsibilities approach, described below, sheds light on the agency of the oppressed and the types of protest and revolt that foster resolving conflict and sustaining systems that better promote justice (see Ackerman and Duvall 2000, 305-333).

John Burton gives little mention of the agency of the oppressed (apart from rebellion), the role of sacrifice, and the quality of action in transitioning social institutions from oppression to justice. This research asks whether these concepts make sense within needs theory and suggests that much can be gained by examining frameworks in which these terms do make sense. Burton says that conflict resolution is a political theory (1993). Which kind of political theory is it? The following examines this question. Also, Burton’s ultimate goal in terms of conflict resolution is conflict *provention*—eliminating or mitigating the causes of conflict before they become conflicts. This research asks whether the language of needs and the accompanying socio-political ontology of liberalism and structural-functionalism is adequate to address the issues involved in conflict *provention*, and seeks to find a framework in which sacrifice and nonviolence are better understood towards promoting conflict *provention*. 
“Where Do We Go From Here?”

This study explores the extent to which the gaps in John Burton’s needs theory arise from the theory’s uncritical embrace of political liberalism and the accompanying structuralism in social theory. While specific liberal democratic theories focus attention on different aspects of politics — such as procedures, constitutions, voting rights, minority rights, and so forth — this study is focusing on the general family resemblance of liberalism which places the individual at the center of concern (Kahn 2005), as will be discussed in a forthcoming section. In response, the insights of civic republicanism and structuration theory will be examined to complement human needs with human responsibilities. A question posed to the reader is: could conflict studies’ commitment to a particular socio-political framework limit its ability for conflict diagnosis and intervention?

The history of political philosophy and international relations has been well-documented and include a vast corpus of scholarly literature. Contrary to the claim of Torbjorn Knutsen that “whereas the new student of political theory is introduced to a tradition which begins with ancient Greeks authors and evolves continually up to our own times, the new student of international relations is introduced to no comparable chain of classics,” (1991, 1) many texts do exist that sketch the international relations tradition. Many have acknowledged the core approach of the recent development in the history of ideas that texts and that authors need to be located in their appropriate historical context before their meaning can properly be understood.
The needs theory, or basic human needs, perspective developed as a response to classical international relations and has made hefty contributions to counter the hegemony of *Realpolitik* and theories of deterrence (Dunn 2001 and 2003). For example, David Dunn recognized the hermeneutic critique offered by needs theory:

In the 1960’s an alternative frame emerged in response to failures in different policies, domestically and internationally. While it emerged out of extensions to decision-making theory, it represented a jump from the power political frame…to a problem-solving conflict-resolution frame…the parties in dispute were helped to identify the sources of their problems, revealing possible options that would satisfy their needs. (2001, 43).

In his treatment of the history of international relations, Edward Keene suggests that the spectrum should be broadened to what the history of the subject contains beyond the conventional focus on state sovereignty to include ideas about how the political relations between communities are and should be conducted. Keene writes, “My proposal, then, is that we should broaden the scope or our enquiry by starting from the more general proposition that all intellectual speculation about international politics originally involves some way of identifying what it is about communities that makes them different from one another in the first place” (2005, 13). John Burton has moved in the direction of
examining and drawing attention to individuals in communities that are marginalized by a given power structure.

Crucial to demarcating this new field, conflict resolution\(^8\), is a different approach to the understanding of conflict which places greater emphasis upon marginalized individuals rather than states. However, is needs theory capable of dealing with conflict prevention? I will argue, first, that human needs theory offers too narrow a conception of the human personality. Second, I will contend that human needs, as does the liberal tradition to which it is tied, serves as a critique of hegemonic power and domination but not as a formative project upon which to build a just society. For example, the move to emphasize community is not directly consistent with liberalism, because liberalism gives primacy to individual choice. Rather, this rhetoric is more consistent with the communitarian and republican traditions.

This study selects the texts to be studied based upon an institutional understanding of the sociology of knowledge, acknowledging the role of social resources in establishing and promoting conflict studies programs. Institutions help codify interpretive frameworks while students at those institutions learn from the written texts of those founders\(^9\) in the process of establishing a discipline and what might be called the “normal science” of a discipline. For example, Kenneth Boulding writes:

I have the strong impression that the last ten years or so in conflict and peace research have been one of consolidation and what Kuhn calls
“normal science” in the United States, without any striking new ideas or new lines of development. (1990, 38)

For Kuhn, this is the “normal science” (Kuhn 1977) puzzle-solving within a given research framework. The next chapter describes John Burton’s (1979) discussion of the importance of a problem-solving approach in the critical assessment of puzzle-solving approaches.

This is not to suggest that all students, or other faculty members, agree with the founders, such as Burton. However, institutions do provide and support particular worldviews (Knorr-Cetina and Mulkay 1983; Kuhn 1977; and, Merton 1973). This study seeks to draw out the assumptions of conflict studies based in a needs theory approach, since “every conceptual or methodological tool brings its own weaknesses as well as its strengths” (Wuthnow 1987: 333). All that is being claimed is that these assumptions — liberalism and structuralism — guide sufficiently important questions, provide sufficiently distinct answers to questions, and represent genuine choices confronting scholar-practitioners attempting to advance conflict studies.10

Thomas Kuhn (1962) used the term paradigm to refer to a collective belief-value system in which a general cognitive framework of explaining and understanding becomes part of the “normal science” of a field (see also, Wuthnow 1996). “Normal science” represents a collectively understood worldview for that community that, as Sandole (2002, 15) explains:11
…dominates the perceptions and corresponding behaviors of a group…
detailing its legitimate subject matter and units of inquiry; legitimates
explanation for the behavior of its subject matter; legitimates problems in
need of solution for the community…plus [gives] criteria of explanation.

Paradigms are cognitive frames that include the process and the outcomes by which
“normal science” comes to view the legitimate areas of investigation, techniques,
explanations, problems, and solutions (Collins 1985). These are conceptual schemes that
include narrative forms, such as written texts (Shapin 1982). Narrative forms are logical
ways of seeing, understanding and explaining the world (Lakoff 1986). Needs theory in
this study is understood as a cognitive frame that informs areas of investigation and
solutions to social problems.

**Conflict Resolution: Practice and Theory**

Several volumes exist which detail various elements of the whole conflict
scenario and detail the many conditions, stages, and outcomes of conflict scenarios and
third party intervention impacts (see, for example, Ramsbotham, Woodhouse and Miall [2005] 2008; Kriesburg 1998; and, Fisher and Keashly 1991). Others have listed the
various successes of conflict and peace studies (Druckman 1986; and, Duetsch 1973).
Still others have mentioned various instances wherein interventions have been less than
successful, detail shortcomings, and consider unintended consequences (Zartmann 2005; and, Anderson 1996).

Conflict scholar-practitioners recognize several changing features, divided roughly, between events and perspectives internal and external to the field of conflict studies. One approach is to examine the field of conflict studies internally. Some conflict scholar-practitioners are dividing conflict studies into distinctions between conflict management, conflict resolution, and conflict transformation (for examples, see Bush and Folger 1998, and Botes 2002). For others the focus is upon finding better ways to implement central conflict studies ideas, such as “basic human needs” and “structural violence” (Rubenstein 2000).

Another changing feature that has received attention from conflict studies is the changing external reality — that events outside of the field of conflict studies have changed dramatically. For example, many conflict studies scholars recognize the changing geo-political post-Cold War arenas of violence are increasingly located within nation-state boundaries and are not limited to interstate war (Stedman 2003). Other’s posit the change in the (re)emergence of ethnic and religious conflict (Horowitz 2000 and Gopin 2001, respectively). For others, short-term conflict intervention designs of several years may be insufficient since transitioning from violence to politics may require 20 year plans (Lederach 2005). Given these orientations to conflict — internal and external, and short-term and long-term — several paths to answer the question where do we go from here are available. These internal and external dimensions are worthy of consideration.
The field of conflict and peace studies is also moving towards assessment and evaluation. This is evident not only internally to the field and organizations dedicated to conflict resolution, but also within organizations that attempt to aid in humanitarian assistance and development (Kaldor 2005). Increasingly, recent publications are dedicated to the difficult task of better conflict assessments and especially to evaluating intervention designs, strategies and impacts (White and Klaasen 2005). This is all necessary and includes a sense of urgency towards better interventions, especially with increasing commitments for post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding (Last 2000, Lund 2003).

These developments in the study of conflict are important. However, little attention has been given to consider the orientation of conflict studies field itself in terms of social and political theory. Donald Schon (1983) directs attention to the importance of reflection on the practice(s) of conflict resolution. John Burton recognizes the importance of a critical program in conflict analysis as well:

We can study situations, history and the history of thought; we can readily get involved in conflictual relationships and seek to remedy them by one means or another. All this can be a waste of effort and lead to further misunderstanding, rather than more understanding of conflict and its remedy, if we do not continually challenge the basic hypothesis reflected in whatever thinking we are observing.” (2001, 3)
Burton suggests maintaining a critical posture towards “the basic hypothesis reflected in whatever we are observing.” However, we need to go further. Not only is it necessary to challenge the basic worldview of those in “conflictual relationships”; it is necessary to examine the analyst’s own presuppositions to avoid “waste of effort” and minimize “further misunderstandings.” Burton’s statements were directed against the current models of international relations and he worked to assess conflicts within a new cognitive framework of needs theory. For Burton, this required reflection on the dominant international relations framework of conflict analysis itself. He then reconfigured international relations into a new framework of conflict resolution based in needs theory and on the idea that deterrence does not deter (1979, 1990). Historically, this is to follow in the tradition of the sociology of knowledge. The study of ideology is examining the assumptions of someone else’s presuppositions. The sociology of knowledge is a broadened approach designed to examine the presuppositions of one’s own position, not just the presuppositions of others of whom I may disagree (Giddens 1979). It is from this robust field of the orientation of the sociology of knowledge that Burton’s challenge is directed back upon needs theory.

Rubenstein, Dunn and Burton ask a very important question: “Where do we go from here?” One way to attempt to answer this question is to apply the sociology of knowledge and examine the assumptions of needs theory by extending Burton’s own emphasis of challenging assumptions by examining the ontological assumptions of needs theory. The approach of this research is to proceed in terms of the theoretical level of conflict studies.
For Strauss and Corbin, “theorizing is work that entails not only conceiving or intuiting ideas (concepts) but also formulating them into a logical, systematic, and explanatory scheme” (1988, 21). However helpful a theory may be, a theory can still be considered from many different angles or perspectives (Strauss and Corbin 1998, 22).

For Strauss and Corbin (1998, 22), a theory:

\[
[D]\text{enotes a set of well-established categories (e.g., themes, concepts) that are systematically interrelated through statements of relationship to form a theoretical framework that explains some relevant social, psychological, educational, nursing, or other phenomena.}
\]

Theoretical statements are designed to explain the relationships between the various components of a field of interest. Among other things, building theory, or deconstructing existing theory, has an “emergent” quality that allows for nuances in the data to appear, has a tolerance for ambiguity, a flexibility in design, and a “large dose of creativity” (Strauss and Corbin 1998, 34).

If conflict scholar-practitioners are asking where do we go from here, one direction is to examine political philosophy and social theory — to continue reflective practice.\(^\text{13}\) If it is true, as this study will argue, that John Burton and needs theory have a liberal and structural-functional focus and emphasize a particular theory of man and society, it should be worthwhile to examine critiques of those two perspectives that have been developed outside the field of conflict studies, and explore whether or not those
critiques offer insights to answer the question where do we go from here. The purpose of this study is to continue in the spirit of John Burton, "It cannot be emphasized too strongly that we must constantly examine and re-examine every one of our assumptions, hypotheses and theories, even at the risk of being a dissenting voice, with all its career consequences" (2001, 9). If successful, this study will continue in the spirit of John Burton and critically assess the assumptions of needs theory, offer constructive alternatives in social and political theory, and add insight to the prevention of conflict.

The primary goals of this dissertation are (1) to identify and explain the fundamental ideas or concepts that John Burton used to make sense of conflict in his socio-political environment, and (2) to suggest additional concepts that may fill gaps and answer questions not confronted by human needs theory in its original form. By focusing on key concepts, this study will locate Burton within the traditions of social and political theory by examining the building-blocks from which he constructs his arguments in the study of conflict (see Turner 2004). The principal task behind examining the foundational texts of conflict studies is to discern what Weber (1968, 41) calls the “conventional habits” of John Burton as examples of “investigators and teachers thinking in a particular way.” John Burton was a generative thinker in at least two ways. First, he transcended the intellectual context and terrain in international relations and produced novel commentaries on the socio-political world. Second, he influenced the emerging field of the study of conflict and peace, has numerous colleagues and students, and helped shape the various institutions of the field. Many of these dimensions have been recognized by others (see Dunn 2001).
This study seeks to critically evaluate and complement several towers of thought, starting with John Burton and basic human needs, working through John Rawls and classical liberalism, and then Anthony Giddens and structuration theory, and finally complementing them with insights drawn from Max Weber and Mahatma Gandhi. It includes a range of insights from different perspectives in an attempt to navigate past some of the hazards and avoiding some pitfalls. The attempt is to move from a narrow focus on basic human needs to a broader focus that includes basic human responsibilities.

The path is neither easy nor straightforward.

Recently, Sandra Cheldelin, Daniel Druckman, and Larissa Fast edited Conflict: From Analysis to Intervention (2003) with the goal of bringing together “various perspectives on conflict and its resolution in order to make progress toward developing generic theory” by integrating the contributions made from conflict scholar-practitioners involved in one or more of the “theory-research-practice” tripod of conflict analysis and resolution to “provide an overview of the various scholarly pieces composing analysis as well as intervention in conflict” (2003, 4-6).

This is a valuable contribution, since, as Cheldelin et al describe, the conflict and peace studies field is expanding: “The proliferation of academic programs at the graduate and undergraduate level, the growth of conflict resolution ideas and practices within a multitude of diverse organizations and agencies are a testament to its popularity and maturity” (2001, 1). Cheldelin et al believe “if this book is successful, we will have influenced many new students who will ultimately graduate from conflict resolution programs and actively contribute to the building of the field” (2001, xvii). Conflict and
peace studies, as Cheldelin et al suggest, is in its “second generation” (2001, 5) which refers to the generation of students specifically receiving formal academic training in conflict and peace studies institutes, departments, and programs. Cheldelin et al recognize that these institutions were developed to provide viable alternatives to those “proposed by exponents of a ‘realist’ persuasion emphasizing power, coercion, and political dominance” (2001, 11). As Burton suggested, in this sense, conflict studies is radical political philosophy (1993) and belongs to the reformist tradition of American sociology (Coser, 1964).

Louis Kriesburg (1998), in Constructive Conflicts, has raised important insights, especially prescient for conflict scholar-practitioners. Conflicts raise a host of questions concerning causes, impacts, implications and blame. In contrast to Burton who emphasizes conflicts as rooted in biologically-based needs, Kriesburg discusses conflicts as “social conflicts” — “which exist when two or more persons or groups manifest the belief that they have incompatible objectives” — and he emphasizes the perceptions that individuals and groups form and have about specific struggles (1998, 2). His attention on beliefs and perceptions about conflicts emphasizes the social element — “contentious interaction” — that exists in all struggles, even those over land and other material resources, and gives great importance to ways the adversaries themselves regard their relationship (1998, 3). Without dismissing or denying the reality of Burton’s biologically-based needs, Kreisburg places greater emphasis on the social reality of conflicts and the ways in which conflicts are understood or perceived. While acknowledging the important role of beliefs and perceptions, Kreisburg places emphasis
on how the parties in conflict interact with each other, focusing on ways that behaviors (can) influence perceptions.

In a single paragraph, Kriesburg makes three statements that have great implication for conflict scholar-practitioners. For Kriesburg, first, “Diverse questions are asked about a struggle because the questions arise from different interests and values and not from the inherent nature of the conflict” (1998, 5). One implication is that conflict scholar-practitioners must be very clear about how they understand a particular conflict, especially the interests and values they use to analyze conflict scenarios to design interventions. Also, Kriesburg moves from an emphasis on the sources of conflict to the social construction of conflict. Second, “People who share a set of questions develop a shared way of answering them and of thinking about conflict.” There is a role for a critical sociology approach to be employed by conflict-scholar practitioners addressing parties in conflict scenarios and there is also a role for critical self-reassessment of the beliefs and perceptions of the conflict scholar-practitioners themselves. This may be especially so for conflict scholar-practitioners with specialized academic training, since Kriesburg notes, “All or many of the members” of a group or social system “often share general understandings of the appropriate means to be used in pursuing and settling conflicts.” Finally, since, “Particular conflicts often become models for the way a group [or person] thinks about many other conflicts” (1998, 141), the perceptions and behaviors at a given time impact the future. Therefore, the implications suggest that there is an important role to not only understand the causes of conflict but to also understand the role of ongoing social practices (Giddens 1984; Jabri 1996) during conflict. If perceptions are
a crucial element in the conflict dynamic then the particular framework of conflict analysis employed and the exhibited behaviors of participants in conflicts can both shape the general understanding of the particular conflict.

The dominant conflict studies tradition which Jeong and Patomaki are describing represents a focus upon power and force of elites and social structures. Managing power relationships and enabling emancipation are only one aspect of a formative approach to building civil society. Moving from criticism and complaint to a formative agenda is a qualitative difference in posing questions, looking for solutions, and examining relationships. The difference between these approaches will become more clear as this study attempts to navigate from John Burton and John Rawls to Michael Sandel, Anthony Giddens, Max Weber and Mahatmas Gandhi.

To state again, locating Burton’s approach to conflict studies within its own ideological configuration will reveal the limits to its effectiveness, limits that are imposed by the political and social theory that define it, liberalism and structural-functionalism. This study will argue that the emphasis on human needs has the consequence that human responsibilities go largely ignored. A framework that gives equal weight to responsibility offers a broader perspective for conflict studies, illuminating a constellation of challenges and opportunities that would otherwise not be treated and thereby enabling a more comprehensive and thus successful approach to any given conflict situation. The following study will reframe conflict resolution theory as to make it more relevant and useful to the formative project of peacebuilding by complementing needs theory with and exploration into a responsibilities approach to self-
governing. The next chapter will begin this task by examining John Burton's needs theory in more detail and further explore his call for problem-solving.
For more examples, see Mary Anderson, *Do No Harm: How Aid can Support Peace, or War* (Boulder, Co: Lynne Reinner, 1999).

See the Appendix ‘Realist Ontology and the Possibility of Emancipatory Social Science’ available at http://www.prio.no/jpr/datasets.asp.

Ibid. ix.

For example, David Dunn writes, “The task of those who are concerned primarily with conflict resolution and *provention* is to articulate alternatives, to set out precisely tested processes and procedures, and generally to provide options to societies desperately in need of them, but which have no clear indications of where to go from here.” See, David J. Dunn, “John Burton and the Study of International Relations: An Assessment,” in *International Journal of Peace Studies* (6:1, 2001) Spring: 23.

For Bodnar, the crucial point is not the facts presented, but the “dominant plots into which the facts are fitted” (1989, 1219). Or, to phrase this in a different way, for David Carr, it is only from the perspective of the end that the narratives beginning and middle of coherence (Bodnar 1989, 1219).


Conflict studies and peace studies do have different genealogies and have developed with their own accentuations, especially in reaction to *Realpolitik* in international
relations (for example, see Lederach 2005). However, for the purposes of this study, conflict and peace studies are sufficiently overlapped and share a general outlook.


Robert Wuthnow expands upon the role of formal institutions in providing the structural framework, or “normal science” paradigm in which forming questions and providing answers takes on a family resemblance.

See also Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago, Chicago University Press, 1962): Chapter IV.

Other methods, such as time series analysis and process tracing could gather such information (for example, to explore the influence of John Burton on the field of CA/R, process tracing could start with the writings of John Burton, then move to the writings of the “first generation” of professionals in CA/R, then examine the written products of the “second” and “third” generation of CA/R professionals). For example, such procedures could address how deeply “The influence of John Burton and others who focus on deep-rooted conflict, human needs theory, and efforts to eliminate the systemic causes of violent conflict remains evident in this volume” (Cheldelin, Druckman, and Fast 2001, iix).

Drawing from Paul Ricoeur, DeMallie contends constructing narratives is making moral judgments (1993, 525). He continues, understanding the past is “exploring the mental worlds in which those actions took place, the cultural knowledge on the basis of which choices were made” (DeMallie 1993, 533). Therefore, the act of narration, as is the act of the study of narration, a creative endeavor that examines cognitive frameworks, it also examines the moral judgments of decision making, understanding that the story could have been framed differently. Among the list of characters in a narrative are perpetrators, bystanders, and victims. These three categories, among others, represent the relationships between the cognitive frameworks and the moral judgments.

Randall Collins, in *Interaction Ritual Chains*, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007), claims that very different social phenomenon and much else in our social lives are driven by a common force: interaction rituals. Collins' "radical microsociology" that proposes that successful rituals, such as conflict analysis and resolution from a needs perspective, create symbols of group membership and encourage individuals with a supply of emotional energy, while failed rituals drain emotional energy. Each person
flows from situation to situation, drawn to those interactions where their cultural capital gives them the best emotional energy payoff. Thinking, too, can be explained by the internalization of conversations within the flow of situations; individual selves are thoroughly and continually social, constructed from the outside in.

15 Cheldelin et al mention, in passing, a charge leveled against conflict resolution scholar-practitioners that “conflict resolution is simply another way of applying the liberal agenda” (2001, 13).
Conflict resolution scholar-practitioners, discussed below, have recognized that needs theory is a controversial field and opposing claims are made in connection with all the basic issues (Burton 1990). The following provides a very brief overview of needs theory by raising a set of questions: are needs universal, how do they differ from interests and desires, do they exist in a hierarchy of importance, and, what is the relation between needs and culture? For Burton, unmet human needs are the engine that drives conflict, especially seemingly intractable conflict: for those with unmet human needs no amount of coercion and deterrence will bring compliance to oppression. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the implications of problem-solving and prevention.

John Burton discusses “the important topic of the relationship between theorist and practitioner” because the “theorist has a practical role to play” (1990, 154). While commonly separated analytically, the two are intimately connected if and when conflict resolution processes are applied because successful resolution requires an accurate definition of the situation (Burton 1979). Burton continues, an accurate definition of the conflict situation requires an appropriate theory of human behavior because “this is the starting point of any analysis of any situations of conflict” (1990, 155). For Burton, the starting point for conflict analysis is needs theory and “must be regarded as the core of the study of conflict, its analysis and resolution” (1990, 155). To state again, Burton
insists that analysis and attempted resolution of conflict without the ontological assumptions of needs theory is faulty and perhaps dangerous. Burton follows that conflict “resolution depends on a thorough analysis of the needs to be satisfied, and the failings of societies to satisfy them” (1990, 150). Burton directs special attention to assumptions that underlie the conflict analysis and the possible means of resolving conflict. The following briefly explores the assumptions of needs theory, the assessment of needs theory from the perspectives of various conflict scholar-practitioners, and finally begins to examine needs theory from Burton’s problem-solving approach.

Burton cautions that two orientations towards conflict can be inadequate and even detrimental to its resolution: conflict management and pragmatism. For Burton, neither approach is properly informed by the reflective nature of theoretical concerns. First, a “management” approach is “restricted and limited” because the training of the intervener is limited — they work within the current system. Therefore, deep sources of conflict may remain implicit, and, finally, if the deep issues are made explicit, they will frequently be mishandled by the management techniques.² In this way, management techniques, while adequate for negotiations, are not adequate for conflicts that involve core “nonnegotiable” human needs.

Examining the human needs approach to resolving conflict can proceed in several ways. Burton described two orientations to addressing questions as either “puzzle-solving” or “problem-solving” (1979). First, a “puzzle-solving” approach can be taken wherein the details of human needs can be further explored and examined. Or, a second “problem solving” approach can be taken where the assumptions of human needs are
examined, drawing from insights from other perspectives. The first approach is taken by Joe Scimecca: “I will argue that the field of conflict resolution is best served via an emphasis upon a parsimonious modification of Basic Human Needs theory as a best available starting point for a prescriptive theory of conflict resolution” (1990, 205). Scimecca takes this position because, he continues, “I still believe that this human needs theory represents the most sophisticated and fully developed theory of conflict resolution available today” (1990, 207). Richard Rubenstein leans towards the second, problem solving, approach: “The basic human needs approach is political…But these rejections [of the current political paradigms] do not constitute a political philosophy; they clear an area in which political philosophy can be constructed” (1990, 336). Should theoretical work in conflict resolution proceed according to puzzle-solving within the needs paradigm, or should theoretical developments in conflict resolution proceed in a problem-solving manner that examines basic assumptions and includes insights from other disciplines?

Scimecca attempts to shift attention away from biology to sociology by showing that ontological human needs can be derived from a non-genetically determined basis (1990, 207). Scimecca identifies freedom and self-consciousness as basic ontological needs. He recognized both positive and negative freedom as two basic types of freedom. Negative freedom is freedom in the existential sense, such as Jean-Paul Sartre’s curse of freedom as a burden for the modern individual (1992). Positive freedom exists as two subsets, the first is freedom from restraint and the second is the “freedom to develop” (Scimecca 1990, 212). This study is most concerned with freedom in the sense of the
development of the individual’s capabilities, since “freedom to develop is more important than freedom from restraint.” Freedom in the positive sense is “Freedom to develop in consort with others, to learn skills, to accumulate knowledge, to develop self-reflexivity” (Scimecca, 1990, 213). This view is more in line with that of contemporary sociologists who stress the interaction of the individual and society for the fullest possible human development (Scimecca 1981).

The second fundamental human need, Scimecca explains, self-consciousness, is based in reflexivity and predicated on choice and awareness. Drawing from sociological insights, choice and awareness are never totally free from social influence and are deeply embedded in social reality. Rather, all choices are made within a context. Freedom then is both individual and social, as is self-reflexivity; neither is genetically or culturally determined (Scimecca 1990, 214). Scimecca continues to draw upon development as crucial to freedom: “without freedom to develop, the mind is restricted and we become less than human beings” (1990, 214). Therefore, he suggests using self-reflexivity and the freedom to develop to judge whether or not societies fulfill basic human needs. Aside from stating that “authoritarian and totalitarian cultures” hinder self-reflexivity and freedom, Scimecca had little to say about the specific details of how to recognize self-reflection and development in the social world, and how to recognize if societies are fulfilling this basic human need. He does stress that societies are to meet these needs. Exactly what society is, Scimecca does not elaborate.

Karen Gillwald acknowledges that needs theory is capable of guiding clarification and creativity for conflict mitigation (1990, 115-124). However, Gillwald cautions that
“the resolution of deep rooted conflict goes beyond the capacity of needs theory and methodology” (115). She continues, while empirical research on “needs” focuses on specific satisfiers and can “help increase rationality in conflicts in two extreme cases — unconscious or repressed denials and counter-productive satisfiers” (1990, 121). The shortcoming of needs theory is that it fails to offer “instruments with which to regulate competing, conflicting, or mutually exclusive terms” (1990, 122). Gillwald’s complaint is that needs theory inadequately addresses, first, situations in which the different needs of one individual may be incompatible and, second, situations in which the needs of two or more individuals may be incompatible.

Rubenstein begins the problem-solving approach by acknowledging that human needs is a latent version of natural law approach to human social relations (1990, 340) and is therefore subject to the criticism of natural law thinking—universal, permanent, supreme, and abstract (1990, 338) — and must advance beyond the level of truism (1990, 343). Therefore, he continues, “if human needs theory is to escape the impact of this critique, reconstruction will be necessary” (1990, 340). For Rubenstein, “Unless [human needs] can be used to generate new insights, however, the utility of the approach for conflict analysis and resolution will be severely limited” (1990, 344). Can a new theory be built that avoids the pitfalls and limitations, can “historicity and concreteness” (1990, 344) be included in a theory for conflict resolution? This dissertation argues that complementing basic human needs with basic human responsibilities is a way to keep the insights of human needs and to include history and locality. Rubenstein starts to move in this direction when he says that the human needs theory should move away from natural
law by recognizing that structures are only “partial satisfiers of human needs” (1990, 347).\footnote{4} The direction of inquiry is to explore what is implied in the self-reflective and development components of human needs.

At this point, Rubenstein cautions: “needs theory (like natural law theory) frequently seems to have this ‘additive’ character — one uses it to restate or to confirm conclusions already arrived at by some other method” (1990, 344). The some other method, this study will argue, is the general worldview of liberalism (this point is explored later). It is a foundation of human needs theory that social arrangements that obstruct the discovery or development of human nature should be changed (for the better). Human needs theory thus has transformative implications—change oppressive social structures and humans will live harmoniously. However, Rubenstein raises a complex and subtle point: “it is only through liberating struggle that humans discover what their true needs are, and how they may be truly satisfied” (1990, 349). This raises a complexity in evaluating the legitimacy of human action and hints at the positive aspects of tension for human development. Jack Donnelly\footnote{5} writing on the positive role of struggle for human rights and the host of writers in the conflict tradition of sociology\footnote{6} raise similar points. Rubenstein summarizes this position: “if needs theory is to be founded on human nature, it must transcend the purely subjective, egoistic, non-developmental view of humanity…” (1990, 351). He continues:

[Human needs] are watered fitfully by ‘satisfiers’ which, under present circumstances, do not and cannot satisfy fully and whose partiality
continuously creates false stopping points in the development of human nature. They can flower only in a future which permits men and women to become masters of production, of the state, and of themselves… (1990, 352)

What Rubenstein seems to be implying is that human nature, to be fully realized, involves addressing the responsibility component of self-governing, both governing individual egoistic wants and desires and governing the state. The idea of self-governing is pursued in the following chapters. What remains to be explored is the developmental view of humanity and the possible role that conflict and tension can play in this positive maturation of the human being.

Mary Clark, agreeing with proponents of human needs theory that the problem of conflict does not lie in biological deficiency such as innate aggression of the individual, says the problem lies rather in “having become blind to the kind of society that satisfies our deepest human needs and having constructed, through a series of deficient social visions, institutions that deny rather than satisfy those needs” (1990, 37). Clark is especially critical of the institutions of modern civilization. For Clark, humans were first “social animals…wholly dependent on a supportive social structure, and it is in the absence of such a support system” that destructive behavior occurs. Clark continues that “civilized” societies since the dawn of recorded history is largely a record of frustrated members of those societies:
It is perhaps not surprising that Hobbes misread the problem, for in his
time the West was still largely ignorant of the evidence that would show
that social institutions were failing to meet human needs, rather than that
humankind suffers from some intrinsic behavioral maladaptation. (Clark
1990: 37)

For Clark, humans are uniquely social beings and the problems of maladaptive, or anti-
social, behavior of individuals stems from a maladaptive environment of civilization
itself, not from the individual.

Clark emphasizes that social bondings are not merely temporary contracts merely
for the convenience of individuals, but are absolute requirements for human existence:
“social embeddedness is the essence of our nature” (1990, 49). This is especially evident,
in Clark’s analysis, because the Western attitude of logical and rational decision-making
(rather than including emotions) are constructed from the point of view of an “isolated
individual who ought to be as free as possible from social constraints…” (1990, 49).
Therefore, social discussions “almost totally fail to ask why institutions of society are in
fact acting against or even actively preventing social bonding” (Clark 1990, 49). The
problem with contemporary Western institutions, for Clark, is a lack of the promotion of
social bonding. Correlating with the decline in social bonding are the increasing costs of
managing social anomie: increases in social welfare programs, more police, courtrooms
and prisons, and more social workers and psychiatrists (Clark 1990, 54). For Clark, the
large-scale institutional changes in the West bring more problems than they solve.
Mary Clark begins her exploration of human needs by cautioning that “human needs theory “must carefully avoid becoming merely a description of the self-perceived ‘needs’ of the particular group that is developing the theory” (1990, 34; see also Fraser 1989). Referring to the development of human needs theory in the Western intellectual tradition, Clark warns that this “narrowness could have unfortunate consequences globally”, therefore, what is needed is “conscientiously to identify and critique as many of the assumptions underlying our own thinking” (1990, 34). Clark’s observations is that the western tradition is concerned primarily with the individual and that the “current fission of the concepts of ‘the individual’ and ‘society’ into separate, often warring, compartments blinds us to the fact that these are one thing” (1990, 37). Whether or not the concept of social bonding is best to describe “social embededness,” Clark is pointing in the direction that assumptions about needs and social relations need to be re-examined.

In summary, for Scimecca, Rubenstein, and Clark, needs theory provides a useful critique of contemporary society and contemporary thinking, yet is still incomplete and inadequate. Whether to proceed in a puzzle-solving mode or a problem-solving mode depends on ontological assumptions. All three scholars provide hints as to where to proceed from here: examine assumptions and explore the developmental view and reflectivity. For Oscar Nudler, needs — both “fundamental” and “derived” — are not easily compartmentalized because they “cut across the whole person and achieve a multi-dimensional inner resonance.” Nudler eschews the more common isolation of biological/psychological/social needs and rather views needs as making a system whereby fundamental universal needs are patterned around cultural and individual
circumstances because basic (universal) needs are mediated by culture. These insights on the increased complexity of isolating human needs and a focus on human development lead in the direction of human responsibilities and self-governing.

For his part, Burton also mentions that conflict provention, anticipating the peaceful future, comes directly out of a focus on opportunities for human development rather than on institutional constraints (1990, 253). For Burton:

We have a language of democracy, freedoms, rights and justice, and we sometimes fail to place these concepts in the context of their origins—that is, a reaction against repressive systems, the essential structures of which we have inherited. (1990: 73)

Burton mentions development as a human need several times and frames his analysis in terms of reactions to systems that oppress individuals. However, he did not explore what development means beyond the freedom for an individual to choose and the elimination of repressive structures that limit those choices. What he did not explore further are the dimensions of human development that also include individual responsibilities. This study will argue that what is required is a robust sociology of knowledge that applies a statement such as “The models, terms and concepts that we have inherited lurk in the back of our minds, frustrate the development of alternative theories, and distort our perceptions of the present” (Burton 1990, 74) to be directed back at a human needs approach to begin to explore what is involved in human development.
The importance of an adequate theory of conflict is restated when Burton addresses pragmatism, the second common approach in dealing with conflict. Burton cautions that a “pragmatic” approach to conflict is potentially problematic because pragmatism implies “an absence of knowledge…and theory” (Burton 1990, 19, 20). In this approach to conflict, a pragmatist, according to Burton, simply employs intuition and unconsciously held theories on a trial and error basis. While the intervener may happen to help resolve a conflict (or not), the risk in using this “method” is that the structural and institutional sources of the conflict may remain unexamined, and thus they are “likely to lead in the longer term to even more costly disputes and planning mistakes…and perhaps to [greater] social disruption” (Burton 1990, 21). Burton wants to be clear that while pragmatism may at times be necessary, pragmatism should still be understood as a “phase in knowledge development” (Burton 1990, 22). While pragmatism is a natural and inevitable phase in the development of a practice it should be recognized that it is a “phase in a paradigm shift…but not yet a switch to a new paradigm” (Burton 1990, 22). The problem arises when pragmatism moves from an intuitive trial and error attempt to being defined as a positive “science” (Burton 1990, 22). For Burton, this is “dangerous” because it is not connected to a theoretical base. Burton’s assessment of the field of conflict studies is that, while making progress, “is still a field in which theorists and practitioners assert their preferences and make claims in the absence of any widespread understanding” (Burton 1990, 10). Burton is convinced that the framework of Realpolitik and deterrence are inadequate to the current socio-political conditions, yet he cautions about being overly confident at present with the current state of conflict resolution which
is located primarily in pragmatism and “devoid of any theoretical base on which they can be assessed” (Burton 1990, 10).

In contrast to pragmatism, John Burton describes the “general thesis” of conflict resolution as resting on complete analysis of conflict and “underlying this general thesis is a theoretical assumption that parties to a conflict have shared goals — that is, the pursuit of human needs common to all” (1990, 328). Burton goes on to state that these “problems” are “located in relationships” such as “identity and recognition” and that these need not be in short supply, unlike physical resources (1990, 328). Burton does little to expand upon the relational aspect, except that it involves perceiving accurately the “depths of feelings and the frustrations experienced by the other” (1990, 328). It is the relational social dynamic that remains the least explored by Burton. He reverts to a liberal social ontology when he emphasizes that the accurate analysis is located in “the extent to which apparently hostile behaviors are the consequence of environmental constraints” (1990, 328). His analysis seems to be directed at those with power, force and control of resources, and not to all members of social community. To what extent, and how, are the oppressed to be involved in self-governing? For example, Franz Fanon, writing on (and supporting) the revolution for independence in Algeria, cautioned that the oppressed must always be vigilant against simply reversing the terms and groups oppressed in their fight for emancipation (1964).

How is a conflict practitioner to approach Fanon’s concern? The following first briefly describes some of John Burton’s insights concerning the role of the conflict resolution scholar-practitioner, especially towards “problem-solving” as a general
orientation for conflict scholars. This leads directly to the second section, which incorporates Burton’s own insights in reflecting upon the implications of his insights towards examining his own writings.

John Burton (1979, xi-xiv & 3-38) makes a deliberate distinction between “puzzles” and “problems”, between “closed systems” and “open systems”, and between “normal” or “applied” science and “pure science.” For Burton, the conflict scholar-practitioner is dealing with unsolved problems located in open systems that require pure science. A puzzle implies that a final solution exists in a closed system and can be solved by the application of available theories or techniques. However, problems, for Burton, are qualitatively distinct — “having the opposite characteristics” (1979, 5) — from puzzles because they exist in open systems and cannot be solved with the application of “current” theories or techniques (1979, 3-4). As open systems, problems lack final solutions because the solution is itself a set of relationships that (potentially) contain a new set of problems and also interact in a larger changing environment. Finally, problems “frequently require a new synthesis or a change in theoretical structure” (1979, 5). Burton presents two different elements of problems related to complications in attempts at “solving” them. The first is the ontological condition of problems — they are embedded in social relationships that are not static but dynamic — and change themselves during investigation: “While the problem is being analyzed its nature is altering and the behaviour of the parts being analyzed is altering” (1979, 5). The second involves reflection and critique of the “dominant theories” of applied and normal science “to question all the implied assumptions, attitudes and theories, to put forward
alternatives hypotheses…” (1979, 6). The first element of problems relates, again, to the dynamism in the ontological condition of human social being. The second element relates to the cognitive framework(s) by which human social beings understand (and are shaped by and shape) the social world.

Many conflict scholar-practitioners have focused on the first element of problems that Burton described, discussed above. Considerably less attention has been directed at the second feature of addressing problems — a critique of the assumptions of dominant theories of conflict studies themselves. Burton outlines his “methodology” of problem-solving in the first chapter of Deviance, Terrorism and War (1979) by emphasizing the extent to which features of analysis are socially constructed and the role of a critical posture towards those social constructions. The range of the indeterminate nature of the social world for Burton is evident in the methodological steps he prescribes. The malleability of investigation of social science is evident in Burton’s understanding of research, ranging from “selection of the problem” and “boundaries of the area of inquiry” to the demarcation of “relevant source material,” “defining the problem” and designing and evaluating interventions (1979, 10-38). Burton, in his critique of international relations based in Realpolitik, states that “it could be that we are tackling our apparently insoluble problems within a system of thought that…excludes the possibility of solution” (1979, 19) and offers the possibility that what may need examination is the “system of thought being employed by the investigator” (1979, 26). The remainder of Deviance, Terrorism and War is engaged in critical analysis that questions the underlying assumptions of current policies, for example, of conventional theories of deviant
behavior. Burton’s diagnosis is to reexamine the frameworks of the analysts themselves “whenever policies are seen to fail to achieve objectives” (1979, 41). He states bluntly that part of the problem may reside in “conventional wisdom” and rather than pursuing more knowledge based and interpreted within this framework, the task is now to “ask ‘what are the assumptions on which ‘facts’ are selected and interpreted?’” (1979, 41). Burton is clear that his project is informed both by the flawed outcomes of intervention strategies and the policies which guide them. But his project is deeper: it is to question the assumptions on which strategies and policies are based, which include “prevailing value systems, definitions of problem behavior, conceptions of morality, notions of law and order and ideas about the role of authority” (1979, 41).

How does an analyst-researcher go about this task of questioning the underlying assumptions of conventional wisdom? For Burton, this requires “imagination”, “an ability to question conventional wisdom”, and “a willingness to be a dissident” (1979, 9) by not simply accepting “the ruling dogma of the day” and instead taking an approach that leads to an alternative set of assumptions” (1979, 6).

John Burton begins “The Two Paradigms,” by stating “When societies tackle their social problems there is a set of givens, a paradigm, that together form a generally agreed approach” (1979, 159) and acknowledges that shifts in values, norms, attitudes, behaviors and conditions do occur, but overall, they are understood within a given framework. For Burton, these frameworks represent fairly stable ontological frameworks and shifts represent only minor adjustments because “these shifts occur within an essentially unchanged set of givens or conventional assumptions about the nature of human
behavior, of society and of the norms observed” (1979, 159). Therefore, Burton calls for a more radical examination of common assumptions (1979), to examine and escape from the restraints of these frameworks. Burton is asking for a change in thinking, away from the “assumptions inherent in conventional thinking” for two reasons: they do not explain observed behavior and they do not provide adequate long term solutions to ongoing problems (1979, 161).10

This dissertation asks whether the framework of “human needs” and liberalism is best suited to address these concerns. Rather, as will become more clear, moving from a narrow framework of “needs” and “freedom from…” to include a broader framework of human responsibilities and liberty points in the direction of finding an “appropriate means” (1990, 328) to address the relational dynamic of conflict. For example, Burton describes security as need for everyone, and argues that increased security for one party of a conflict increases security for all parties. The problem is that usual means to security limit the possibility of it being shared.11 A human needs approach, focusing upon what individuals require for themselves, alludes or pushes to the background, the possible necessity of including basic responsibilities that follow (possible) emancipation, or said another way, what comes after the revolution? The fundamental question, unaddressed by a human needs approach, is what is required to sustain self-governing — what is required to sustain a movement from violence to politics? A human responsibilities approach (that does not remove human needs) that expands social ontology to include ongoing participation in self-governing relationships is one answer. The freedom required in “human development” is crucial, but is it enough to sustain polities of
participation? The following study will argue that human responsibilities are needed to complement human needs.

Burton adds another variable to his consideration of conflict — the future — and invents a new term to address it — *provention* (1990, 161). Burton explains: provention is a “more fundamental study and exercise...it is a decision-making process in which the future is analyzed and anticipated” (1990, 161). For Burton, the problem with different forms of governing, even representative political systems, is that no current political system has yet been discovered that gives adequate priority to the future. Such a system, accordingly, would be conflict avoidant in the positive sense. The move for conflict resolution as a discipline is to configure a political governing future as an “extension of analytical conflict resolution...because there emerges a whole new political approach to decision-making” (1990, 162). Burton shows no hesitation when he states it is “clear that provention must rest heavily on the theory and practice of conflict resolution” as the means by which insights are obtained into the nature of political problems (1990, 162). However, Burton restates that political philosophies must be oriented towards the future and “must rest on reliable theories of human behaviors” (1990, 163). Here Burton is combining two dimensions of social life, the moral philosophy of politics and the virtues of intersubjective decision-making, what I refer to below as the responsibility of self-governing (1990, 164).

For Burton, human knowledge is part of a cultural evolutionary process, with the human needs approach contributing to the progression of knowledge. However, he allows that further developments are necessary (1990, 177). Burton is committed to a
human needs theoretical framework that defines more precisely what these needs actually are and therein developing “more understanding of the structural sources of conflict” and the need to seek institutional policy options that cater to human requirements” (1990, 177). Rather than humans adjusting to institutional requirements, Burton sees this as a transitional period in which governing is no longer catering to “power-elite interests” to “the nature of which is far from clear” (1990, 178). Burton rightly acknowledges that this transition is a confused and difficult one, raising questions of “ethics, relevance, justice, constitutional rights, human rights, human needs and a host of others” (1990, 178). He ends assessing the current situation in human socio-political evolution declaring that system-preserving approaches are inadequate to address the fundamental issues of the future and suggests that problem-solving conflict-resolution leading to prevention is heading in the right direction.

However, Burton hesitates that his human needs framework “is still at an immature stage” (1990, 179). While looking to the future, Burton skirts the promise of nonviolence in building a just social order in the process of revolution, of building the type of society that satisfies human needs in the connection between means and ends in nonviolent social relations and participation. The ends — a non-oppressive social order — must be connected to the means in which that governing order is achieved. This study seeks to explore the complications and complexities of ethics and justice, not by abandoning a human needs approach completely, but by expanding Burton’s basic human needs ontology by adding human responsibilities to complement to needs and obligations that lead finally towards self-governing and nonviolent problem-solving conflict
resolution approach to maintain self-governance. Nonviolence is implicit in Burton’s writings, but not explicit. For example, Burton cautions that the misapplication of a technique for dealing with conflict or a failure to properly understand the needs-basis of a deep-rooted conflict may only momentarily suppress a conflict and actually lead to further violence (1990, 8-9).

The following proceeds, not by abandoning human needs, but by complementing human needs with human responsibilities. To do so, the chapters below examine self-governing in terms of the responsibility that individuals have both towards themselves and towards others. Said another way, one way to transcend the egoistic view of humanity with an exclusive focus on needs is to include basic human responsibilities — responsibilities to oneself and to others.

In John Burton and Frank Dukes, *Conflict* (St. Martin’s Press: New York, 1990): 18-19. Burton explains: “It has to be noted that in many cases perhaps most cases, mediation processes do more harm than good…They provide an answer to the particular case and, if successful, help to preserve that system or set of circumstances that give rise to the cases treated” (Burton and Dukes 1990, 160).


In the section “Trends in Thinking about A Human Dimension”, Burton states that the reference point for understanding conflict is no longer in accord with the “Natural Law notion” of justice based on mysterious divine social order, but rather on “estrangement” due to “an absence of participation and social control” (1990, 91). For Burton, the new reference point is based on psychological and physical needs of individuals. The social developments of modernization and the problems of legitimacy draw attention, for Burton, to the social problems and the impacts on individuals and point to analytical problem-solving processes to better address the social conditions that have led to estrangement of the non-elite individual — to increase the participation and control of all individuals (1990: 91).


Clark mentions three changes in Western civilization: the rise of the nuclear family, the “institution of competitive individualism” and “efficiency,” and the disappearance of sacred meaning (Clark 1990: 49-51).

The idea of “bonding” is critiqued in a later section on civility and responsibility.


Burton lists influences for solving widespread social problems

Burton here implies, but does make explicit, that the means typically pursued by the party with power and resources is that of (military, police, policy, or legal) force.
When discussing needs, Burton moves from his critical posture of “problem solving” when dealing with the field of international relations to a “puzzle solving” approach when seeking to explore needs within conflict studies.
3. Liberalism and Political Theory

The following draws on debates in political theory concerning liberalism in order to locate Burton’s basic human needs in a tradition of political theory. These insights from the debate in political theory are used to better inform basic human needs theory. Central in these discussions is how differently the questions what is a human being and how the social world work are answered, and more specifically, how the relationship between the individual and the collective is defined. Two popular and competing political philosophies are readily available to answer these questions, liberalism and communitarianism. According to liberalism the individual receives priority and according to communitarianism the collective receives priority. Given these two perspectives, where do we go from here?

This chapter attempts to explore the conceptual architecture of liberalism, to find a “family resemblance,” as described by Wittgenstein (see Miller and Fredericks 2000), among these different perspectives of liberalism, and then to locate the general ontology of liberalism compared to other political philosophies. This conceptual architecture forms a schema around which rhetorical strategies and frameworks organize thought about the self and its relation to others, society and the polity. I will argue here that neither liberalism nor communitarianism offers an adequate social ontology. The argument is presented that civic republicanism does offer a social ontology adequate to
capture the complexities involved in self-governance. Finally, Burton’s problem-solving approach is revisited in light of developments in the sociology of knowledge and culture in terms of the reflexivity involved in self-governance. Problem-solving involves questioning general assumptions and ontological categories and differs from a puzzle-solving approach that works within a given framework to address a situation from a given perspective. Problem-solving requires taking a step back and examining those basic assumptions. The connections between Burton’s problem-solving approach and the demands of reflexivity in the responsibility of self-governing will become more evident in what follows.

Liberalism is a protean doctrine with views on matters as diverse as epistemology and international relations. As such, liberalism has been interpreted in various ways by different proponents and detractors, and disagreements within liberalism exist, as do pronounced disagreements between liberalism and other political and epistemological doctrines. What unites proponents of liberalism — a minimal definition — is that liberals regard individuals to be at the center of moral value and believe that each individual is of equal worth (Krieger 1993). Liberalism is concerned with individual freedom, and, though it may be morally neutral with regard to the ends individuals pursue, it is not morally neutral in regards to the availability of choice in the ends that they pursue. In this way, the individual and the individual’s freedom to choose is the hallmark of liberalism and must be safeguarded from unwarranted interference.2

Liberalism has three common usages in contemporary discourse. First, liberalism can refer to partisan political practice. In this sense, liberals are contrasted to
conservatives, such as the common distinction in contemporary US politics between liberal democrats and conservative republicans. Second, it refers to a family of political theories spanning a wide range, bounded by market libertarianism on one side and state interventionist social-welfare engineering on the other. Third, liberalism refers to a broader political culture or outlook. In the final sense, liberalism characterizes the values and institutions of western culture.

There are mutual and reciprocal relations among all three usages of liberalism. Paul Kahn (2005, 33-142) views the history of the West as the genealogy and architecture of the development and infusion of liberalism as a cultural phenomenon — in the broadest sense in which liberal conceptions of law, political rhetoric, and socio-political philosophies contribute to self-understanding, both individually and collectively. George Lakoff discusses the metaphors guiding the discussions and worldviews of “liberals” and “conservatives” and how these differences are displayed in the more narrow confines of contemporary American political debates (Lakoff 1996). This present research concentrates, rather, on liberalism as a family of political and social theories, the second usage of liberalism mentioned above. As a family of theories, they share orientations towards personhood and the social world and are rooted in common ontological assumptions of what individuals, societies, and political regimes are. In short, liberalism views the freedom of the individual as the paramount concern. This research is closer to viewing liberalism as a “metaphysical conception of mind and society” (Unger 1975, 6) and is not addressing the details of current political debates nor
is it trying to span broad currents of deep historical developments and how these developments came about.

Informed by the wealth of developments in the sociology of knowledge, and especially the sociology and history of science since Karl Mannheim, this project begins with a discussion of liberalism in terms of Wittgenstein’s “family resemblances.”

Family resemblances refer to a general relationship of characteristics and qualities that, though they may differ in particular details, are shared among a group. A family resemblance, for Wittgenstein, is a concept among concepts. It is a grouping of ideas that are similar, but not quite the same. This is anti-essentialist in that no one thing may be common to all the instances of a family. It is in this same sense that Burton and perhaps many in the field of conflict resolution, while each unique in their own right, may still share affinities in their diagnoses of the problems and solutions of conflict.

Liberalism is not so much a coherent formal doctrine as it is a similarity in conceptualizing the world. What is clear is that liberalism, despite its varieties, represents a “broad stream of political ideals which” under the name of liberalism “operated as one of the most influential intellectual forces guiding developments in western and central Europe.” The liberalism that emerges is identified with a movement toward democracy whether emphasizing protection by law against arbitrary coercion or the broader concern of emancipation from irrational thought. Though differing in details, both forms of liberalism employ the concepts of freedom and equality. Another significant point, overlooked by many who reflect on the historical development of liberalism, is liberalism’s engagement with modernity, and hence, it’s ever-changing
construction of itself (for example, a liberalism, once based on logical-positivism must itself make amendments when logical-positivism is undermined, just as a liberalism based on natural law, or any other tradition of thought, must adjust if that tradition of thought develops insufficiencies). This engagement with modernity is one way to explain Hayek’s contention that certain specific features of past liberalisms may have little in common with how the term is now used and may contain ideas directly opposed to those ideas that were originally designated. For example, “freedom from…” can be described in a number of ways depending upon what is deemed as constraining. To some, economic market forces may be constraining, to others state policy may be constraining. The specific details of terms and their relation may vary according to different strands and historical developments of liberalism itself as an orienting perspective, a rhetorical device. However, the theme most consistent with liberalism is freedom from constraints to choose.

C. B. Macpherson and the Critique of “Possessive” Liberalism

The following section explores the argument of C.B. Macpherson’s (1962) “possessive” individualism, presents the question of whether “possessive” individualism, focusing on protection, inhibits the responsibility of self governing, and contrasts this with Macpherson’s identification of “developmental” democracy. Forthcoming sections of this research explore what is, or might be, involved in individuals reaching their “full potential” and whether liberalism is equipped to handle “developmental democracy.”
Criticisms of the two dominant perspectives — realism and liberalism — within international relations and international political economy have been ongoing for several decades.\textsuperscript{12} What these criticisms share in common is the claim that both liberalism and realism are fashioned from decontextualized and ahistorical \textit{a priori} claims about the essential nature of human beings with regard to drives, needs and goals. It is well-known that John Burton developed \textit{a priori} human needs as an approach to conflict resolution in reaction against the prevailing attitudes of realism in international relations (1976). What is less explored is the extent to which both needs theory and realism are both forms of liberalism.

Crawford Macpherson referred to these \textit{a priori} claims as the core identity and ethos of “possessive individualism” that includes assumptions about human nature and the state that they are so embedded that they are viewed as unproblematic (1976). Liberalism and realism in international relations and international political economy are united, according to Macpherson, in liberalism’s domestic portrayal of the individual as “the proprietor of his own person or capacities, owing nothing to society for them. The individual was seen neither as a moral whole, not part of a larger social whole, but an owner of himself” (1976, 3). For Macpherson, studies in international politics simply transfer their liberal domestic conceptions of individuals to their understandings of interstate relations which constructs a whole system that “exists to uphold and enforce a certain kind of society, a certain set of relations between individuals, a certain set of rights and claims that people have on each other, both directly and indirectly” (Macpherson 1992, 4). This liberal ontology, thus, inhibited the creation of a coherent
theory of social obligation (Macpherson 1962, 3) because it employs a negative conception of liberty as “freedom from...” and, ironically, prevents individuals from meeting their full potential (Storms 2004, 4).

Macpherson arrives at his conclusions by examining the implicit social understandings liberal theorists have about their society from their own ontological positions about human nature. He argued when “a writer can take it for granted that his readers will share some of his assumptions, he will see no need to point these out....A second reason of a theorist’s failure to state an assumption is that he may not be clearly aware of it” (1962, 5-6). Two common threads that provide unity for Macpherson’s critique of liberalism are his assertions about human nature and what he believed constituted a fully developed life (Townsend 2000, 102-107). While Macpherson acknowledged that at the center of these ongoing theoretical debates is the concept of human nature, these debates must be continually addressed because “political theory hinges on its penetration of its analysis of human nature” (1962, 51). Rather than concentrating further on the differences between needs theory and realism, this research explores alternatives in depictions of human nature as presented in different social and political theories.

For Macpherson, the possessive liberal ethos began three to four hundred years ago and now permeates Western culture, beginning with the formation of the modern nation-state, not “equality”: 62
Its essence was the system of alternate or multiple parties whereby governments could be held responsible to different sections of the class or classes that held political voice. There was nothing necessarily democratic about the responsible party system. In the country of its origin, England, it was well established, and working well, half a century before the franchise became at all democratic. This is not surprising, for the job of the liberal state was to maintain and promote the liberal society, which was not essentially a democratic or an equal society. The job of the competitive party system was to uphold the competitive market society, by keeping the government responsive to the shifting majority interests of those running the market society (1992, 9).

Macpherson’s goal is to restore equality and the social dimension of life within liberal discourse by concentrating on the “two basic conflicting ontologies within liberalism” by “using liberal theory against itself” (Storms 2004, 4-5). These contradictions emerge, for Macpherson, because liberalism separates political and economic spheres. On the one hand, liberalism stresses protective democracy by guaranteeing individual’s rights against state oppression. On the other hand, liberalism stresses the fulfillment of individual development — developmental democracy (Townsend 2000, 10-21). For Macpherson, liberalism’s focus on the limits of the state obscures the role of the market in society and its effects upon the individual. In this way, protective democracy overshadows developmental democracy. Macpherson insists that when “democracy is seen as a kind
of society and not just a mechanism of choosing and authorizing governments” the empowerment of human beings will have begun (1973, 51). In this way, Macpherson is pointing to participation and responsibility in self-governing.

This study argues that liberalism as a political and social philosophy is unable to develop a robust understanding of human development because liberalism’s view of the individual, or human nature, is too narrow. Human development, as noted previously and in the following chapters, is socio-relational and cannot be reduced to free-acting individuals alone. In this regard, liberalism is ill-equipped to address the issues of responsible conduct and thought towards a rich participation in social life that is required of human development. Macpherson’s own criticism of liberalism does not go far enough. While agreeing with Macpherson, that shedding light on the ways in which protective democracy obscures developmental democracy is an important contribution, this study questions to the degree that shifting focus on the ways in which the lack of distributive justice, which are based in the consequences of market inequalities, can achieve and sustain a “developmental” democracy. Is a shift from security to distributive equality enough, or has Macpherson simply shifted the objects of possession?

Macpherson is certainly closer to a human needs approach. Is either form of possessive individualism, while each important and deserving of attention, ontologically adequate to meet the needs of democratic governance? What can be learned from other political and social theories?

This brings the discussion to the role of theorizing and begins to ask whether or not liberalism is adequate to handle the tasks required of sustaining democracy. Robert
Cox (1981, 128-129) explained the difference between puzzle-solving theory that “takes the world as it finds it, with the prevailing social and power relationships and the institutions into which they are organized, as the given for action” and problem solving theory that “stands apart from the prevailing order of the world and asks how that order came about” (Cox 1981, 128-29). Macpherson’s contribution is to link mainstream contemporary Western political philosophy to the core of possessive individualism that views “individuals as the sole proprietors of their own capacities [which] emphasizes the limited social responsibility of individuals to society” (Tilman 1988, 183). Is reduction of this sort warranted? This question is especially prescient, since, as Keohane and Nye emphasize, echoing Burton: “applying the wrong image and the wrong rhetoric to problems will lead to erroneous analysis and bad policy” (2001, 7).

In terms of Burton’s human needs, from the perspective of the marginalized and oppressed, needs theory fits into a framework of liberalism in which individual needs are accentuated, first, as freedom from constraints and, second, as possessions or rights of entitlement. This depiction, therefore, downplays or ignores basic responsibilities of the marginalized and oppressed. As suggested earlier, when needs are identified, liberalism emphasizes the obligations of the state (or elites who control and influence the state) to meet those needs. The responsibility for action is demanded from states and elites. Without excusing elite and state-centric obligations, a central question remains: are individuals also not implicated as “responsible” citizens in meeting needs as well? This responsibility can take (at least) two other forms: individuals are responsible to meet the needs of others and individuals are responsible to meet their own needs. This civic
dimension is underdeveloped in liberalism because of the emphasis on possessive individualism (Sandel 1976). This study will argue that, in a similar fashion, individual responsibility is under-theorized by Burton because he labored to emphasize human needs. Upcoming sections will begin to explore in more detail the possible role of responsibility.

**Three Answers to the relation between the Individual and the Collective: Liberal, Communitarian and Civic Republicanism**

The general framework used to examine the different orientations in social and political thought begins by asking a seemingly simple question: who is responsible to do what? Reading Burton, the assumptions about what is a human being and how the social world works becomes more apparent: first, humans have inalienable needs and, second, institutions and structures must meet those needs (1976). Stark differences appear between three different perspectives in political philosophies — liberalism, communitarianism, and civic republicanism — and relate directly to what is a human being and how is the human being related to society. Two primary categories are given, the individual and the collective (the collective includes many other non-individual concepts such as institutions, society, social structure, the state, and so on), and it is crucial how these concepts are related to one another. These theories differ in depicting the relation between the individual and the community.
The communitarian approach is similar to Burton’s analysis of contemporary society: “Structures and institutions have been treated as givens. Persons have been have been required to adapt to them” (Burton 1990, 68). For communitarians, the collective is given priority when tensions emerge between individuals and communities. In contrast, the liberal emphasis understands the relationship as Burton again describes: “when conflict appears between individuals and social structures, social institutions must change” (Burton 1990, 68). For liberals, the individual receives priority when tensions emerge between the individual and the collective. Are these the only two options? Is it necessarily an either/or relation between individuals and communities? The civic republican, or responsibilities of self-governing, approach attempts to balance these two perspectives, between the needs of individuals on one side and the obligations imposed by social collectives on the other side, and thus incorporates Burton’s notion of development and participation in relational, not individualist terms.

Liberalism focuses on individual needs and rights. Communitarianism emphasizes the debts and obligations incurred by individuals to a community — ranging from family to the state. Between these two polarities of individual and collective lies a mediating position of self-governing, or better stated, the responsibility side of self-government. Responsibility is not simply a one-sided dimension of human life — it is not an either or proposition (either I serve my self or I serve a group). Rather, self-governing involves both a concern with one’s own self and with the larger group and political community. Self-governing, in this sense, has several levels of meaning. On the one hand, self-governing is concerned with free action and lack of unwarranted constraint
and restraint and the ability to perform actions based on agentic free-will. On the other hand, self-governing is concerned with “governing” one’s self in accordance with the appetites of pleasure, and the remaining virtues of fortitude, justice, and prudence. Self-governance is not a straightforward checklist of a diminished set of laws and codes. Rather, self-governance includes the critical reflection on all of the virtues for guiding intrapersonal thoughts and actions. Nor is self-governance a strict reliance on observing the informal and formal norms and values of a community, the obligations incurred from being part of a community that require observance to the specific codes of a community, to the extent that the self is or can no longer flourish. This broadened conception of self-governance includes responsibilities—responsibilities both to self and to community, a responsibility that contributes to self-governing.

Self-governing requires a critical posture to decipher when I might be wrong, or when the codes of a community might be misdirected, for both can lead to a lack of self-governing. Each accentuation, either liberal or communal, can serve as a corrective to the other accentuation, but neither accentuation can serve a fully-developed sense of self-governance. Ironically, the search and demand for lack of restraint can lead to one being restrained by one’s own cognitive frameworks; at the same time, the obedience to communal codes can in turn oppress and dominate the very self that serves the community. Liberalism and communitarianism are both accentuations that help correct the opposite accentuation—liberalism corrects communitarianism and communitarianism corrects liberalism. For example, liberalism can identify oppressive features of communal life and communitarianism can identify free-riders. Communitarianism
promotes personal sacrifice for the collective in times of war; liberalism promotes individual civil rights in times of segregation or slavery. However, though serving as necessary corrections, neither liberalism nor communitarianism can properly claim to be the final solution to the deep questions of self-governance. They serve to correct each other, but neither can claim to be right. Neither position contains an adequately robust social ontology to account for the dimension of human life that promote self-governing. (Just because I can point to the inadequacy of your position does not mean that I have the correct position).

One way to tell the story of the development of politics in the West is through the pendulum swing between these two positions (Ezrahi 1995). On the one hand, the liberal emphasis — especially noted in the Social Contract tradition of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau — effectively serves to undermine the Divine Right of Kings and to promote universal human rights in the name of civil and political equality. On the other hand, the communitarian emphasis on individual obligations to the group promotes networks to help fellow immigrants, codifies norms and values for daily interactions, and attracts individual sacrifice for the good of the community.

**Limits of Communitarianism and Liberalism**

The following section introduces political philosopher John Rawls (a following chapter deals more specifically with his approach) as a way to frame the liberal-communitarian debate. In this debate, priority is given either to the individual or to the
community. In these terms priority is either given to the right or to the good. This section continues the discussion of self-governance as a way to embrace, rather than eschew, another new concept, judgment in social life.

Since the 1980’s, political philosophy in the United States is defined partially in terms of the liberal/communitarian debate (Sandel 2006). This debate attempts to locate differing political thought in terms of whether emphasis is given to the individual — liberal — or to the community — communitarian. One way to summarize the debate is to examine whether priority is given to the right or to the good. The following discussion introduces the work of John Rawls as a way to introduce the liberal-communitarian debate and then moves to a discussion if either position is adequate to address a basic human responsibilities approach to self-governance. I will argue that the responsibilities approach, rather than engaging in reductionism by giving priority to the self or the collective, embraces the ongoing tension involved in balancing these two perspectives.

In A Theory of Justice (1972), John Rawls, arguably America’s most celebrated political philosopher, offers the most compelling account of liberal political values since John Stuart Mill. Rawls revived political theory by demonstrating the possibility of arguing rationally about justice, rights, and political obligation by concentrating on individual rights. Before Rawls, the dominant conception of justice in the English-speaking world was utilitarianism: laws and public policies should seek the greatest good for the greatest number (Sandel 2006, 248-251). For example, if a large majority despises a minority religion and wants it censored, utilitarian principles support this ban. But Rawls, returning to the doctrine of fundamental rights, argues that certain rights are
so profoundly important that the desires of the majority should not override them. In this way, Rawls emphasizes the priority of the right over the good. The utilitarianism that preceded Rawls posited that a just society is one based on achieving the greatest good (or happiness) for the greatest number of people. For Rawls, the fundamental right that cannot be usurped is the right of the individual to choose.

Contemporary liberals, such as Rawls, deliver a poignant challenge to utilitarianism which is directly relevant communitarianism. Utilitarianism can be used to serve the desires of the majority at the expense of the minority. The concentration on individual rights thus serves as a necessary bulwark against the tyranny of the majority. Challenges to the contemporary liberal focus on individual rights, thus, tend to be defined in terms of the reaction against a majoritarianism that concentrated on the good of the community at the expense of individual rights. Rawls and liberalism will be discussed in more detail in a following section.

The argument made at this point is that the contemporary debates in political theory are more nuanced than the polarity between individual verses collective commitments. This will be further elucidated in the following discussion by adding the viewpoint of civic republicanism to the liberal-communitarian debate. Civic republicanism is typically defined by its individualist opponents as communitarian. While this charge is partially true, it is crucial to emphasize that civic republicanism cannot be collapsed within the communitarian camp. At the same time that civic republicanism draws upon valuable insights from the communitarian school of thought — the notion that the good is crucial for social life — and civic republicanism also draws
upon crucial insights from liberal individualist school of thought — the notion of individual rights are crucial for social life. To help illuminate this nuance, later in the chapter civic republicanism will be associated with virtue ethics.

Much confusion in the liberal-communitarian debate arises from conflating communitarianism with majoritarianism — the idea that rights should rest on the values that predominate in a given community at a given time. This form of communitarianism holds that principles of justice derive their moral authority from values commonly shared in a particular community or tradition. In this way, the values of the community override individual preferences in defining what is just or unjust. On this view, the recognition of a right is dependent upon demonstrating that the right is a formative element of the community itself and informs the shared understanding of the tradition itself. It is not difficult to recognize that arguments of rights are ultimately bound to arguments that recognize the good of the community that respect those rights. In this understanding of communitarianism, priority is given to the good as defined by the community or tradition and not to the rights of the individual. This way links justice to the good by appeal to shared communal and/or traditional values.

Another way to link justice with conceptions of the good connects principles of justice with the moral worth or intrinsic good of the ends they serve (Sandel 2006, 252-262). The ends they serve can be conceived along contrary broad contours, for example, as maintaining social order (Hobbes) or initiating changes to challenge social order (Rousseau). This form — examining the ends that are served — recognizes a right in accordance to the justification that it observes and/or addresses and advances some
important human good. Whether or not this good happens to be highly valued or merely implicit in a given tradition is not the decisive point. Therefore, the second way is not, strictly speaking, communitarian. Rights are based, in this way, on the ethical importance of the ends and purposes they promote. It is therefore better to describe this conception as teleological, since rights cannot be properly discussed without the good. Aristotle’s political theory is an example: prior to defining an individual’s rights or prior to determining the “nature of the ideal constitution,” for Aristotle, “it is necessary for us first to determine the nature of the most desirable way of life. As long as that remains obscure, the nature of the ideal constitution must also remain obscure” (Barker 1958, 279).

In various ways, those enlisted on the communitarian debate have pressed major objections against the liberal or “individualist” perspective. First, they charge that the liberal emphasis on distributive justice and individual rights promotes division of the citizens of the modern state against one another, fostering isolation, selfishness and apathy rather than commitment to the civic enterprise (MacIntyre 1981; Taylor 1985; Sandel 1982; and Walzer 1983). The fundamental concern is that liberals are too preoccupied with rights, freedoms, and needs of abstracted individuals that they put the survival of liberally-minded societies at risk (Sandel 2006). First, the “enlightenment project” undermines itself by its failure to recognize that reasoning cannot substantially depart from shared traditions and practices (MacIntyre 1981). Second, abstract and universal — deontological — conceptions of the individual promote withdrawal from
civic duty and civic responsibility, by relying on the state, and are engaged in, literally, a self-defeating enterprise (Sandel 1982).

The communitarian criticisms are addressed in two interlocking responses. First, Rawls (1993) maintains his “political” conception of the self is not a metaphysical claim about the ontological status of the self, but simply a way to think about justice. Will Kimlycka explains that it is to promote critical reflection and that “no end or goal is exempt from possible re-examination” (1989, 52). The second response centers on the meaning and value of community, and especially on the vices of community. Relying on abstract universals allows critical evaluation of local prejudices that communitarians must accept so long as the standard of value is the survival and continuation of the community at the expense of oppressing those individuals in the community.

The liberal-communitarian debate, according to Richard Duggan, “if nothing else, should help us to see that individualism can be taken too far and the claims of the community taken too lightly” (2009, 303). The challenge is to bring the claims of the individual and the community into balance, not to choose between them. Doing so requires decisions that are “seldom clear-cut and often painful” (Duggan 2009, 303). For Duggan, this debate tends to obscure a fundamental point: “communities cannot exist without individuals and individuals cannot exist, much less thrive, without community” (2009, 303). Therefore, the challenge is to find and support forms of community and individuality that mutually recognize and support each other.

Contemporary critics of liberal political theory, notably Alaisdair MacIntyre, Charles Taylor, Michael Walzer, and Michael Sandel have been identified with the
communitarian critique of individual rights (needs)-oriented liberalism. However, as Sandel elaborates, both the liberal-individualist and communitarian-majoritarian approaches to justice are insufficient (2006, 9-34). Both make a similar mistake; both try to avoid evaluating the content of the ends that are promoted. Both escape the reflexive insistence upon judgment. The liberal emphasis upon neutrality in promoting individual rights towards any good and the communal-majoritarian emphasis on prevailing social values as defining “the good” both try to avoid passing judgment on the content of the ends that rights or values promote. This is misguided, according to Sandel, since, “arguments about justice and rights have an unavoidably judgmental aspect” (2006, 254). What needs further exploration, then, is the relation between judgment and self-governance.

Liberalism and Civic-Humanism: Rights (Needs) or Virtues?

It is civic republicanism (Sandel 2006, 9-34) that offers a way of conducting political argument, not of transcending it. The only alternative to fleeing from judgment is to embrace judgment as a necessary feature of justice (Sandel 2006, 26). Judgment in the liberal tradition refers to judgments of individual needs and choices. Judgment in the communitarian tradition refers to judgment of obligations to the serving the collective. To add more complexity, civic republicanism informed by virtue ethics includes equally respect for individuals and their rights and respect for communal conceptions of the good life. Otherwise, to make justice a creature of personal preferences and individual wishes
or to make justice an emblem of convention and tradition is to deprive justice of its critical, reflexive, problem-solving character. The crucial questions of self-governance cannot be reduced simply to the ability of an individual to choose nor reduced simply to moral codes that emanate from and sustain a community. Rather, the question is better phrased: what kinds of individuals and communities are created, sustained and promoted (Weber 1968)? It is not simply a debate between, on the one side, the pursuit of preferences, and, on the other side, obedience to communal and traditional moral codes. Self-governance, understood in the way presented here, is respect for both individuals and communities.

The political location of needs theory now becomes more evident. For Burton’s needs theory, needs are universal and “more basic and fundamental” than “cultural values” (1979, 58). In terms of conducting political argument, the paramount question is whether or not, or to what extent, the assessment of needs is considered to be a topic for deliberation. Burton is clear that social and cultural values are open for debate because:

…social values are asserted as part of religion, ideology and class or cultural philosophy. Different assertions lead to different structures and policies. Changes in governments lead to changes in policies. Different value orientations lead to quite opposite conclusions…Left-right, hard-soft debates dominate discussion about the handling of situations. As a result problems are not approached as such with a view to a solution. (1979, 63)
Burton’s critique of social and critical values is similar to the liberal critic of the good. Burton’s solution to the problems of context-dependent and malleable social and cultural values and goals is universal human needs. For Burton, first, this requires a reexamination of the scientific enterprise and a reassertion of objectivity. Since there “can be no objectivity about human goals and, therefore, no objectivity about policies,” Burton advances universal human needs as a “logical starting point of behavioral analysis” in order to locate a “scientific basis for determining goals” (1979, 62). In this way, needs are not subject to evaluation themselves but provide the reference point or means of “judging the relevance of social norms and conventions” (1979, 64). In the same way that fundamental rights are beyond political debate for Rawls and override conceptions of the good, human needs are “nonnegotiable” and override social and cultural values for Burton. Needs are amoral, neither good nor bad, and provide the “navigation” points and provide a “firm basis on which to judge” (1979, 65) because they are “not generated by events [but are] constant” (1979, 69). The similarity of (context-free and deontological) rights for Rawls and universal needs for Burton is that both are beyond debate and critical reflection. This discussion will be further developed in Chapter Six. The immediate discussion below will return to debates within political philosophy.

Political philosopher and historian J.G.A. Pocock remarks that political philosophy in the western world has been organized around two different vocabularies and has resulted in “markedly discontinuous” discourse about public and political life because they “premise different values, encounter different problems, and employ
different strategies of speech and argument‖ (1981, 355-56). Though within each perspective exist a wide range of diversity of opinions, the division is classified as between liberalism, on the one side, and communitarianism on the other side. Balancing between the two, I argue, is civic republicanism, or what this study calls self-governing. Rather than positing an either/or emphasis upon the individual or the community, self-governing is a third way between this dualism. The simplest way to present this thesis is that liberalism focuses on negative freedom while self-governing, or classical republicanism, is concerned with positive freedom (Hexter 1979).

These two traditions — liberalism and civic humanism/republicanism — are distinguished in that liberalism concentrates on law and empire while civic humanism concentrates on the republic. It is possible that, according to Skinner, politics can operate simultaneously in the civic humanist and the juristic modes (Skinner 1978). However, the distinction is crucial, as Pocock explains:

Law, one may generalize, is of the empire rather than of the republic. If one argues in the tradition of Bartolus, the city acquires libertas in the sense of imperium; possibly it reacquires it from princeps or imperator; it acquires a freedom to practice its own laws. If the citizen acquires libertas, he acquires a “freedom of the city”—the original meaning of the French bourgeoisie—a freedom to practice his own affairs protected by the rights and immunities which the law affords him, and also by the imperium which decrees and enforces these laws. (1981, 361)
For liberalism, Pocock continues, this is its “greatest role” and “performs this role by associating liberty with right.” This juristic, or liberal, understanding of liberty is negative, “distinguishing between libertas and imperium, freedom and authority, private and public. However, this is a particular understanding of liberty and contrasts with positive liberty of the civic humanist or republican tradition as articulated by dictators, or humanists:

But the libertas of this bourgeoisie is not enough to make him a citizen in the Greek sense of one who rules and is ruled….What mattered about the republica was that its authority should be public….It contended that homo, the animale politicum, was so constituted that his nature was completed only in a vita activa practiced in a vivere civile, and that libertas in the sense of imperium in order to rule and be ruled. Only such a political system, said Guicciardini, was an exception to the general rule that government was a form of violent domination over others. (1981, 356)

It is the uniquely civic humanist, or classical republican, emphasis on self-rule that distinguishes it from the juridical understanding of political life. Negative liberty — freedom to act without constraints and oppression — is less ambiguous than positive liberty.
To understand positive liberty within the civic humanist tradition, Pocock suggests using the term “virtue” which he claims cannot be adequately reduced to the status of right or incorporated into the vocabulary of jurisprudence. Virtue is a word with a long history and has many meanings. First, it can be used synonymously with “nature,” “essence,” or “essential characteristic.” Second, it can be used in opposition to “fortune” or the accidents of life. Third, it could mean a fixed propensity to act in accord with an ethical code (see Pocock 1981, 353-368). As developed more specifically in the civic republican tradition, virtue is used to emphasize any or all of the following: a concern with the common good, the preconditions and/or the propensity to practice and to be engaged in self-rule, and the active ruling of citizens committed to the common good. The whole notion of ruling and being ruled approaches a robust identification with the ethics of responsibility approach to self-governance and ongoing participation and responsibility in self-governance.

To better grasp the civic republican understanding of justice informed by virtue — participation in self-rule — which entails ruling and being ruled, the citizen here is defined in terms of a personality adequate to participate in self rule. Therefore, this demands a certain amount of responsibility towards others along with equality among citizens. This contrasts significantly with the liberal jurisprudent understanding of justice wherein the individual is simply to be free from constraints. It also contrasts significantly with Macpherson’s “possessive individualism.” discussed above, that emphasizes either security or distributive justice. Pocock explains that the tendency of liberal jurisprudence is to “lower the level of participation and deny the premise that man is by nature a
political animal‖ (1981, 359). The overwhelming preoccupation of jurist is that which can be distributed, with things and rights (and needs). For liberalism, informed as it is by the jurists, then, the citizen is not defined by virtue of her personality and actions, but rather by “rights to and in things” (Pocock 1981, 360). If “participation” in public life is defined as distribution according to needs of individuals alone, there could be no res republic — in Aristotle’s terms, no polis — in which to participate. For the advocates of civic republicanism distribution of public goods based on private rights is “the classic definition of corruption, and under corruption there would be no rights at all” (Pocock 1981, 359). Civil and political equality is a moral imperative, not simply the assurance of access to certain things. Equality in the civic republican tradition is a condition of participation in public life, not a matter of the consumption of public or private goods. 

The vocabularies of rights (needs) and virtues are not interchangeable. For example, Pocock asserts that “corruption is a problem in virtue, not in right” (1981, 364). What he means is that the concept of corruption is addressed in the civic republican tradition while oppression and the right of resistance appear in the liberal tradition. While the antonym of rights is domination, the antonym of virtue is corruption. Pocock refers to the civic republic and the liberal political theory as operating in different “paradigms” and that the ideals of virtue and commerce cannot be neatly, if at all, reconciled to one another (1981, 365). This requires further discussion of freedom and liberty.
Freedom or Liberty? Liberal, Communitarian or Self-Governing

The following revisits liberty as a language of political thought and connects this to Berlin’s two conceptions of liberty. In locating a balance between differing conceptions of liberty, virtue ethics is included in this study to capture the complexity involved in making judgments in the social world and the complexity involved in self-governing from an ethics of responsibility approach. It will become clear that different perspectives in political theory ask different questions.

Americans are versed, writes John Pocock, in the language of liberty (1975, 99-112). However, liberty has undergone a crucial revision in political life with the conception of the citizen. A decline in virtue sees its logical corollary in the rise of interest, needs and rights of possessive individualism. This is represents a shift from civic republicanism to liberalism — that is, from the conception of the individual citizen as “a civic and active being, directly concerned and participating in the res republic, toward a conception of the individual conscious primarily in her own interests and taking part in government to the extent and in order to press for her own realization” (Wood 1969, 613-14). Pocock calls this the “great restatement of paradigms” (1975, 103).

This condition arose, according Alasdair MacIntyre (1981), following Elizabeth Anscombe (1958, 1-19), because historical notions of morality have become unintelligible. Older moral traditions have inherited no single moral tradition but have instead pieced together fragments from different life worlds that often conflict. Without a historically overarching moral framework, modern individuals, for MacIntyre, have no
“moral rudder” (1981, 12). From the perspective of virtue ethicists and civic republicans, it is the success of the liberal political tradition and the Enlightenment critique of tradition that focuses on the interests, needs and rights of the individual that has led to this condition.

The ideal of liberty advanced in the liberal tradition, as Isaiah Berlin (1958) argues, casts liberty in a “negative” light — as freedom from. Freedom, the liberal conception of liberty, is represented as the condition enjoyed when others do not interfere within the normal pursuits of others, in the sense that others do not intentionally or negligently do anything to frustrate, obstruct, or coerce the voluntary choice of a given agent (Pettit 1989, 2). The role of the liberal state is to promote such a form that negative liberty is maximized within society (Pettit 1991). Charles Taylor gives this account of liberalism:

The standard Enlightenment view of freedom was that of independence of the self-defining subject in relation to outside control, principally that of state and religious authority. Now freedom is seen as consisting in authentic self-expression. It is threatened not only by external invasion but by all the distortions that expression is menaced by. (1990, 35)

In contrast, the ideal of liberty advanced in the republican tradition casts liberty in a positive light, to continue Berlin’s metaphor. Liberty is, rather, a positive achievement that requires more than non-interference of others, more than the absence of external
obstacles. Liberty in the republican tradition is positive in the sense that civic participation is a requisite of securing liberty both to stand against tyranny and to promote the characters of virtues for better civic participation. In this way, the republican tradition incorporates intersubjective accounts and promotes justice as a positive social category and not simply justice as a relation between individual and state.

The opposition between negative and positive liberty, or between freedom from external forces — liberal — and freedom from internal forces — communitarian — represents Enlightenment and counter-Enlightenment thought. Quentin Skinner summarizes this difference as between the first which is concerned with threats that impose upon the subject from without, such as the state, and the second which is concerned with threats from within, such as narcissism. Either the individual or the community is given priority. The responsibilities of self-governing approach, suggested by civic republicanism, expands the liberal emphasis on needs and rights to include a concern for possible corruption of community or the self. Liberalism is concerned primarily with the possible corruptions of the self imposed by external forces, such as tradition, power and social structures. The self-governing approach includes these concerns while adding the possibility of corruption of the individual by asocial narcissism (see Wuthnow 1996).

Civic republicanism balances these two competing traditions — liberalism and communitarianism — by focusing on the positive and negative conceptions of the subject and the positive and negative conceptions of “external” forces, balancing the individual and the community. In summary, a focus on needs, rights and interests can translate into
possessive individualism which too easily can become narcissism; and, at the same time, a focus on obligations to the collective can too easily lead to oppression and structural violence. While ontologically appropriate for the complexity of social life, a self-governing approach must give up the methodological clarity of the accentuation of one aspect of social ontology available to both the liberal and communitarian, and live with the ambiguity of attempting to (re)balance those concerns. In terms of the relation between needs theory and civic republicanism, in the civic republican perspective needs are never universally objective, ahistorical, or deontological. Therefore, needs do not escape the requirements of judgment. These points are further developed in upcoming chapters. From the civic republican perspective, what is required is a balance between the focus on the individual and the focus on the collective. But this is balancing act is not straightforward and no ready formula is available. The balancing act requires judgment.

This distinction is evident in the differing conceptions of liberty, as freedom from and as justice toward. This distinction exists in two ways, one is an emphasis upon needs and wants (of the individual or the collective), while the other is an emphasis on the responsibilities of participation in civic life. The first focuses upon the limits of external power while the second focuses on the virtues involved in living and participating in socio-political life. Rather than focusing on needs, a concern with virtue focuses on the character of personality and the relations between individuals and communities involved in self-government.
Civic Republicanism, Virtue and Self-Governance

This moves the current discussion to deeper questions of self-governing. The first task is to examine the character of the individual suited for self-governance. Questions of character occupy a central place in discussions of ethics. Virtue theory, writes Greg Pence, has its goal in describing types of character which we might admire (2000, 249-259). Virtue theory asks what kind of person shall I be before asking the more common inquiry, what shall I do? Virtue theory is therefore raising the ontological question of Being, not just the empirical dimensions of behavior. The key is not to ignore human needs but to expand human ontology to include the messy-ness of living in the social world and to further develop responsibilities — alongside communitarian obligations and liberal needs/rights — connected with making judgments and beyond emancipation to self-governance.

The above ideas are the distinctive emphasis of the political language of the participants in the civic republican tradition (Pocock 1975). This common language is civic governance, personal and civic virtue, and countering the dangers of corruption and invasion. This language is very different than the language of state legitimacy and individual obligation that emerged in the seventeenth century with the social contract theories and utilitarianism (see Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and Mills) that has considerable influence on later liberal ideals (Pocock 1975). Equally, it is very different from the nineteenth century liberal language and the focus upon the Laissez-faire ideal of
noninterference, often sanctified in the notion of natural or individual rights and the danger of the overbearing state (Skinner 1983).

Civic republicanism is unified and motivated by a different, broader, tradition and understanding of liberty. Included in the civic republican tradition are the liberal concerns of laws, checks and balances on centralized power, and a concern with the individual. But the civic republican tradition expands this concern by insisting that civic virtue and participation are needed because they represent the means by which republican liberty is achieved (Skinner 1983, 3-15). The discussion is therefore broadened from freedom as freedom from oppression to a more robust conception of freedom as liberty that balances both freedom from oppression and the obligations incurred in social contracts with the responsibility of participation in self-governing.

The revival of interest in civic republicanism, and its companion virtue theory, in the 1980’s was sparked largely by Alasdair MacIntyre’s *After Virtue*, published in 1981 (Pence 2000, 249-259). For MacIntyre, modern societies have inherited no single ethical tradition but rather inherent conflicting ethical traditions, and, as in the United States, have oscillated between liberalism and communitarianism. The Enlightenment successes have made the civic republican tradition virtually invisible (Pagden 1987). However, civic republicanism is returning to the American political discourse (Sandel 1996). The point is not to resolve the tension between needs/rights and service to the community, but to use the tension positively as a corrective to over-accentuations, to go beyond a position of complaint and towards a constructive project of self-governance. These details are
further elaborated in a following section, beginning with Max Weber (1919a) and the “ethics of responsibility.”

In terms of reaching final truth in a single ethical tradition, the ethics of self-governing approach differs from forms of civic republicanism informed by Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807), such as MacIntyre’s. Hegel’s dialectical method — thesis, antithesis and synthesis — stresses the progression of the mind’s quests for truth. A *thesis* is a single idea, an intellectual proposition. This idea contains a form of incompleteness that gives rise to the *antithesis*, a negation of the thesis. A third point of view, a *synthesis*, arises from the conflict. The synthesis overcomes the conflict by reconciling the (partial) truths contained in the thesis and antithesis. The synthesis is a new thesis. The new thesis generates a new antithesis and the dialectical process continues. This process continues until it arrives at final truth. The self-governing approach is less optimistic about reaching final truth and is not seeking to finally resolve the tension between the individual and the community.

The critics of liberalism, of whom John Rawls represents the primary modern spokesperson — Alasdair MacIntyre, Richard Rorty, Michael Sandel, Charles Taylor, Roberto Unger, and Michael Walzer — are often termed “communitarians” (Archard 2003). While none of these authors subscribe consciously to a common manifesto, all reject the thin ontological claims of liberalism (Sandel 1982). First, the so-called communitarians reject liberalism’s description of the nature of the human being and opt instead for an ontology that situates human beings deeply within a social, political, and historical context. This rejection by communitarians leads to a broader rejection of
liberalism in normative terms: humans beings are embedded in socio-historical contexts (Sandel 1982); human beings are political (Sandel 1982); political participation is a good and is required to secure rights (MacIntyre 1981); and, the goods that are involved in political life and their distribution are relative to particular social meanings in specific historical locations (Walzer 1983).

The central criticism rests on liberalism’s “unencumbered self” and has been addressed poignantly by Michael Sandel and is further discussed in Chapter Six. Rawls’ conception of the self (discussed later) is too “thin,” according to Sandel, and any “unencumbered self” is not embedded in time and space — the ontological a priori for communitarians (1982, 268-270). Even if the unencumbered self were possible, the unencumbered individual would not be a being capable of making good (or better) decisions that concern relationships with others (MacIntyre 1981). To separate human beings so dramatically from their socio-historical context is, from the perspective of civic republicanism informed by virtue ethics, to radically alter the ontological conditions of being human and ignores the conditions for responsible and civically engaged human development.

David Archard describes the other criticisms as normative (2003, 270-272). First, Rawl’s contends that priority should be given to the virtue of justice. According to the communitarians, however, justice is only an ideal for societies that do not display community, a second-best option for social cooperation. Second, robust membership in a political community is more than an instrumental good. A politics defined only in minimal instrumental terms ignores or neglects the relational aspects of living together in
a political community, what is fully required of justice. Finally, what is in the long term interests of individuals is also in the long term interests of communities, and vice versa, since long term interests coincide in the reciprocity of self-governing. To separate individuals from community is to separate both the community and the individual from what is good. However, communitarians must contend with the possible oppressive side of life in community. In short-hand political philosophy terms, the pursuit of social order by Hobbes’ must be balanced with Rousseau’s challenges to social order. Self-governance, therefore, does not resolve the tension in either direction (as do liberals and communitarians) by giving priority to the individual or to the collective, but seeks to maintain the critical, problem-solving dimension of self-correction by giving equal weight to individuals and communities.

At this point, a more thorough discussion of social theory is required to address the balancing act suggested by the basic human responsibilities approach to self-governing which refuses to collapse human social ontology in either liberal or communitarian directions and therefore needs to be further informed by the problem-solving demands of judgment.

**Sociology of Knowledge and Culture**

This section will explore further what is involved in a problem-solving approach, advocated by Burton, in contrast to a puzzle-solving approach. As noted earlier, a puzzle-solving approach works within a given knowledge system, in contrast, a problem-
solving approach deconstructs a given knowledge system or includes insights from other knowledge systems. The first step is to continue the work from previous discussions and explore social and political theory since each hold a unique position compared to other forms of inquiry. Social and political theory both address the ontological level and (should) include reflexivity. This reflexivity of problem solving occurs especially in the sociology of knowledge and culture. This occurs, according to Stephen Fuchs, when “observers observe themselves and other observers as one possibility among very many others” within networks of communication and meaning (2005, 2). When constants within knowledge and cultural traditions occur, essences are formed. These essences then constitute the “deep cores” of knowledge systems and cultures “where they house that which they cannot consider, let alone deconstruct” (2005, 2). The literature from the sociology of knowledge and culture has many terms for this core essence, including paradigm, tacit knowledge, practices, ethnomethods, common sense, and pre-theoretical understanding (2005, 75). Many of these terms share affinity, or family resemblance, with the categories such as frames and schema, mentioned earlier. The following section will explore in more detail what is involved in a problem-solving approach advocated by John Burton, in contrast to the puzzle-solving approach (1979). A puzzle-solving approach works within a given knowledge system utilizing deep cores of knowledge. ON the other hand, a problem-solving approach deconstructs the givens of a core essence.

Proponents of the sociology of knowledge and culture examine essentialism and dissolve the essential quality of the core (Brubaker 2005; Luhmann 2005). Observing the observers in other cultural traditions gives birth to the analysis of ideology. Observing
one’s self and one’s own observations, in one’s own community, gives birth to sociology of knowledge and culture (Barnes 1986; Giddens 1984). One important reason for essentialism (see also Brubaker 2005)\textsuperscript{18}, accordingly, is that it fails to account for the observer. A sociology of knowledge and culture challenges the dogmatism of blind essentialism, questioning the categories that have been naturalized and unexamined, and bring the observer back into view in the constructed categories of \textit{the world} (Brubaker 2005). This point is well argued by Burton (1979, 1990) when he examines the categories and constructions of \textit{Realpolitik} in international relations. However, Burton counters with a deeper essentialism of biologically-based human needs (1979, 55-84).

Mary Clark (1990), discussed earlier, asks if needs theory is the social construction of a certain class of intellectuals (see also, Fraser 1989). A human responsibilities approach, in this perspective, dissolves the essentialism of the priorities of both liberalism and communitarianism. A human responsibilities approach to self-governing asks rather what are better forms of human relationships that further self-governing?

Niklas Luhmann refers to two basic levels of observation, the “what” and the “how” (1990). Level one, the “what,” attributes observation to the world, as to what the world presents or “is.” Level two, the “how,” attributes observation to an observer of, and in, the world. In this sense, level one is “realist”\textsuperscript{19} while level two is “constructivist” (Woolgar 1988). The use of the term realist differs from Burton’s use of the term realist. For the sociology of knowledge the reference is to systems of thought generally and is not referring to a specific school of thought in international relations. For Luhmann, no observation can operate simultaneously at both the realist and the constructivist levels.
because it takes time to move between these two levels (see also, Shapin 1996). And, as Randall Collins and Stephen Shapin both note, persistent and unending questioning produces a negative radical skepticism in which knowledge and action become paralyzed by continual reflection. More positively, persistent back-and-forth movement between these levels produces adventures in reflexivity requiring multiple viewpoints, because one authorial voice becomes inadequate as the “what” of the world becomes questioned and the “how” of observation becomes contextualized (Kripke 1980). For Luhmann, on the first level, observation proceeds in a naively realist way as “common sense,” or what analytic philosophy calls the “natural attitude” (Berger 1995, 34-36). All forms of observation have their own common sense and natural attitudes (including natural science) that are considered familiar, beyond need of proof, and shared by all competent members of the culture. To be a competent member is to share not only in these observations but in the *mode* of observation. On the second level, the “what” of the first level becomes visible as observation includes the “how” of the observer. At the second level, observations are attributed to the observer in relation to the world. This is also the level of ethnomethodology. The “what” at one level becomes the how at another level.

The sociology of knowledge and culture exists at the level of observing how the observers observe, a substantial distance from the ‘world’ itself. Therefore, the characteristic activity of the sociology of knowledge and culture is to reveal the selectivity and contingency of first-level observation (Berger 1995, 34-36). It is important to note that there is no end or closure to second-level observation, no view from nowhere (Fuchs 2005, 28). In this way, sociology of knowledge and culture is a
comparative study of observers. This study is located at the second-level, observing the what and how of John Burton’s writings and human needs theory.

The following outlines the development of the sociology of knowledge and culture as it emerged from a critic of the position of the Other, to a more fully developed approach that can aid in problem-solving. It is important to note this history because it informs the complications of engaging in Burton’s problem-solving approach and the dynamics of the responsibility of judgment required in the self-governing approach of civic republicanism. The sociology of knowledge and culture develops from several sources, but namely from a study of ideology (Giddens 1984). Especially since the emergence of the enterprise of modern science, attempts have been made to distinguish between correct and false beliefs. In the writings of Francis Bacon and Immanuel Kant, modern science is to dispel the “idols of the mind” and lead to untainted knowledge. True knowledge is knowledge separated from social context. This has proved to be a false dream (see Shapin 1996). Controversies are important in the sociology of knowledge and culture, because conflicts disrupt and question the first-level certainties. Or, as Giddens might suggest, conflict represents critical moments (discussed later) which can question the natural attitude of antagonists. Said another way, each party in a conflict situation tends to characterize the viewpoint of the other party as deriving from an ideologically motivated knowledge system (Kriesburg 1986). I contend that the attribution of ideology is the approach of puzzle-solving while the sociology of knowledge and culture is the approach of problem-solving. The first question, then, is whether or not ideology has a place in sociology of knowledge and culture. The
following will begin with a discussion of ideology and move to a discussion of the sociology of knowledge and culture.

In classical Marxism, ideology reflects the surface social structure as legitimate and conceals the deeper power relations and exploitations of bourgeois liberalism and industrial capitalism. False consciousness is the reification, or naturalization, of the socially constructed world into the essence of what the (social) world is (Engels [1932] 1972, 146-200). Classical Marxism splits into two separate trajectories concerning ideology and false consciousness: Hegelian critical theory and the sociology of knowledge. Hegelian critical theory takes a pessimistic form with Marcuse (1964) and Adorno (1951). Intellectuals escape into negative dialectics against instrumental and administrative reason as the revolutionary impulse of the oppressed disappears; they attempt to resist ideological colonization but this resistance is ultimately rendered impotent (Habermas 1984). Habermas takes a more optimistic position wherein consciousness can escape into islands of ideal speech acts where discourse is guided by the noncoercive force of superior (rational) argument (1984). False consciousness results from the distortions of communication when discourse is invaded by systemic coercions of power, commodity, and technical reason. Accordingly, emancipation will be realized when society is modeled according to the conditions required for free speech acts, and instrumental reason is shown to be derivative from, not superior to, rational communication (Habermas 1984, 1991).

The second trajectory in the development from classical Marxism moves through Lukacs and Gramsci to French structuralism and from Marxism to Bourdieu (Fuchs
Ideology is generalized to include the means and ends, the operations and outcomes, of any ideological apparatus that reproduces hegemony through state organizations, such as education and mass media. The radical distinction between false and true consciousness of Hegelian critical theory begins to dissolve as ideology becomes any systematic form of cultural reproduction. Ideology still serves to rationalize and justify domination, but it is less clear if any social system is capable of escaping the production of ideology.

False consciousness and ideology are not simply errors of reasoning or errors about some fact of the world. Rather, “facts” themselves have ideological dimensions since they are collected and validated by hegemonic social groups (Shapin, 1996). An ideology is not necessarily a false statement or theory, rather, it is “false” because true interests and social context are concealed. The carriers of an ideology may themselves be deceived, to at least some degree, by the mystifications, reifications, and blindness of a particular way of seeing (and not seeing).

In this way, “ideological falseness runs much deeper than error; it is a systematic or structural falseness that cannot, and will not, get any of the facts right, since the entire ideological approach is distorted by symbolic violence and cultural hegemony” (Fuchs 2005, 31) Whether or not ideology must be taken in this strong form is a matter of debate. For example, Giddens (1984) suggests that every social system has ideological elements, but are not entirely ideological in this strong sense. In fact, it is difficult to imagine a system that does not “get any of the facts right.” However, the important point
is that coupled to the very notion of ideology is a deep suspicion about concealed motives and interests.²²

A core problem of sociology of knowledge and culture, especially emphasized in traditions stemming from Hegelian critical theory of ideology, is whether there is any position from which non-ideological observation might be possible? A related conundrum is, since every way of life is also way of not seeing, the question remains as to what degree anyone trapped in an ideology is capable or willing to recognize the blind spot?

Karl Mannheim ([1929] 1969, 135), in his early work, believed that the intellectual’s relative autonomy from the dominant social system allowed them a privileged position from which they could escape ideology, or false consciousness. In his later works, Mannheim concedes that all knowledge is wedded to social location and ideology then becomes any set of ideas and practices that reflect underlying social structure. The pure vision of the counterculture critique of hegemonic dominance embedded within the ideological scaffolds becomes itself just another way of seeing and not seeing, with its own lens(es). The pure distinction between true and false knowledge collapses. The sociology of knowledge turns reflexive and includes a sociology of intellectuals and a sociology of sociology — an ideological analysis of ideological analysts.²³

According to a levels of observation approach, recall that observation is attributed differently at different levels. At the first level, observation proceeds naively and attributes its observations to the world. At the first level, observation is unaware of its
construction. At the second level of observation, observation is attributed to observers observing from a particular framework orienting the selection and interpretation of data. Herein lies one of the insights to proceed with Burton’s call to examine assumptions. Burton’s method of problem-solving can proceed by comparing different claims to knowledge, such as economics, political science, and psychology. Or, problem-solving can proceed by examining natural attitude upon which a system, or systems, of knowledge are constructed.

Where do we go from here? Once a sociology of knowledge and culture softens the rigid distinctions between true and false it cannot exempt any cultural system, including its own, from at least a partial cultural explanation. Explanations still require some approximation to truth — some stories are better-formed than others. It seems what is needed at this point is a sociology of judgment. This is the paradox of reflexive self-observation — judgment is intimately and inescapably connected to culture and observation. Several questions are raised: is it possible for all, or only some, individuals to participate in second-order observation? How might better choices be made concerning the increased options made available by second-order observation? Answering the first question involves a consideration of power — “agency” — available to individual actors and is discussed in the following chapter on structuration theory. Answering the second question is explored following a discussion of structuration theory specifically and social theory generally.

The dimension of critical appraisal in self-governing relates to Jeffrey Alexander’s formulation of and task of social theory. For Alexander, social theory
requires a dialogue with previous social theories (Turner 1974). Those doing social
theory must participate in an ongoing dialogue with those who have previously thought
about the self, society, and politics in broadest categories. Doing so promotes not only
problem-solving in the comparative sense of examining insights from different
knowledge traditions, on the first level of observation, but can also promote observing the
observers on the second level. For example, Max Weber did not just more fully think
through the implications of the ideas of Marx in his reaction to Hegel; rather, Weber
thought with both Marx and Hegel, both materialist and idealist (Schluechter 1988). The
power, and continuing usefulness, of Weberian ideas are that he was able to synthesize
two very different traditions. This tension is prevalent in Weber’s writings and the
strength of his insights lies in the ability to balance these two traditions, holding them in
constant self-correcting tension, and maintaining an ongoing dialogue between the two
(Weber’s approach is discussed in a following section). This section began by
contrasting both liberalism and communitarianism, for each offer useful, yet incomplete,
and provides corrections to the other tradition. Before continuing further in a problem
solving approach to needs theory, a robust account of human social ontology is required.
The next chapter examines such an account, through the work of Anthony Giddens and
structuration theory.
Steven I. Miller and Marcel Fredericks, “The Family Resemblance Metaphor: Some Unfinished Business of Interpretive Inquiry” Qualitative Health Research, 10, 4 (2000): 440-451, argue that “The rapidly expanding discipline of interpretive inquiry, especially in its narrative analysis form, has not been fully cognizant of certain crucial epistemological and methodological assumptions that form the ultimate basis of its purpose. Even after abandoning traditional positivist views, the related disciplines within the human sciences that are engaged in interpretive inquiry have still not discovered the core implicit assumptions that militate against a full acceptance of this form of inquiry. [Therefore it is important to] to outline the locus of these implicit assumptions… [and then legitimate them by grounding them]…in a well-known but heretofore undiscovered perspective, namely, Wittgenstein's notion of a family resemblance. It is argued that this metaphoric phrase is the key to unlocking the real and unique nature of narrative analysis.”


Opponents at this level, however, may discover that their disputes actually stem from differing commitments to particular aspects of liberal philosophy. For example, liberalism can support arguments both for and against market/libertarian agendas and for and against a robust social-welfare state.

In this conception, both liberal democrats and conservative republicans share a “liberal” perspective in political theory, though they contrast on which element of liberalism receives emphasis — market or welfare liberals.

Paul Kahn, in Putting Liberalism in Its Place (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005), examines the broader, cultural level of liberalism. See also R. Unger, Knowledge and Politics (New York: Free Press, 1975) for a discussion of this broadest sense of liberalism wherein liberalism is “…not just a set of doctrines about the opposition of power and wealth, but as a metaphysical conception of mind and society.”

Paul Kahn has been writing on this topic for a number of years. His most recent publication deals extensively with a critique of a narrow liberalism that is based on social contract and reason and therefore overlooks the Christian emphasis on sacrifice (2005, 33-142).

A family resemblance is not a straight-forward logico-mathematical deduction. For example, how do we recognize that two people we know are related to one another? We
may recognize similar characteristics and traits such as similar height, weight, eye color, hair, nose, mouth, patterns of speech, social or political views, mannerisms, body structure, last names, etc. If we see enough matches we say we've noticed a family resemblance. It is perhaps important to note that this is not always a conscious process -- generally we don't catalog various similarities until we reach a certain threshold, we just intuitively see the resemblances. The problem with logical analysis, according to Wittgenstein (1958), in *The Blue and Brown Books*, is that it demands too much precision, both in the definition of words and in the representation of logical structure. In ordinary language, applications of a word often bear only a "family resemblance" to each other, and a variety of grammatical forms may be used to express the same basic thought. But under these conditions, Wittgenstein now realized, the hope of developing an ideal formal language that accurately pictures the world is not only impossibly difficult but also wrong-headed.

8 see F.A. Hayek, “Liberalism” *New Studies in Philosophy, Politics, Economics and the History of Ideas* (London, Routledge & Keagan Paul, 1982): 119-151, for a discussion of the broad developments of two liberal traditions, one stretching from Greek antiquity through the early Roman empire and Hobbes and Locke as a political doctrine to secure citizenship and individual liberty, undermine the “Divine Right of Kings,” through appeal to law. The second form of liberalism derived form the anti-traditional and anti-clerical Enlightenment efforts to reconstruct “the whole of society” based on rational principles. The second, “Continental,” approach was the broadest and was based on “a demand for an emancipation from all prejudice and all beliefs which could not be rationally justified” and for escape from arbitrary authority of “priest and kings.”

9 One way of understanding this difference in liberal thinking is to understand this difference as a response to the differing social and political situations in Britain and France. For discussion, see Liah Greenfield, *Nationalism: Five Roads to Modernity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).

10 Closely connected with the liberal conception of law is the liberal conception of justice. It is different from that now widely held in two important respects: it is founded on a belief in the possibility of discovering objective rules of just conduct independent of particular interests; and it concerns itself only with the justice of human conduct, or the rules governing it, and not with the particular results of such conduct on the position of the different individuals or groups. The belief in the existence of rules of just conduct which can be discovered but not arbitrarily created rests on the fact that the great majority of such rules will at all times be unquestioningly accepted, and that any doubt about the justice of a particular rule must be resolved within the context of this body of generally accepted rules, in such a manner that the rule to be accepted will be compatible with the rest: that is, it must serve the formation of the same kind of abstract order of actions which all the other rules of just conduct serve, and must not conflict with the requirements of any one of these rules. The test of the justice of any particular rules is
thus whether its universal application is possible because it proves to be consistent with all the other accepted rules.

11 For example, both contemporary political parties in the United States are arguably rooted in “liberal” understandings: loosely, Republicans are market liberals while Democrats are welfare liberals, separated by differing conceptions of freedom and equality.


13 This critique is especially pertinent given the experience with totalitarianism in the 20th Century.

14 The term “civic humanism” may also apply, but the term civic republicanism has been chosen here to keep more closely to a political discussion.

15 The civic republican response to commerce begins around 1789 as “founded upon soullessly rational calculation and the cold, mechanical philosophy of Bacon, Hobbes, Locke, and Newton.” (Pocock 1981, 367).

16 The current debates are commonly phrased as the liberal-communitarian debates. Communitarianism focuses on the absence of *internal*, rather than external, obstacles to the—such as narcissism—and adherence to external powers, in particular one’s community and the realization of a particular collective moral ideal (see T. Baldwin, "MacCullem and the Two Concepts of Freedom." *Ratio* 26 (1984).

17 See Q. Skinner, *The Idea of Negative Liberty* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984). Another way to phrase this is to say that the liberal emphasis on negative liberty has a positive conception of the person; in contrast, the communitarian and romantic positive liberty was based upon negative conceptions of the person. Positive conceptions of the person are threatened by external forces; negative conceptions of the person welcome the positive influence of external forces.

18 See also, Rogers Brubaker *Ethnicity without Groups* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005) for a detailed discussion of ethnicity and group formation and the difficulties that arise not only when ethnic groups define themselves in essentialist terms but the ironic impact that fuels “ethnic conflict” when so defined by conflict resolution specialists.

19 Luhmann uses the term “realist” to refer to what is more commonly called the natural attitude in which things are perceived to exist as given, independent of the descriptive apparatus of the observer.

Stephen Fuchs, *Against Essentialism: A Theory of Culture and Society* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005). 30-35. Whereas Fuchs claims that classical Marxism splits into “three” separate schools, I prefer the view that it split into two schools, with the “third” school better described as a maturation of the sociology of knowledge turning a reflexive eye onto itself and its own modes of representation and analysis.

In another irony, perhaps it is from this strong notion of ideology that Adam Smith considered self-interest ultimately a virtue since self-interest is not concealed in his praise of individual self-interest since it is manifest in explicit relations with others.

For example, in the 1970’s, the so-called Bath School, or Strong Program, followed earlier insights from historians of science such as Thomas Kuhn, and builds a constructivist sociology of scientific knowledge that continues the challenge to “neutrality,” “objectivity,” and “rationality,” viewing natural science as one culture among other cultures, also related to social structure and profane forces of “interests.”
4. Social Theory

This chapter builds on the previous chapters and locates a social theory — structuration — adequate to address a responsibilities approach to self-governing. The focus is primarily on the agent-structure issue in social theory with a focus on power and capability and frames the discussion of the upcoming chapter that deals with the connection between the voluntarist and cognitive dimensions of agency. The purpose of this chapter is to continue the discussion of the former chapter that focused on the shortcomings of the social ontology of liberalism and needs theory by examining different conceptions of power. Here I will argue that liberalism and needs theory are too closely connected to structural-functionalism in social theory. Structuration theory provides a robust social ontology that addresses the shortcomings of structural-functionalism and creates increased possibilities of transforming social structures through the agency of individuals. This chapter will conclude with a discussion of critical moments.

Social theory is normally thought of as non-empirical sociology, or as sociology without direct and immediate application while, at the same time, Anthony Giddens (1985) is convinced that every competent member of society is a social theorist because everyone makes working assumptions and expectations about living in the social world. Stephen Turner views social theory as a mature, valuable, complex and coherent
conversation with mankind closely related and increasingly indistinguishable to a similar endeavor: political theory (2004, 141-170). For Turner, along with many others, the themes of both social and political theories are so closely interwoven with each other and into actual activities of daily life that clear demarcations between formal social and political theory on one hand, and laymen and common sense daily notions, on the other, are difficult to discern. At the same time, social and political discussions seem best described as continuations and variations of perennial dialogues, critiques and propositions more than they can be described as truly original insights (Bronner 1999).1 In fact, most scholarly activity today uses the conceptual equipment available in the era of Durkheim and Weber.2 If this is true, then a second level approach to inquiry is important to examine the constructed dimensions of all social theories, even those, such as needs theory, that claim to be biologically based.

Whereas new discoveries may usher in a revolutionary paradigm a la Thomas Kuhn in the natural sciences, social and political theory has never achieved such an overarching consensus as to warrant such a dramatic revolutionary event in social and political thought. Even in the natural sciences, many arguments can be made that extreme paradigm shifts are local events at best, and that they are in reality long-term evolutionary developments of progress, drawing on former, perhaps largely forgotten traditions, weaving together a new program based on a few novel ideas, and drawing upon an existing peripheral tradition. New variations and new ways to synthesize ideas are available, but the primary categories are ancient (Turner 2004). What is common in social and political theory is that the conceptual furniture is not changed but merely
rearranged in a different set of adjacencies and conjunctions, and a concept that figures in a minimal or peripheral form in one thinker is formalized in maximized form in a new conception. Different institutional forms, different power structures and different developments within and between traditions can and do occur. For example, within liberalism the structural elements at the conceptual level can remain the same, as a family resemblance, while the mechanisms arranging them can change, such as Burton’s basic human needs and structural violence.³

In social theory, different sides in a debate try to address the most general issues to make an account of the world as it is and to answer the question what does it mean to be human (Oakshott 1989). What mature sociology is able to provide is a more robust conception of the human being than that found within the confines of a purely self-interested “economic man” concept or forms of determinism that view individuals as passive “cultural dopes” re-generating hegemonic social structures (see Barnes 1995). For Turner, “the ways in which rational choice approaches today ‘explain’ norms are themselves fundamentally problematic, and the problems will not be resolved by methodological arguments” (Turner 2004, 141-170). At the same time, the ways in which normativity is usually conceptualized is full of problems as well: “the problem of the reality of collective objects, whether these be states, societies, or practices, will not go away either” (Turner 2004, 144). In fact, the sociological and anthropological corrections to rational choice models can err in the opposite direction, giving too much formative power to social abstractions such as institutions, norms, structures, systems and cultures. At the other end of the spectrum from rational-choice models, they rely too
heavily on reductionist and determinist formulas to account for human behavior. Stephen Turner (2004) describes the role of sociology as a field to investigate these topics that are out of reach of the rational actor/rational choice model that emerged with the development of the field of economics. However, as has been well-documented, the adjustments themselves may have gone too far, viewing individuals as overly determined by social structures (Barnes 1995). Is it now time to correct the corrections? Or, in Burton’s phrasing, is it time to proceed with a problem solving approach within social theory itself?

It should be noted that conceptions of social life are not necessarily true or false; rather, either conception, by itself, is limited and therefore incomplete because each accentuates certain aspects of human life while de-emphasizing other aspects (Weber 1968). Humans are rational actors who are oriented normatively and influenced by social and cultural systems and structures. The problems addressed by the social scientists are perennial tensions within and between human beings; dissolving this tension on either side narrows the possibilities of what it means to be human. While this narrowing may be methodologically expedient, it is not ontologically appropriate. Here is a clear indication of the role of social theory.⁴

Social theory is directed towards the question, again, what does it mean to be human and how does this relate to the social artifacts, such as communities, values, social structures, systems and cultures? Sociology, as a late nineteenth and twentieth century intellectual and disciplinary task, is primarily performed under the ideal of a science of society. Largely an empirical enterprise, dealing with issues of social welfare,
racism, equality, gender differences, crime, and so on, sociology informs social policy. These issues have content that relate to social theory, but not as closely as usually is imagined (Turner 2004, 147-48). Social theory and empirical sociology, contrary to common assumptions, do not have that much in common. For example, the journal that publishes social theory — *Theory, Culture and Society* — and the journal that publishes empirical sociology — *American Journal of Sociology* — have widely divergent readerships and are very different bibliometric literatures (Crane 1992). Sociology, rather, empirical sociology, is “based on a misunderstanding of the relationship between statistical techniques and ‘theory’” (Turner 2004, 163; see also, Glymour 1997, 317-322).

Without laboring the entrenched and enduring epistemological and methodological debates, Turner’s position is that empirical sociologists, especially those doing causal and statistical modeling, actually employ background knowledge and assumptions to eliminate most of the data and then use the data to select and eliminate most of the cases. Data sets are assembled according to plausible relationships and then some sort of theoretical account of the phenomena that makes sense of those relationships is then constructed (Glymour 1983, 126-134). It is this final step of making sense that is crucial to understanding the relationship between social theory and empirical methods and results. Causal modeling never does, nor can it, break out of its dependence on background knowledge. In this way, empirical sociology is “dependent on the very concepts that are the subject matter of social theory” (Turner 2004, 152). Social theory does not separate phenomena as does empirical sociology. What is problematic, at least in terms of social theory, is that empirically-tuned sociologists are not involved in the
larger debates that concern social theory; rather, as Turner suggests, empirical sociologists select from a host of theoretical positions one that seems to fit with the relationship of the data.

Social theory allows sense-making of the present and also allows for challenges to conceptual constructs. Social theory works in several ways. First, a variety of opinions can be assembled in such a way that the errors of one form of systematic thought can be improved by other forms of thought (Leo Strauss). Second, limitations can be improved and revised (Schluter on Weber). Third, order can be given to a host of seemingly disparate collections of data and phenomena (Durkheim). Finally, social theory can be relentlessly critical and a reflexive activity (Frankfort School). Social theory provides a conceptually coherent structure of social life. As such, social theory is not divorced from social life, since social theorists are embedded within the forms they are making commentary upon.

It is in this context that John Burton’s human needs theory is located in a tradition of political thought — liberalism — and the following will argue that it also shares a family resemblance with structural-functionalism. The call from conflict scholar-practitioners, such as Jeong and Lederach discussed in the first chapter, to make a move towards theory is not as straightforward as it may first appear. The history of theoretical developments in both social and political philosophy is vast and complex, so a move to incorporating more “theory” into conflict resolution can bring a new set of problems and complications — which theory or theories should be chosen and which ones should be discarded? Or, said another way, simply discarding one accentuation for another
accentuation, such as realism, with another, such as needs theory, will not serve the goals of conflict prevention if it is true that liberalism has a self-limiting social ontology. The responsibilities approach to self-governing does not disregard needs theory but attempts to complement human needs with a relational approach to human ontology. To help achieve this task, this study turns to the work of Anthony Giddens and structuration theory.

**Structuration Theory**

The following section is an introduction to Anthony Giddens and social ontology as described in structuration theory and considers several elements of structuration theory. According to this theory it is necessary to balance and learn from different insights in different social theories to complement each and discard shortcomings. Giddens and others maintain that the complexity of social life is missed by accentuation on either action or structure, and that social theory needs both acknowledged and unacknowledged conditions of action and intended and unintended consequences of actions. Therefore, social life is about participation (whether habitual or intentional), and, social structures are both constraining and enabling. From a structural-functional perspective in social theory, such as the Burton’s needs theory, structures and institutions (and the roles that issue from them) need to change to effect change in individuals. In contrast, from a structuration perspective, structures and institutions are resource containers and are maintained and transformed by the routinized behavior of individuals.
and collective actions. If the ontological implications of structuration theory are correct, then, modification and change in social systems can be implemented anywhere along the agent-structure continuum. This is important in terms of needs theory since, as discussed earlier, Burton emphasized that systems must change to meet the needs of individuals. By emphasizing changes to social structures, such as institutions, this research argues that Burton obscures the role of individuals in their own emancipation. This section concludes with a critical approach to structuration theory by examining the relation of “critical situations” to daily routines. The final argument presented in this section is that Giddens misses the insights of virtue theory and, in doing so, limits the power/agency of those involved in critical situations.

Anthony Giddens, in his discussion of “The Prospects for Social Theory Today” (1979, 234-259) provides an overall analysis for the prospects of doing contemporary social theorizing. The starting point is the lack of consensus evident in the social sciences, especially since the (re)emergence of various traditions in the social sciences such as hermeneutics, ethnomethodology, phenomenology, ordinary language philosophy, feminist, and critical theory. For Giddens, the recent “disarray” in the social sciences followed a relative consensus by theorists — such as, Comte, Durkheim, Weber, Lipset, Bell, Parsons, Aron, and Dahrendorf — held broadly similar views by positing a bipolar contrast between “traditional society” and modern, or “industrial,” society (1979, 234-259). The brief consensus in “orthodox or mainstream” sociology was based in the prevalence of functionalism and naturalism (1979, 236). Briefly, functionalism is associated with models of change and order loosely based on biological metaphors that
deal with systems rather than aggregates. Closely connected with functionalism is naturalism — the thesis that the logical structures and frameworks, including goals, of the natural and social sciences are in essential respects identical. In the well-known positivist thesis of Augustus Comte, sociology is the last science to come to maturity as the social sciences better approximated the exigencies of the scientific method (Parsons 1977, 44-57). Structuralism, similarly, carries the normative concerns of liberalism by focusing on the ways in which social structures form cognitive frames and behaviors.5

For Giddens, the response of the loss of consensus in the social sciences can lead in three ways (1979, 239). First is the reaction of “despair” wherein the diversity of opinion concerning the fundamental categories of social theory is ignored in favor of doing social research. Second is the “reversion to dogmatism” of the former consensus while ignoring other research and social theory traditions. Third is “rejoicing” in the diversity of theoretical perspectives as testimony to the inherent fruitfulness of social theory to account for different situations and for capturing key elements of the non-determinism of human social life. Giddens rejects this final alternative, while admitting its significance, since it has lead to a plethora of sub-traditions that are nearly incapable, let alone interested in, establishing connections and exploring ways to transcend the differences. Giddens’ suggestion, therefore, is that “social theory stands in need of systematic reconstruction” (1979, 240). In terms of Burton’s human needs, by locating it within a family of social and political theories, the strengths and weaknesses can be better recognized and complemented; if successful, more robust theories can be developed. In this way, Giddens and this research are participating in problem-solving. The following
will argue that needs theory is located in structural-functionalism, which was prominent
during Burton’s development of needs theory, and will therefore be complemented by the
insights of structuration theory.

Giddens’ attempt is not to substitute a new orthodoxy for an old one, but to provide “a more satisfactory ground for the discussion of central issues in social theory than that were provided by the erstwhile consensus, or permitted by the hermetic isolation in which the current theoretical standpoints tend to exist” (1979, 242). Giddens reasserts the necessity of theorizing for two reasons: first, every perspective brings some variables into focus and ignores other variables, and, second, it is necessary to establish avenues of communication between isolated theoretical traditions. One of Giddens’ contributions to social theory is that he shows us how to read social theory. Theorizing in this sense is the second-level stepping back described by Fuchs in the preceding chapter and the problem-solving approach described by Burton.

Social and political theory can then be assessed according to several general themes. Broad themes such as determinism and free-will, order and change, agency and structure, and, objectivity and subjectivity, and how each is accentuated (or not) matter in terms of diagnosis of the causes of conflict and conflict resolution designs. They matter because, especially in the field of conflict and peace studies where issues of conflict are not simply a matter of academic inquiry but matters of actions and behaviors, interventions in the social world are based upon some prior assessment of what is the problem and how change can (or should) occur (Burton 1990; Zartman 1997). As a condition of intervention, designing the proper intervention requires a broad range of
assessments, and these assessments emanate from prior conclusions about change and order, power and resources, determinism and free-will, or assumptions about how intractable conflicts might be resolved (Burton 1979).

First, Giddens suggests that a robust theory of action is needed. For Giddens, “orthodox sociology — namely structural-functionalism — lacks a theory of action” and is directly linked to a failure to account for the multiple dimensions of power as a central element in social theory (1979, 253). Giddens defines orthodox sociology as functional-structuralism. For Giddens, this perspective lacks a robust conception of action in relation specifically to individual agency. Giddens’ definition of action includes reference to “a conception of conduct as reflexively monitored by social agents who are partially aware of the conditions of their behaviour” and that individuals are always capable of “doing otherwise” (1979, 253).6 However, this is not a straightforward task of amending one aspect of social theory, since the introduction of a robust theory of action and power cannot be achieved without a complementary “re-working of the idea of structure” (1979, 253). Giddens’ notion of the “duality of structure” — recognizing that the reflexive monitoring of action both draws upon and reconstitutes the institutional organization of society — captures this revised conception of the link between structure and agency (Giddens 1984). Structures do not exist without and apart from human agency recursively reproducing them and institutions require individual humans acting in relatively routine ways to reproduce them as well. Humans, variously and within degrees, reflexively monitor and evaluate their own actions that both draw upon and reconstitute the institutional organization of society. To give some clarity, Giddens
further makes a distinction between “system” — ordered in terms of the reproduction of spatially and temporally situated events — and “structure” — the medium and outcome of systemic (re)production (1979, 256). The main implication is that social theory is involved in “rotating two axes simultaneously,” agency and structure (Giddens, 1979, 259).

Before launching further into an account of Giddens’ re-conceptualization of agency and structure in his theory of structuration, it is important to understand what he sees as the inadequacies of social theory generally. Primarily, the individual cannot be portrayed as deontological in any meaningful sense in terms of social ontology. For Giddens, and he is not the first to recognize this, social theory has been too long indebted to an understanding of the natural sciences — namely, to positivism. The natural sciences enjoyed tremendous successes in the past several centuries and many concluded that the social sciences, to be successful, must approximate the explanatory laws of the natural sciences (Barnes 1995).

Burton’s needs theory shares an affinity with the tradition of positivism. Needs are universal and objective, no amount of coercion and persuasion can subdue them (for long). For Burton, the obstacle to a “science of society” (1979, 63) is that distinctions have not been adequately drawn between “(cultural) values and (universal) needs” (1979, 58). Burton believes that needs are based in the biology of the individual and are shared universally by all individuals. Burton’s discussion resembles the general argument of liberalism in that “at the heart of the problem” is the notion of “cultural values … [that] take precedence over individual values” (1979, 57). From the perspective of needs
theory and liberalism, the solution to a science of society is to sweep away the cultural
idols that beset the mind (Bacon) and freedom from the tutelage of past (Kant). Cultural
and social values are too frequently, for Burton, impediments to the development of the
individual (1979, 68-79).

Recently, however, the causal modeling of the natural sciences has been shown
inadequate to account for human social behavior. Giddens, rather than pursuing
parsimonious approaches to social theory, actually commends the plurality of social
theory:

For it can plausibly be argued that chronic debates and persistent dissensus
about how the study of human social conduct is to be approached express
something about the very nature of human social conduct itself; that
depthly established disagreements about the nature of human behaviour are
integral to human behavior as such, and thus necessarily intrude into the
heart of the discourse of philosophy and social theory (1979, 239).

The “very nature of human social conduct,” for Giddens, involves connecting human
action with structural explanation in social and political analysis. Making the connection
between human action and the structure of social life demands a theory of the human
agent, an account of both the conditions and consequences of action, and an account of
social structure as coterminous in both of those conditions and consequences (1979, 49).
Individuals have knowledge (with limits) of the social world and make assumptions and
predictions about themselves, others and how the social world works. This is the double hermeneutic in social life: individuals are variously informed by and inform the social world in which they participate (Giddens 1984). For Giddens, individuals are the product of culture and social structures, but they are not determined by them. It is better said that structures are determined by the repetitions of ongoing human actions.

Action and structure in social and political theory normally appear as antimonies and prominence is given to one over the other (Brettell 1999). The consequence is that, since they are pitted against each other, neither schools of thought that focus on action nor schools of thought that focus on structure have been able adequately to deal with how either action or structure relate to institutional transformation and change. To return to Burton, if institutions are required to change (1979, 1990) how is this accomplished? In usual social and political thought, either priority is given to the subject — the individual — or priority is given to the object — social structure. However, for Giddens, the notions of action and social structure presuppose each other. One is inconceivable without the other since all social practices are “situated activities in a continuous flow of conduct” as involving a “stream of actual or contemplated causal interventions” of human actors in the “ongoing process of events-in-the-world” (1979, 53-55). Action and memory are distinctive features of reflexive monitoring of individuals.

For structuration theory, neither individuals nor collectives are given priority, and neither evades or contains complete responsibility. In seeking to bridge the ontological gap between the contending approaches (individualist/collective, voluntarist/determinist, subjective/objective) which have preoccupied the social sciences, Giddens uses “duality
of structure” which expresses the mutual interrelation of structure and agency (1979, 69). In structuration theory, structures and agents are both outcomes and mediums, neither possible without the other. Change and consistency in both agents and structures are (re)produced in social practices by the interaction between agents and structures. Change and consistency can emerge anywhere in the social system, either from agents or structures and intentionally or unintentionally.

Though some of his ideas and concepts (such as how he uses the term rules) have been modified over the years, Giddens’ central argument remains consistent: various schools of social theory have accentuated one aspect, either agency or structure, at the expense of a robust understanding of human social life, on human social ontology. Briefly, either a perspective focuses on action or it focuses on structure. Structuration theory is complex and does not fit within the general prescriptions of parsimony and simplicity. Why? For Giddens, human social life is complex and complicated. To express this lack of parsimony that is evident in robust accounts of social life, Giddens distinguishes between the natural sciences — which operate according to a single hermeneutic — and the social sciences which operate according to a double hermeneutic — humans have monitoring and invention capabilities and can use knowledge to influence the social world.

One way to sift through the complexity of structuration theory is to view structuration theory as a guide to reading social theory, as a second-order tool, described earlier by Fuchs and Woolgar, to conduct a sociology of knowledge and culture. Giddens uses the term “social theory,” rather than “sociology” or “sociological theory,” to
encompass the whole range of the social sciences and humanity disciplines — anthropology, economics, literary criticism, politics, psychology, sociology, etc — that are concerned with the thoughts, motives, behaviors, institutions, and social and cultural systems of human beings. (1979, 5-9). For example, social theory “is at the very center” of such enterprises as hermeneutics that inform both the reading of texts and the philosophy of science (see Kuhn 1977) and what Clifford Geertz (1980, 6) calls the “blurred genres” of interdisciplinary issues and boundaries which have both clarified and have been “fogged” in social theory. Much of the current situation in social theory is based in a loss of legitimacy for positivism and naturalism, which itself is a complicated debate itself and will not be explored here. Giddens summarizes the core of the blurring of disciplines as requiring an adequate account that appreciates both intentional, meaningful action alongside unacknowledged conditions of action and unintended consequences of action. (1979, 7)

Giddens is engaging many different traditions and, therefore, the dimensions of his explanations range in terms of which tradition he is addressing at a given time. Since he is addressing not just one tradition, but many, he acknowledges both the shortcomings and the insights from each tradition. For example, he accepts the rational-choice insight that individuals engage in intentional meaningful actions. He also accepts the functional-structural insight that social systems provide cognitive and unacknowledged conditions of actions and that the unintended consequences of actions are beyond the complete grasp of the rational actor. Doing so, he is able to remain critical of lop-sided accentuations in social theory while keeping the insights of different perspectives. Rather than, as is
commonly done, simply reacting against one tradition, he is able to integrate very
different traditions — such as rational-choice and structural-functionalism. For example,
rational-choice models focus on the voluntarist components that individuals display in
social life; functionalism accounts for the unacknowledged conditions of social life and
ways in which human social actions have unintended consequences that can serve to
perpetuate systems of domination. Prominent themes in social theory include the
polemics between micro and macro levels of analysis, subjective and objective
(methodologically) informed social theory, and the material and the symbolic causes of
social action, which are all based in dualisms (Giddens 1984). Giddens preserves the
insights from each tradition but uses each as a correction to the contrasting position.

Giddens is able to integrate these various traditions because of the way he
conceives the duality of agency and structure in the social world because, he argues, this
is the way the social world really is. While different traditions are capable of explaining
certain features and dimensions of the “superficial” world, they do not provide an
adequate account of how the world is, an adequate ontology (1984). Giddens begins with
ontology and escapes the quandary of methodological disputes.

For example, when considering the functionalist tradition, Giddens dismisses the
ontology of functional analysis as resting on false premises — determinism — while he
retains a key insight of functionalism: the anticipated conditions and unintended
consequences of action. In contrast, traditions that focus on human action, such as
rational-choice theories, correctly acknowledge key features of knowledgeable agents
acting in and upon the social world, yet overlook key features of the influence of
structure upon those actions. By connecting the important features of the way the social world is — ontology — Giddens is able to retain important features of social analysis and synthesize these accounts into a robust social theory.

In summary, the first element of the stratification model in structuration theory is that of individual agents. Agents are *knowledgeable* to the extent that they are familiar with the rules of social life and knowledgability is *reflexive* in that it is situated within the continuities of social life and *recursive* in that every action by human agents (re)produces the structures which render those actions possible. In this way, human action is rational in that situations which define the contextual framework are drawn upon reflexively and are reproduced intentionally through processes of social interaction. At the same time, human social action is bounded by the *unacknowledged conditions of actions* and by *unintended consequences of action*. Rational and purposive social conduct includes the calculations between means and ends and human agents do navigate and reflect and pursue goals. At the same time, for Giddens, cognition is influenced by *stocks of knowledge* that actors have of themselves and the world around them and by *motivations for actions* — the wants which prompt action — which are included in the unacknowledged conditions of actions. Giddens refers to this as the stratification model. On one side, the model includes rationally calculated purposive action (rational-choice models) in which individuals can be knowledgeable of the conditions in which they are located, can change their motivations, and can adjust their actions (individuals can exercise their capacity to do otherwise). These points will be discussed in sections that follow in relation to an ethics of responsibility (Weber and Gandhi) and in relation to
civility and virtue (Carter and Aristotle). On the other side, the combination of the limits of “knowledgability,” the possibility of skewed motivations, and the unintended consequences of historical irony place limits on the rational-purposive action. This limited rationality available to the individual means that the origin and outcomes of actions because they are reciprocally related to the social structures and perhaps to dimensions of the personality (such as the subconscious?) of which the individual may not be fully aware. For Giddens, this means that the individual does have knowledge of themselves and of the social world, and can and does make assessments accordingly. However, the individual, first, can never have full self-disclosure and, second, can never have awareness of the full social implication of their conduct.

The second component in the stratification model, for Giddens, is structure. Structure constitutes patterned and regulated relationships which “shape, channel, and facilitate by providing agents with the awareness of the practices, relations, and spatio-temporal settings they require in order to participate” in the routinization process (Cohen 1989, 201). Social structure relates both to the constitution of meaning and to positive and negative sanctioning of modes of social conduct (Giddens 1984, 18). Structure is, therefore, both rules and resources. Mediating between “objective” structures and “subjective” individuals, are social system(s) as both rules and resources organized as properties of regularized social practices. For Giddens, while lacking parsimony, the importance of a robust human social ontology is that:
The structuration of social systems means studying the modes in which such systems grounded in the activities of situated actors who draw upon rules and resources in the diversity of action contexts, are produces and reproduced in interaction. (1984, 25)

Therefore, power, for Giddens, is a central feature of all the components of a social system and exists in all dimensions along the stratification model, from individual to social structures. Power relates to the capacities of resources that agents draw upon in achieving desired outcomes. Power is not fixed, but refers to the ability to act in the social world and to the sanctions (both positive and negative), provided by others and social structures, of social action. For Giddens, neither individuals nor structures are devoid of all power or monopolize all power. The constitution of society is accomplished through the conduct of knowledgable agents but not under “conditions that are wholly intended or wholly comprehended by them” and occur within social structures that sanction behaviors, “as both the medium and outcome of the practices they recursively organize” (Giddens 1984, 25).

For Giddens, the “duality of structure” places the individual firmly within the context of society, wherein individuals and structures are (re)constituting each other. This means that structural properties of social systems may be so deeply embedded in the actor’s practical and discursive knowledge that they may reify specific social relations so as to “naturalize” what are in reality historically contingent conditions. At the same time, through practical and discursive actions, humans can challenge, destabilize and de-
legitimize social orders and naturalized social practices and representations (Giddens 1984).

In terms of this study, the breadth of structuration theory helps to locate Burton’s needs theory within the general outlines of social theory. In Giddens’ account, needs theory shares a family resemblance with structural-functionalism. For Burton, when needs are unmet, social structures must adapt to meet them (1979, 1990). For Giddens, this is partially true, but misses the power of individuals to do otherwise and gives too much determining capacity to social structures. Missing in needs theory, according to the structuration theory, is that individuals, no matter how oppressed, always have capabilities to do otherwise. Structuration theory is not designed to excuse oppressive systems from responsibility and make the same error as rational-choice theories. Rather, structuration theory includes both structures and individuals as partially responsible to meet human needs.

Burton is clear that oppressive social systems must be changed (1979, 34, 45, 51, 68-72, 75-79). Giddens, especially in his later work, agrees with Burton. Where needs theory differs from structuration theory is in how changes in social systems are made. For needs theory the role of the non-elite(s) to promote system change is limited. While Burton is clear that elites who control social and cultural systems need to change oppressive social systems (1979, 53), he has much less to say about the role of the oppressed and marginalized to effect system change. For Burton, elites must ultimately change the social policies that contribute to structural violence. If they refuse to change policies voluntarily the marginalized and oppressed can (and often do) participate in
deviant behavior. The marginalized and oppressed can (threaten to) rebel, revolt, and engage in terrorism and war (1979, 1990). The agency of the oppressed and marginalized, for Burton, is primarily limited to deviant and (the threat of) violent conduct. In this way, the marginalized and oppressed can dramatize the injustice of structural violence, but it is unclear if other more constructive and civil means are available to them. Giddens acknowledges that elites do have greater access to resources and do play a greater role in the structuring of social systems. However, structuration theory defines social systems as routinized social actions (not reifications) and has an expanded role for the oppressed and marginalized because they can participate in changing social systems by refusing to reproduce them. Giddens incorporates the “action” dimensions of social theory into his analysis of social systems to address the overemphasis on the “structure” dimensions in structural-functionalism. Giddens therefore allows more room for actions by the marginalized and the oppressed. This point is discussed further in the section below. The following section and the remaining chapters attempt to deal with the further nuances of the robust theory of power (capability) developed in structuration theory and the implications for conflict analysis and resolution.

Using Structuration Theory

Vivien Jabri uses Anthony Giddens’ theory of structuration to develop a framework for understanding violent human conduct (1994, 34). For Jabri, both
discursive and institutional continuities can (and do) legitimate and enable war as a form of human conduct both drawn upon and reproduced by knowledgeable agents. For Jabri, the theory of structuration is useful for understanding violent conflict, and especially war, as a form of human conduct centrally located in the relationship between self and society. Accordingly, war is both routinized and reproduced in the course of daily and institutional life — in both cognitive framing and resource allocation. War and support for war derives from purposive human conduct embedded in and reproducing institutional frameworks (1994, 75). While agreeing with Jabri’s conclusions concerning war in modern society, the following will argue that this is a rather pessimistic and conservative use of structuration theory. War is part of the routinization process in modern social life and structuration theory aids in understanding this. However, structuration theory contains a more optimistic tone as well, since agents can and do influence structures. The optimistic implication is that war and violent conflict are not necessary features of modern social reality. The following will discuss structuration theory as a social theory and discuss the insights it brings in terms of transforming a social system from one that legitimizes war and for insights in overcoming oppression.

In terms of social theory, structuration offers insights for scholar-practitioners attempting to transform violence into politics. Jabri agrees that debates within conflict resolution center on the epistemological divide between subjectivist and objectivist accounts, otherwise known as the agent-structure problem (see, for example, Wendt 1987, 3). As noted earlier, a structurationist approach problematizes an exclusive focus on either agent or structure. Structuration theory is concerned with the “ontological
conceptualizations of fundamental entities or mechanisms” and less with the “substance” of the social world; therefore, structuration theory is focused primarily on the “constitutive potentials” of social life: the generic human capacities and fundamental conditions through which the course of social processes and events are generated and shaped in the manifold ways in which this can occur” (Cohen 1987, 17). The aim of social theory is to provide “conceptions of the nature of human social activity and of the human agent which can be placed in the service of empirical work” (Giddens 1986: xvii).

Vivien Jabri uses structuration theory to locate violent human conflict in terms of the “discursive and institutional continuities which legitimate and enable war as a form of conduct and which are drawn upon and reproduced by actions in strategic actions” (1994, 54). In her framework, the social position of elites allows them enough control over allocative and material resources that they generate a hegemonic war discourse, and this discourse is reconstituted by (enough) members of society so as to (re)constitute the system that enables war as a form of human conduct (see Jabri 1994, 1-10, 84-6).

While accepting Jabri’s conclusions, this study will argue that hegemonic discourse and practices, using structuration theory, can be challenged as well by pursuing what Giddens refers to as “dialectic of control” that can react against strategies of control that draw upon structures of domination in seeking compliance and conformity (1984). For Giddens, structures of domination, embedded in the historical irony of unintended consequences, generate counter-strategies and counter-discourses which challenge the “given”, established social order. Even the most change-resistant embedded social system is not capable of determining the cognitions and behaviors of individual agents because
agents always have the “capacity to make a difference” (Giddens 1984, 29). Whether or not a single individual agent can in fact transform a deeply embedded social institution, from a structurationist perspective individuals do have the capacity not to engage in activity as to further reproduce that social institution. For Jabri, “A central concern in understanding violent human conflict is related to the choice available to actors in conflictual social relations” and therefore “it could be concentrated in the enabling aspect of structure: that is, those discursive and institutional continuities which enable and legitimate the occurrence of war as a form of conflict behavior” (1994, 178). This study is concerned with the cognitive and voluntarist dimensions of agency that do not serve the reproduction of social systems that utilize violence and oppression as a means of social interaction. Thompson wrote: “One of the key tasks of social analysis is to explore this space of possibility.” (Quoted in Jabri, 1994, 179).

Criticisms of Giddens…and Responses

The most common criticism of structuration theory is that it remains unhelpful in concrete empirical research—it is ontological and not ontic. For example, Nicki Gregson (1989, 129), complains that, since structuration theory is developing human social ontology, “for the most part, these will be specific to the ontological level; they will relate more to the nature of being, of existence, in human society generally than to the contingencies of how this might work out in particular periods or places.” The general criticism of structuration theory is that it is at level of abstraction that it is not directly
applicable to concrete research questions. This is an accurate portrayal of structuration theory — it is not a research program. Rather, structuration theory is better understood as a corrective template for critical thinking about other research programs as a second-level reflection wherein the categories and frames of reference are critically evaluated by examining how empirical reality is understood and presented.\textsuperscript{9} In this sense, Giddens’ concern differs from that of John Burton. Burton is concerned primarily with resolving, and ultimately “proventing” conflict, at the practical level and developed needs theory to better understand conflict scenarios that would lead to better conflict analysis and therefore to better ways of handling conflict. Giddens’ concern, on the other hand, is to better understand the relationship between the individual and the collective, the subjective and the objective, and to deal with shortcomings of over-commitment to either structure or agency. Giddens’ analysis is at the ontological level at what constitutes both agency and structure. Burton uses needs theory to counter realism and deterrence and understands unmet human needs in terms of the (oppressive) features of institutions and structures. Needs theory is not necessarily undermined by structuration but becomes a segment of structuration theory. This can help account for both the acknowledged and unacknowledged conditions of actions — insights from basic human needs can serve as motivations for action and can help critique structures of domination — and these are areas where elites heavily influence discourse, allocative and material resources. While basic human needs and structural violence are contained within structuration theory, structuration theory expands available options for the transformation of society by incorporating an ontological position that locates power within both agency and structure.
In structuration theory, agents always maintain capabilities to do otherwise, to challenge prevailing social structures.

Recall from an earlier discussions that Burton describes oppressive systems — those that violate basic human needs — as those systems controlled by elites, with little concern for those who are oppressed by them (1979, 1990). Therefore, the system must change. For Burton, elites must ultimately change policies that contribute to structural violence (1979). The questions are how to convince elites to change the system and what role might the oppressed play? The most straightforward way is for the oppressed to remove the existing regime through uprising and rebellion and replace the elite with other elite who can then change social policy that will change the system. Anti-colonial rebellions are an example of this type of system change. The other option is to engage in other deviant or violent acts (Burton 1979, 1-32) that dramatize injustice and persuade or coerce elites to change the system. Individuals, as presented in needs theory, have little capacity and power within social systems. Therefore, agency is limited expressed in terms of resorting to deviance, crime and violence (Burton 1979). This is similar to Giddens critique of “objectivism” and Structural-functionalism in terms of the perceived lack of options available to individuals:

To ‘have no choice’ does not mean that action has been replaced by reaction (in the way in which a person blinks when a rapid movement is made near the eyes). This might appear so obvious as not to need saying. But some very prominent schools of social theory, associated mainly with
objectivism and with ‘structural sociology’, have not acknowledged the distinction. (1984, 15)

For Giddens, the problem for theories such as needs and others based in objectivism, positivism, and structural-functionalism all “have supposed that constraints operate like forces in nature, as if to “have no choice’ were equivalent to being driven irresistibly and comprehendingly by mechanical pressures” (1984, 15; see also, 211-13). Individuals can either passively await change or they can overthrow the system. The following will explore in more detail how structuration theory expands the opportunities available for challenging and transforming social systems.

For structuration theory, needs and structural violence are incorporated into the analysis of the social system, while the analysis is expanded. Yes, elites should change systems of domination to better account and care for oppressed populations. But for Giddens the analysis is expanded. In structuration theory, the concern is with both the (re)production and the transformation of institutional practices over time and space. The aim of structuration theory is to “analyze social structure so that we can clearly discern how it requires agency and analyze human agency in such a manner that we grasp how all social action involves social structure” (Bernstein 1989, 25). Rather than positing a one-way trajectory of domination from elites and structures, structuration theory, by describing agents with the capacity to do otherwise, implicates all actors within social systems. Even the oppressed, to some degree, participate in systems of domination, perhaps unintentional and as unacknowledged conditions of actions. Agency relates to the
transformative capacity of situated agents, positioned at intersections of structures of legitimization and domination. It is true that individuals are differently located in terms of resources, but all are to some extent related.

Jabri asks if structuration theory constitutes a specifically “critical” social theory (Jabri 1994, 176)? Giddens maintains that in the social sciences, unlike the natural sciences, theory can transform its own object because it operates in a double hermeneutic wherein lay actors can be and are influenced by social theory (Giddens 1984, 74). Social theory can therefore be critical (or conservative) to the extent that social science is incorporated into daily life.

Jabri’s specific question is whether we are able to move beyond technical understanding about violence and conflict to an “emancipatory transformative social theory” (Jabri 1994, 177). She acknowledges that continuities between agency and structure generate and legitimate violence. It is important to note that when she searches for an “emancipatory discourse” and a transformation of continuities that promote war and violence, she does not continue with structuration theory. Rather, Jabri looks to Habermas and his conception of emancipation situated within the moral domain of discourse ethics (Jabri, 1994, 159-167) of the free-speech act: “Emancipation… emerges through a process of communicative action and … requires that the subjects shed any ideological distortions…” (1994, 162). The ideal speech situation requires symmetrically situated participants with respect to social norms and material conditions (Jabri 1994, 164), and as long as asymmetries exist, the free speech act cannot exist. From this perspective the project of emancipation becomes a critique of asymmetries and an
argument for redistributive equality. This again is the classical liberal critique of coercion and oppression, but in this form, social equality precedes the free speech act.

For Giddens, emancipation is not equated simply with distributive equality but with the capability of agents to reconstitute society. Jabri’s implication, switching from Giddens to Habermas’s discourse ethics, is that asymmetries must be addressed through distributive justice and that structural changes that perform distributive justice are required before conflict resolution discourse can proceed. For Giddens, on the other hand, emancipation is not simply about directly challenging elites and eliminating structures of domination. For Giddens, as discussed earlier, change and transformation can happen anywhere in a social system — all points, from agents to structures, are at least partially responsible for the conditions that currently exists and for transforming systems of domination because power exists at all levels in a social system. Both needs theory and discourse ethics inject a critical component towards structures of domination — change the structures to meet needs and allow for free discourse. But it is here where Jabri drops crucial insights from structuration theory when she moves to Habermas’s discourse ethics to discuss overcoming systems of domination. Structuration theory can be viewed pessimistically — victims are implicated in their own oppression — or structuration theory can be viewed optimistically — everyone can participate in the emancipation process and in the process of transforming violent and oppressive structures.

Said another way, no one is innocent and everyone can do something. For example, without further blaming the victim, Gandhi’s position was that the British had
not “taken” India, but that the Indian population had given India to the British. It was the process of nonviolent struggle, in which everyone – men, women, and children – participated to de-legitimize and undermine British colonial rule (see Ackerman and Duvall 2001). The Indians did not wait until the oppressive structures were removed, they engaged in action to precipitate the removal of the structures. For example, the Indians defied and undermined British rule by refusing to consent to the oppressive policies and structures. The insights of Gandhi and his use of the capabilities of the oppressed are developed in the final chapter.

**Self-governing**

The following section deals with the complications of self-governing both as an act of agency and as social systems that sanction behaviors and routine practices. First, Giddens’ theory of structuration is not parsimonious and does not lend itself to straightforward application as a research program to test in practical research studies. Structuration is at the level of human social ontology serves as a meta-critical evaluation framework to assess the validity of particular research projects. This is most apparent in *New Rules for Social Research* (1989), where Giddens examines the strengths and weaknesses of different research programs. Second, what is given up with lack of parsimony is gained in accepting the success of each research program while correcting for shortcomings. In doing this, Giddens rejects the dualistic approach of focusing on either agency or structure and accepts the dualism both of agency and structure. Third,
the result of a structuration approach is that both agents and structures are implicated in overcoming or transforming oppression. Critical theories and theories of emancipation, such as needs theory, must include individuals as agents of change, alongside structures. Without this robust inclusion, theories lack an adequate conception of change.

Both “action” and “structure” connect in immediate ways to the significance of power in social theory. Power, whether discussed explicitly or inferred implicitly, is ever present in social theory. From the action side of the social world, power refers to “capability” and “knowledgability” of individuals (Giddens 1984). By capability, Giddens means that in terms of human action the possibility individuals “could have done otherwise” (p. 9). Included in the action side of the social world is the “knowledgability” of individuals refers to “all those things which the members of the society know about the society, and the conditions of their authority within it” (1984, 9). Here are both the cognitive and voluntarist dimensions of human personality that will be discussed in the next chapter.

Institutions (can) have “broad spatial and temporal extension” (Giddens 1984, 15). It is important to note that Giddens distinguishes between institutions and organizations, capturing the original use of institutions. In this usage, institutions have the dimensions of verbs more than nouns. Institutions refer to routine practices (re)produced in social interaction. Organizations are more formalized “containers” of institutions. This is crucial for Giddens, since both cognitive and institutional aspects of human social reality are not facts outside of the (re)generative energies that humans give to them. In this way, change and order are both implied in the constructing capability of human
agency and routinzation of daily life. Resources enter structuration theory, as one of the means by which practices “happen” or are “made to happen” in the continuity of daily life. Resources are structured properties of social systems and “exist” only in the capability of actors (and in their capacity to do otherwise). Structure is the second major element — action being the first — that describe ways in which social practices are fundamentally recursive. In this, both elements of chance and order are (re)constituted structurally, since structure is both the medium and the outcome of practices. Giddens infers throughout that a key notion to understanding the various concepts embedded in structuration theory is that of participation. The act of participation in social life emerges at all levels of structuration theory, especially in terms of agency and most notably in Giddens’ usage of the terms systems and structure (1984, 15) because structures do not exist apart from routine behaviors.

The chief aim of structuration theory is to link “an adequate account of (meaningful) action with the analysis of its unanticipated conditions and unintended consequences” (Dallmayr 1994, 18). In doing so, Giddens does not simply abandon different traditions, but uses certain insights from one to serve as a corrective in other. For example, Giddens discards one main assumption of Functionalism—that systems have needs — while retaining a crucial insight —actions have unacknowledged conditions and unintended consequences — that are missing in other accounts that accentuate the capability and knowledgability of individuals while ignoring the structural components of the conditions of action (Giddens 1984).
In addition to human agency, structuration involves the role of social “institutions” defined as “structural social practices that have a broad spatial and temporal extension” (Dallmayr 1982, 18). Practices include human choice and rules and resources. Giddens distinguishes between “systems” and “structure” (1984). This differentiation is important since social systems are practices concretely “situated in time-space”, while social structure is “non-temporal and non-spatial” (re)produced in social interaction as “its medium and outcome” (1979, 2-3). For Giddens, this signifies both the enabling and constraining features of structure since “structure is both the medium and outcome of the practices it recursively organized” (1979, 21).

In response to Dallmayr’s criticism of Giddens for not giving enough attention to the “openness of being” (1982, 26), Giddens comments that while he acknowledges openness of being”, he may have under-explored this dimension. Giddens says that there is a direct connection between structuration and “the moral frameworks of human existence [however]. I accept that I have not so far anywhere elucidated this connection in the detail it demands” (Dallmayr 1982, 26). Giddens concentrates primarily on the voluntarist side of human agency while the cognitive dimensions remain under-theorized, as will become evident in the following discussion of critical moments. This study will attempt to complement this missing dimension of Giddens by a later discussion of judgment and virtue. First, power must be connected to individual agency.
Revisiting Power

Structuration theory is centrally located in discussions of power. Stephen Lukes, in *Power: A Radical View* ([1974] 2005), locates the debate over power, on one side, between those who view social and political elites as having power to the extent that they have *power over* non-elites that leads to powerless and oppressed classes of peoples.\(^{10}\) The depictions of elite domination over powerless populations produced a reaction, on the other hand, by “pluralists” who found no monolithic “ruling elite” but rather that power was relative at different times to different actors and different groups in the local context of its exercise.\(^{11}\) Lukes refers to these as the “One-Dimensional View of Power” (2005, 16) in which power is viewed in behavioral terms where the exercise of power can be observed, and is best observed in conflict scenarios that provide a test of power attributions. Luke describes the “two-dimensional view of power” as embracing “coercion, influence, authority, force and manipulation” all of which not only influence empirically observable decision-making but include considerations “of the ways in which decisions are prevented from being taken” (2005, 25). The two-dimensional view thus incorporates into power relations both control over explicit issues and ways in which behaviors are not expressed. The “Three-Dimensional View of Power” expands the discussions of power beyond actual conflict to include ways in which power can be expressed, as manipulation or consent derived from perceived authority, in “non-decisions” to engage in conflict. The three-dimensional view includes ways in which “the most effective and insidious use of power is to prevent such conflict from arising in the
first place” (2005, 27). The first and second accounts of power develop from one of the methodological positions in the social sciences to study phenomena — such as power — by examining actions in the social world (2005, 25-29).12

Lukes seeks to expand, or broaden, the study of the scope of power. Lukes affirms that “the absolutely basic common core to, or primitive notion lying behind, all the talk of power is the notion that A in some way affects B” (2005, 30). This basic definition is filled with normative assumptions, because from the different perspectives “each arises out of and operates within a particular moral and political perspective” and that “power is one of those concepts which are ineradicably value-dependent” (Lukes 2005, 29-30). Lukes clarifies:

By this I mean that both its very definition and any given use of it, once defined, are inextricably tied to a given set of (probably unacknowledged) valve-assumptions which predetermine the range of its empirical application… (2005, 30)

As “essentially contested concepts” which “inevitably involve endless disputes about their proper uses on the part of their users,” a discussion of power is therefore embedded in assumptions (Gallie 1955-6, 168). What is important in terms of a discussion of power is that it involves a choice among alternative modes of action.13 In this way, different power schemas emphasize differing elements when identifying “who is responsible to do what?” As discussed above, needs theory attaches responsibility to social systems,
institutions and structures. Structuration theory, on the other hand, attaches responsibility to both structures and to individuals.

Structuration theory, with the agency-structure dualism, does not collapse a discussion of power in such a way that demands for change can be suffocated before they are even voiced. In structuration theory, both agency and structure are implicated in the distribution of power and social transformation. Consider Hannah Arendt’s discussion of power in contrast to violence. Power and violence are opposites; they exist in an inverse relationship because, for Arendt, “the people’s support that lends power to the institutions… is but the continuation of the consent that brought laws into existence to begin with” (1970, 41). Whether or not Arendt’s strict analytical separation of violence and power is accurate, the connection here to structuration theory is that social institutions do receive a level of support (consent) from constituents when social practices reproduce institutions. Lukes states that even though all theories of power are laden with ontological assumptions, some theories are better than others in that they account for numerous ways in power can operate in the social world. Structuration theory is robust in this sense because power is present and can operate at all dimensions of social life, from individuals to collectives, from individuals to structures. Lukes summarizes: “Power denotes a range of different objects or referents… [and]… how we think of power may serve to reproduce and reinforce power structures and relations, or alternatively it may challenge and subvert them” (2005, 61, 63). Structuration theory accounts for both the persistence of collectives as well as the transformation of collectives.
Peter Morris suggests three contexts of power: “practical”, “moral”, and “evaluative” (1987). First, “practical” power relates to our own powers in relation to the power of others. Second, “moral” power relates to assigning responsibility for bringing about a certain outcome. Importantly, Morris argues that you can deny all responsibility by demonstrating a lack of power. In terms of Burton’s unmet human needs, demonstrating a lack of power allows responsibility to placed on social structures and institutions, not on oneself. Third, “Evaluative” power involves making judgments of the distribution of power within social systems. Morris cautions that we should not assume that powerlessness results from domination (the oppressed may be passive or impotent, not oppressed).

In terms of responsibility, however, if lack of power is framed as an injustice (rather than facts) then those with capabilities to remedy powerlessness can be deemed as responsible. In terms of providing a single, comprehensive, generic conception of power, Lukes suggests two variations: “power to” and “power over” (2005, 69). In terms of social life, power is too often equated with the “vehicle fallacy” that equates power with wealth, status, or resources. Rather, power should be viewed as capacity and potential, similar to agency in structuration theory. From this point of view, judgment is required about the scope of the concept of power utilized, and judgment about the outcomes available (2005, 72). Power as domination suggests the “imposition of some significant constraint upon an agent or agent’s desires, purposes or interests, which it frustrates, prevents from fulfillment or even from being formulated” (2005, 113). But how is this to be understood? Are desires, purposes and interests beyond observation? Are they beyond
critical assessment? If judgment is required concerning the exercise power, then it seems reasonable to also exercise judgment in terms of agent’s desires, purposes or interests. It is here that needs can too easily be defined as interests and desires. In terms of the critique of liberalism discussed above in this study, needs can too easily be defined as possessions and freedom from (the responsibility of) participation in social reality. Needs themselves need discerning, which requires the application of judgment.

Judgments, or *phronesis*, for Aristotle, are part of practical wisdom that involves the application of principles to particular circumstances. It is a virtue whose presence gives evidence of maturity. For Aristotle, it was clear that good judgment is a virtue that can be cultivated or discouraged. As Franz Fanon explores (discussed below), domination can lead to the suppression and stifling of good judgment. Good judgment, from Aristotle, contributes to human flourishing, both for the self and for others. What are the conditions that lend to flourishing? A “capabilities approach” to human flourishing, for Amartya Sen, is that certain functions are central to being human, such as being self-directed (2002), which Lukes describes as “shaped throughout by these human powers of practical reason and sociability” (2005, 118). The relation to power is complicated, as Lukes explains:

Power can be deployed to block or impair its subjects’ capacity to reason well, not least by installing and sustaining misleading or illusory ideas of what is ‘natural’ and what sort of like their distinctive ‘nature’ dictates,
and, in general, by stunting or blunting their capacity for rational judgment. (2005, 115)

This begs the question of what is a failure of rationality in terms of judgment.

The focus of many writers, notably from the liberal perspective, is on ways in which the social environment influences injustice. However, too few examine judgment preferences. What is excluded from the discussion, by focusing on oppressive dimensions of social structures exclusively, is “a critical scrutiny of preferences and desire that would reveal the ways in which habit, fear, low expectations, and unjust background conditions deform people’s choices and even their wishes from their own lives” (Nussbaum 2000, 114). Power as domination in influencing judgment preferences therefore presents a bleak view of liberation from oppression. There is no guarantee that simply removing dominant social structures will sustain liberty. This is the insight from the civic republican tradition in political philosophy. If power as domination “is to suggest the imposition of some significant constraint upon an agent or agents’ desires, purposes, or interests, which it frustrates, prevents from fulfillment or even from being formulated” (2005, 113). Then, a perspective concerned only with “freedom from” domination and the freedom to unconstrained choosing does not legitimize the judgment preferences of the emancipated. While it is clear that domination presents external constraints on behaviors and actions, there is a more insidious way in which domination “can induce and sustain internal constraints upon self-determination – ways of
undermining and distorting people’s confidence in and sense of self and of misleading and subverting their judgment as to how best to advance their interests” (2005, 192).

Antonino Gramsci and Karl Marx, as “hegemony” and “false consciousness,” discussed earlier, have also touched on this issue. James Scott therefore proposes a thick and a thin version of the domination of reality:

The thick version claims that a dominant ideology works its magic by persuading subordinate groups to believe actively in the values that explain and justify their own subordination… The thin theory of false consciousness, on the other hand, maintains only that the dominant ideology achieves compliance by convincing subordinate groups that the social order in which they live is natural and inevitable. The thick theory claims consent; the thin theory settles for resignation. (1990, 126)

If this line of reasoning is correct, the potential for overcoming domination and sustaining liberty encounters severe obstacles. However, according to Scott, subordinates have a vested interest in avoiding direct or explicit displays of insubordination and they also have a practical interest in resistance. In Goffman’s terms, the front stage performance of subordinates is displayed in complicities; the “backstage” is constant rebellion. A system of domination is held together by a “structure of surveillance, reward and punishment… which are held in check by relations of discipline and punishment” (Scott, 1992, 3-4).
Given these two seemingly competing accounts of dominance, how are they to be reconciled? On the one hand, subordinates are pressed with false consciousness and serve to reify existing social structures. On the other hand, subordinates are engaged in constant rebellion beneath a thin veneer of hegemonic ideology. Rejecting parsimony, Lukes suggests that both forms can co-exist and monolithic explanations should be avoided. Missing in the above accounts are ways in which individuals might, as Giddens claims, do otherwise. Both reification and rebellion are consistent with structuration theory. In terms of self-governing, the task is to gain an appreciation of the ways in which individuals participate in their own oppression and in their own emancipation and exist within communities in which they partially form (this is further discussed in the final chapter).

In terms of political philosophy, the concern is with the external shaping of individual agent’s desires and beliefs. For Amartya Sen, “The most blatant form of inequalities and exploitations survive in the world through making allies out of the deprived and the exploited” (1984, 308). For Nussbaum, such reifying responses are the outcome of socialization and the absence of information (Nussbaum 2000,139). Pierre Bourdieu (1895) argues this cannot be adequately understood by referring to either constraint or consent but rather through what he calls symbolic violence that is not at the level of consciousness and therefore resists articulation, critical reflection, and conscious transformation in everyday life, or *habitus*. It is here that structuration theory offers insights because social structures can be both constraining and enabling. But the tension between the two cannot be resolved in terms of a robust social ontology. Discernment
requires judgment informed by the insights of civic republicanism that promote self-governance with a concern for both individuals and collectives.

When is external shaping domination? If enculturation is an enabling source, at what point does the acquisition of beliefs and preferences constitute domination? Is it simply that all hierarchies are examples of domination, as liberalism seems to suggest? Said another way, how can the real interests, needs, or meta-preferences be unmasked? One proposal by Thoman Benton is for a third party external observer to make judgments “on behalf of the actor” (1997, 167). The judgment that has to be made is how the actor would feel or behave under conditions which do not now hold, and maybe never have, nor ever will hold (Benton 1997, 161-84).

“Infantalizing Judgment”

Conflict scholar-practitioners have emphasized the role of external invention into scenarios wherein first and second parties are engaged in conflict. For example, Lederach outlines various roles (from research and activists to enforcer, etc.) that third party scholar-practitioners can take towards invention. Louis Diamond details the various “tracks” of diplomacy that broaden the number of possible “diplomats” to include a full range of civil society members, both local, regional, and international. This is important for two reasons. First, conflicts generally are not simply at the track one diplomatic level between leaders, they involve all levels of civil society. This is especially true now that violent conflicts tend to be “civil wars” rather then trans-national
(Kaldor, 2004). Secondly, since violent conflicts engage whole populations and issues and concerns at the lower level of civil society, increased effort is now placed on representing the entire population in the process of analysis and resolution. This is for (at least) two reasons: track one leadership is often disconnected from the concerns at lower levels, and for resolution to be effective it must include all levels of society in the process as well. Therefore, increased emphasis in conflict resolution process is places at ownership, at the “grassroots” level (Lederach 2002).

Given the increased intervention by third party scholar-practitioners and the expansion of resolution efforts to include both those in power with those subjugated to power, the questions of false consciousness carries considerable significance. Since false consciousness is “an expression that carries a heavy weight of unwelcome historical baggage”, Lukes suggests that it not be used as “the arrogant assertion of a privileged access to truths presumed unavailable to others…but rather to a cognitive power of considerable significance and scope, namely, the power to mislead” (2005, 149). In this way, false consciousness can take many forms — from censorship and strategic manipulation of information to failures of rationality and “naturalized” worldviews.

In his discussion, Lukes makes an interesting phrase, “infantalizing judgment,” yet does not consider this in detail. Connecting “infantalizing” to judgment presumes that judgment can be mature. If false consciousness is an instance of judgment that is, in one way or another, immature, what might a mature judgment look like? How might judgment preferences based in maturity differ from an infantile judgment preference? Lukes does not provide answers to these questions. While providing important categories
from critical reflection about power in the social world and how power both externally and internally influences individuals, for Lukes, “there is no reason to believe that there exists a canonical set” of evaluating judgment preferences to “provide the last word on the matter” when judgment preferences are based on maturity or infantalizing” (2005, 148). The essential ambiguity of the term “power” in the social world does not suggest that less critical evaluation should be directed at power. Nor does it necessarily suggest that power as an ambiguous term can be easily understood if more energy were placed into solving the questions it evokes. Rather, given the discussion of power, especially in the context of domination and false consciousness, it is important to utilize the tools of critical reflection for thinking of the possible uses and influences power exerts in social life. What is required is further exploration. This raises a pertinent question not only for the oppressed but also for third party interventions: to what degree do the intervener or the oppressed understand and are capable of articulating the situation and the means to achieve alternate ends? At a minimum, according to the arguments presented earlier, the situation should be viewed with more complexity than merely redistributing possessions. The following section continues this exploration.

**Critical Situations**

Giddens connects infantilizing judgment and critical moments, moments that are not part of the normal routine of social practices. Critical situations in structuration theory are linked to the analysis of daily routines and are related to power. Gidden’s
approach will be partially challenged at the end of this discussion. For Giddens, much of social life is lived within the parameters of the daily routine of social activity, while critical situations represent the radical disruption of the accustomed routines of daily life (1979, 124). For Giddens, critical situations represent the “radical disruption of routine” and produce “a sort of corrosive effect upon the customary behaviour of the actor, associated with the impact of society and fear” (1984, 126). Giddens here takes a rather pessimistic view of changes in the routines of daily life and associates these disruptions with mass movement appeals:

This circumstance brings about heightened suggestibility, or vulnerability to the promptings of others; the correlate of such suggestibility is regressive behavior. The outcome of these is a new process of identification — transitory in the case of the mob, more permanent in protracted critical situations — with an authority figure. (1984, 126)

Giddens is trying to understand critical situations in terms of changes that occur in the personalities of those exposed to them “in spite of their conscious resolution to resist” (1984, 127). He draws his examples from LeBon’s work on The Crowd and Bettleheim’s work on the effects of the concentration camps on Jews during the Holocaust (1984,124) to demonstrate the role of the unconscious in human personality that breaks through for individuals during these times of disruptions as they regress “to childlike attitudes of dependency” (1984, 125). Again, this is a pessimistic view of critical moments and does
not allow for the transformative possibilities available in critical moments. This is a narrow view of the possibility of cognitive reflection because individuals, to paraphrase Giddens, “could think otherwise” in critical moments. This is similar to how Giddens explains that individuals “could do otherwise” in the course of their action. True, individuals can simply resort to previous cognitive frames and routine behaviors. However, a critical moment can provide space for cognitive reflection as well as behavior modifications. Critical moments can stir the mind as well as behaviors.

Aristotle’s example of the virtuous personality differs sharply from Giddens in this regard. Giddens’ goal is to connect together two features of the theory of structuration: the stratification model of the individual on one hand and the actor’s knowledge of the context of their actions on the other. While Giddens is correct to some degree, he ignores or understates a crucial element of his own theory, the idea that persons could have done otherwise. For Aristotle, it is the attitude of constancy of personality towards behaving in virtuous ways that defines the person as virtuous, the ability not to “revert to childlike dependency.” While Giddens does offer evidence that supports structuration theory, he misses the crucial element of virtue theory in which the personality is able to demonstrate such virtues as justice and courage in spite of the disruptions of the routines of social life. Virtue thus implies the display of virtue when the daily routines of social life are disrupted and the basic security system — ontological security — of the personality experiences a critical moment. While it is true that the familiar is reassuring and is a bulwark against the corrosive effects of anxiety, critical
situations (can) open the frameworks to (re)evaluation. Critical situations can be viewed optimistically.

Giddens is discussing critical situations in the prolonged experiences of severe disruptions of daily routines using Sargant’s (1989) studies of behavior under fire in the battle-field, forced interrogation, and religious conversion and Bettleheim’s discussion. These involve “ruthless” conditions that include actors that are perpetrators and victims. Here, elements of trauma exist in severity. Giddens acknowledges that he has yet to fully investigate the role of judgments and critical situations. Virtue ethics and a responsibilities approach to self-governing may offer the insight Giddens is looking for, for it maintains the critical and dynamic tension of social life and incorporates his insights of the undetermined natures of agency and structure.

**Summary**

In summary, this chapter attempted to locate a social theory adequate to address the responsibilities approach to self-governing, turning to Anthony Giddens and structuration theory. The chapter began with a discussion of social theory generally as involving assumptions about human beings and the social world. Rather than concentrating on the empirical dimensions of social life, the discussion has focused on the implications of different perspectives and the inadequacies of focusing on either structure or agency. Central to this discussion is the portrayal of power and capabilities of the individual agent. Questions were raised concerning the inadequacy of needs theory
for a robust conception of agency and power. The action dimension of the action-structure duality in structuration theory, understated in needs theory, broadens the available options for participants in the process of emancipation.

Vivienne Jabri uses structuration theory to account for the persistence of war and violence. It was argued that her approach was overly pessimistic and did not fully appreciate the optimistic opportunities available for individual agents to positively transform social structures. Power was revisited in terms of Lukes’ variations and pointed to the necessity of judgment in discerning the appropriate stance towards complexity of the exercise of power in the social world. Critical moments, interruptions from daily routines, were introduced as an insight into how Giddens understands situations that disrupt daily routines. The question is raised whether Giddens failed to utilize fully the transforming promise available in his own structuration theory. The following chapter will examine agency in terms of the cognitive and voluntarist dimensions to shed light on the insights of structuration theory and to further explore dimensions of agency by adding to the critic of liberalism. The following chapter will also revisit critical moments from perspectives such as virtue ethics and civility in the hopes of better informing structuration theory for the purposes of transforming conflict.
For example, the contemporary debates of liberalism and antiliberalism, both as ideas and as political traditions are discussions and social forms which are found in the eighteenth century. See, S. E. Bronner, *Ideas in Action: Political Tradition in the Twentieth Century* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1999). Bronner’s historical survey research on ideology also found that the topics at the end of the Nineteenth Century — race, class, and gender — are also the prominent topics of contemporary social and political discussions.

Stephen Turner, (2004). "The Maturity of Social Theory", *The Dialogical Turn: New Roles for Sociology in the Postdisciplinary Age*, edited by Hans Joas (Lanham, MD, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2004) 141-170: 142. This statement is itself contested, as Turner acknowledges: “One of the reasons that any argument about the presence or absence of originality cannot be formulated with any great historical or analytic precision is that such arguments involve a number relative judgments about the innovativeness of particular claims and the degree to which claims differ from previous versions of the same general idea.” For example, is Habermas’s contribution essentially to tidy up and clarify the classical tradition or a means of supplanting the classical tradition?

This is not, of course, to suggest that social and political conditions have remain changed since the rise of the modern nation-state and the concept of the citizen in modernity in the West. As conflict scholars have recognized, even the nature and location of conflict is moving from intra-state to inter-state.

A benefit of a more sociological approach to social theory is that sociological approaches demand a means by which change (or order) is made to happen. Sociologically informed social theory pays attention to the mechanisms in social life.

Emanating both from within and between these traditions of the natural and social sciences, chasms appeared as the large questions surfaced. At the same time that the dogmas of neutrality and objectivity were being challenged in the philosophy of science, the ideas of laws, facts, and predictability were challenged by the interpretive turn in the social sciences. At the same time, philosophy is now acknowledging its debt to the social sciences.

Giddens is making a distinction between power of social system and structural norms, rules and the blatant use of force, and the “capabilities” that, even under the most extreme conditions, an individual “could have done otherwise.”

Giddens here is incorporating the insights of Martin Heidegger that the experience of time is not as discrete units but as the reflexive moment of attention that insists upon an apparent tautology that memory is linked with anticipation of the future and the necessary feature of ‘voluntary’ action that the agent could have, at any point in time, done
otherwise: either positively in terms of attempted intervention or negatively as forbearance.

8 It should be noted that perhaps Giddens rather than Jabri bears more responsibility for this pessimism, as will become more clear in the following discussion on “critical moments.”

9 This is what Stephen Fuchs refers to as “second level” reflection wherein the categories and frames of reference are critically evaluated, examining how empirical reality is itself understood and presented.

10 For example, see C. Wright Mills, *The Power Elite* (New York: Oxford University Press) 1956.


12 Lukes explains that he uses the term behavioral to refer to the study of overt and actual behavior.


15 Perhaps Giddens should not be taken to task too far on this point, since even Vivien Jabri, using structuration theory, came to the same conservative-pessimistic conclusions as did Giddens when examining conflict and its impacts on routine social order. One direction in correcting this accentuation is by appealing to cognitive dissonance theories.

5. Freedom and Responsibility

John Burton writes that conflict resolution is political philosophy (Burton, 1993). The question is, what kind of political philosophy is it? The following discussion will examine in closer detail the differences between liberalism and communitarianism and argues that needs theory is a liberal political philosophy. This will be argued primarily through a discussion of John Rawls’ advocacy of liberalism; exploring in more detail Macpherson’s possessive individualism; and, finally, examining the cognitive and voluntarist dimensions of agency within the context of liberalism as informed by structuration theory. If it is true that liberalism “has become so hegemonic that it hardly needs defending” (Mansfield and Sisson 2005, 35), then it is appropriate to continue problem-solving by examining the basic assumptions of liberalism. This chapter begins by locating liberalism within broad debates in political philosophy and transitions into a discussion of the ontology of liberalism as a social theory. The goal is to examine the assumptions of liberalism (and needs theory) in order to expand to a discussion of responsibilities in the next chapter.

The following will argue that liberalism is rooted in an Enlightenment commitment to a deontological epistemology and therefore is committed to neutrality in principle. Deontological epistemology is therefore committed to “freedom from” encumbered ontologies (Sandel 1976). By contrast, communitarianism is rooted in the
authority of tradition and community and therefore is committed to making judgment concerning the good life. Communitarianism is committed to ontology and (too often) fails to acknowledge the historically constructed character of its own worldview and the ontologies of other worldviews, failing to temper its own arrogance by including insights from anthropology, the history of ideas and the sociology of knowledge.\footnote{What Michael Sandel (1976) calls the limited view of liberal conceptions of justice is better phrased as liberalism’s emphasis upon individual freedom and a deontological conception of justice.} Said another way, liberalism presents an ontology that is too narrow, while communitarianism presents an ontology that is too broad. The trick is to develop an ontology that presents the right consistency, such as presented in structuration theory wherein neither the individual nor the collective receives priority. The earlier discussion of civic republicanism as balancing liberalism and communitarianism is continued below.

The position of this paper is that moral, social, and political philosophy, while perhaps distinguishable analytically, cannot be distinguished in any real sense because they either implicitly or explicitly refer to each other when their implications for different domains of social life are logically extended (Turner 2005). The two primary questions to ask of any social and political philosophy relate to two fundamental questions: what is a person and how does the social world work? These are ontological statements that of necessity refer to one another. These are neither proven nor are they disproven with certainty (they can only be shown more or less adequate). These deeply embedded ontological statements are, in the end, to return Aristotle’s syllogism: \textit{If} persons are such and such, or \textit{if} the world works this way, then… For example, John Burton contrasts the
basic assumptions of the Realist school of international relations — that humans are inherently aggressive and this is the root of social conflict — with his contention that social structures are the primary root of social conflict when they oppress individual fulfillment of basic needs (1979, 1990).

Keeping with both Giddens’ and Burton’s perspective, multiple orientations are healthy for a critical and reflective social theory to serve as corrections and to retain the complexity of social life within social theory. The goal is not to achieve a position of instrumental application, but to retain the ongoing necessity of critical judgment in and about social life and our relation to it. Rather than resolving these ontological questions that create tension, the argument developing in this paper, especially the final chapter, is that the resolution of tension might be part of the problem (this relates to Weber’s discussion of conflict and tension below). The solution to questions of what is a person and how does the world work, it will be argued, are better found in managing the tension(s) rather than collapsing the tension in a lopsided accentuation (Weber 1968). This presents a dilemma since, in managing tension, the arguments have a tautological character — complexity is not reduced, but rather amplified. The following will attempt to elucidate various approaches at simplifying the complexity of personhood and social reality. Rather than stating definitive solutions, the findings remain as provisional as do personhood and social reality, retaining the malleability of the “if” and the “then” of the syllogism, while attempting to elucidate a better starting point. This will be pursued by asking slightly different questions and following through to different conclusions based on those questions. For example, the orienting question is not what do individuals need,
or what is the obligation of the state to its citizens; rather, the orienting question is how can individuals self-govern? The inquiry is redirected, in this way, from focusing exclusively on basic human needs to an inquiry into and the inclusion of basic human responsibilities.

For Harry Brighouse (2004), political theory relates to the institutions of social life. For structuration theory, institutions are reproduced through daily routines, they do not exist apart from the activities of individuals. Therefore, moving from a discussion of needs to include a discussion of responsibilities moves to a discussion of the relations between people and this involves a discussion of justice. In short, a basic human responsibilities approach includes human needs and requires participation in social and political life. To participate in self-governing requires responsible interpersonal relations, and responsible interpersonal relations require some conception of justice. Justice, in turn, involves assumptions about what is a human being, how the social world works, and how individuals relate to one another. Hence, there is no easy consensus about what justice is (Miller 2005).

Harry Brighouse begins *Justice* (2004) with a question: why would the topic justice qualify as a topic in the social sciences? He recognizes that social science is usually highly technical and directed towards describing and explaining social processes which require explanatory concepts and causal laws, not normative concepts such as justice (Brighouse 2004, 6). Why should social scientists be concerned with justice when selecting and framing research topics? His answer: what counts as an interesting problem is related to “what one thinks about justice, especially when one is doing social science
that one hopes to be of use for policymakers,” and this is especially so because policymakers should also have a particular interest in justice when deciding what kind of social scientific studies to commission for policy purpose (Brighouse 2004, 6).

To begin a discussion of justice, Brighouse argues, is to begin with a discussion of the work of John Rawls, since “All theorizing about [contemporary] justice…operates within a framework set by Rawls…Even if the theorist disagrees, absolutely, with everything Rawls says, the theorist has to explain why” (2004, 8). For Brighouse, theorizing about justice is embedded in moral philosophy which concerns how we relate to other people through social institutions, the principle topic of political philosophy. Current discussions of justice (especially within a liberal framework) focus primarily on human rights. In fact, as Andrew Kuper describes, human rights are the “basic normative currency for addressing political, social, and economic injustice and insecurity” (2005, ix) which are also perennial topics of conflict studies. There is little difference, this research argues, between a human rights approach and a human needs approach to justice: rights are viewed as individual possessions and needs are viewed as essential properties of individuals. Hence, needs and rights are interchangeable in terms of this discussion.

It is a measure of the reach and breadth of John Rawl’s A Theory of Justice (1971) that it provoked not one but several different debates. The following will focus on the writings of John Rawls in order to address the possible limitations of liberalism. It will be argued that responsibilities, consistent with structuration theory, offers a necessary
complement to needs theory. A more robust social ontology will inform a position that continues addressing the transformations required in moving from violence to politics.

John Rawls triggered several debates. The first debate is located within the specific objectives of Rawl’s himself — to counter the then dominant view of Anglo-American moral philosophy (such as argued by John Stuart Mill) that justice should be founded on utility. For Rawls, respect for individual human rights cannot be based on the end utility —the good — of society. Rather, individual rights are primary. Since these rights are fundamental, social institutions must remain neutral to determinations of the good and individuals must be free to choose the good for themselves. Since Rawls, rights-oriented liberalism is the dominant framework of moral philosophy (Hart 1979, 77-98). The second debate is within rights-oriented liberalism itself, between libertarian liberals and egalitarian liberals (or, roughly between republicans and democrats in the US party system). Libertarians generally argue for market economies and noninterference by the state; egalitarians generally argue for state welfare and redistribution (Nozick 1974; see also, Hayek, 1960). The third debate centers on the assumptions shared by both libertarian and egalitarian liberals: the state should be neutral according different conceptions of the good life. This central tenet of liberalism is shared by both market libertarian and welfare egalitarian liberals is, as summarized by Kant, the state’s role in promoting and maintaining the priority of the right over the good by maintaining neutrality (For discussions, see Rawls, 1971; Nozick, 1974; Dworkin, 1977; Ackerman, 1980; Fried, 1978; and Larmore, 1987.) A wealth of information on these arguments and
the details of these positions and counter positions are available and will not be discussed further in this study.

A fourth debate, though arguably less prominent, also related to Rawl’s original project, is commonly portrayed as the “liberal-communitarian debate” (Sandel 2006). This debate is also located in the discussions of the priority of the right over the good and is centered within the traditionally thematic concerns of political philosophy — the proper relation between the individual and the collective. This debate is between the priority of the right, the liberal position, and the priority of the good, the communitarian position. In terms of this debate, for liberalism the individual is given priority as a “right” while for communitarianism the community is given priority as a “good” (Kuper 2005).

The attempt made in this study is to demonstrate that neither the right nor the good, neither the individual nor the community, should be given priority. Both are equally important for self-governance. The tension between the two should not be resolved, but managed. Both are needed in moderation for critical reflection and participation in self-governance. What is required in this balancing act, therefore, is judgment. Not judgment in the pejorative sense of condemnation, but judgment in the sense of better judgment in the exercise of the cognitive faculties and behaviors. Judgment is viewed in this study as the virtue of (better) assessing the context and background of a given situation and the consequences of certain actions or non-actions. The discussion of judgment will follow the critical evaluation of liberalism. First, the dimensions of liberalism and communitarianism are reconsidered.
Liberalism correctly critiques the inadequacies of a social ontology based primarily on communitarian-collective concerns that fail to adequately consider individual and minority rights. While the vision of liberalism is admirable and has served to undermine the divine right of kings with the transition to modern citizenship, to name just one example, at the same time, the main limitation of liberalism is not that it is ever unlikely to be fully realized in practice; rather, the main limit of liberalism resides in the ideal itself. It is not simply that freedom remains always to be achieved. Or, at the other extreme, it is not simply that liberalism is wrong. Rather, the limits of liberalism reside within the ideal itself, its vision is incomplete. The same is true for communitarianism. This dissertation seeks to address the limitations of each position by maintaining the insights of the countering tradition. Said another way, liberalism has something to learn form communitarianism and communitarianism has something to learn form liberalism. These visions are incomplete not only in practice, but in theory. Overemphasizing the individual — liberalism — misses key components of social responsibility necessary for self-governance. Over emphasizing social obligations — communitarianism — misses key components of the possibility of emancipation from domination necessary for self-governance if the expectation is that individuals should follow unjust laws and norms. What is needed is a position that acknowledges both the insights and limits of these two perspectives. The task is to formulate a position that respects both the concern for individuals and the concern for collectives. This requires a closer analysis of justice.

John Rawls is adamant that justice is to receive priority. Justice has many definitions, perhaps most widely defined as giving a person their due (Miller 2005).
Several questions remain concerning how this actually is to be conceived among individuals and the relation between institutions and individuals. Several questions remain to be answered: who or what is obligated to give, what is a person, and what is an individual is due. Competing social philosophies answer these questions in quite disparate and irreconcilable ways. For example, are humans essentially good or essentially bad, are humans motivated best by fear or by compassion? Attempting to answer these questions raises problems of locating standards of judgment concerning exactly what are the referent principles of justice. If standards of assessment are derived internally, from the view from within socially empirical conceptions of the good, then are not conceptions of justice situated in current values, values that may differ according to historical epochs? If standards or justice are external to prevailing social values, disqualifying socially empirical experience, what assurance is available that a decontextualized notion meets the reality of lived experience? Michael Sandel summarizes this dilemma:

Where justice derives from existing values, the standards of appraisal blur with the objects of appraisal and there is no sure way of picking out the one from the other. Where justice is given by *a priori* principles, there is no sure way of connecting them up. (1996, 17)

Rawl’s, and liberalism’s moral philosophy generally, search for an Archimedean point—a firm foundation that is neither overly conditioned in its relation to the world nor
detached and irrelevant — has yet to be found (Sandel 2006). The solution for Rawls is that “we need a conception [of justice] that enables us to envision our objective from afar” (1971, 23), but not too far; rather, the desired location “is a certain form of thought and feeling that rational persons can adopt within the world” (1971, 587).

In terms of giving a person their due, it is important for a theory of personhood in general, and moral philosophy in particular, that individuals are capable agents (Weber 1968). This is why Rawls emphasizes, in reaction against utilitarianism and teleological conceptions, that the self is always prior to its ends. The self is, as Sandel states, “always, irreducibly, an active, willing agent, distinguishable from [the] surroundings, and capable of choice” (1998, 19). This demarcation between the self and the world is needed to distinguish the self from the particular situation. Without this distinction, there would be no subject.

With the importance of choice, liberalism embeds justice in the act of choosing and locates justice itself in the freedom of the individual to make decisions and movements unencumbered by the conditions that promote the overall good of society. In this way, justice is defined as freedom from constraints of others. As Rawls notes, this is the “standard for appraising institutions and for guiding the overall direction of social change” (1971, 263). In this way, liberalism emphasizes a metaethics — the conditions of ethics — that concentrates on the conditions that enable the freedom of choices and movements for individuals. Liberalism correctly recognizes the importance of the ability to choose, for this is a fundamental feature of agency. Liberalism, however, fails to
acknowledge both the grounds and the consequences of decision-making (Sandel 1998, 27).

Agency — the active or capable component of personhood — has two dimensions. Said another way, there are (at least) two ways of conceptualizing what agency is. To better understand the liberal conception of agency, it is helpful to clarify the liberal connection between agency and community, between the individual and the collective. Liberalism presents two accounts of the good of community. The first account views the community in instrumental terms “where individuals regard social arrangements as a necessary burden and cooperate only for the sake of pursuing their own ends” (Sandel 1998, 148). Rawls distinguishes his view of community from the instrumental view and rather acknowledges the possibility that cooperation can be a good in itself. Rawls concedes that individuals may engage in cooperative activity, contra instrumentalism (Dworkin 1978), for reasons other than selfish motivations alone: “We need not suppose … that persons never make substantial sacrifices for one another, since moved by affection and ties of sentiment they often do” (Rawls 1971, 178).

Rawls acknowledges cooperation as a social good, but with qualifications. For Rawls, cooperation is qualified because it is attached to sentiment, as “moved by affection.” Against the instrumental approach that views cooperation as governed ultimately by the self-interested motivations that consist only in the advantages individuals derive from cooperating, perhaps even in their own long-term self-interests, for Rawls, feelings of attachment may accompany cooperation. For the instrumental approach to community, community is a byproduct of the interests of individuals who
comprise it. While Rawls appears to be broadening the instrumental approach to cooperation, does he expand it enough? Do possible sentiments that individuals may have to a community shape his conception of justice? When discussing the influence of sentiments on cooperation, Rawls states: “but such actions are not demanded as a matter of justice by the basic structure of society” (1971, 149). While Rawls concedes that cooperation in communal life may be a good, he does not consider this to be a dimension of justice. In this way, Rawls shares with Burton an emphasis on rights or needs of the individual.

Given Rawls’ account, collective ends may indeed be a good and are natural. But is his account of the reasons for cooperation — self-interest and sentiments — adequate for the responsibilities of self-governance? When Rawls states that such action as cooperation are “not demanded as a matter of justice” he is offering an individualist account of interpersonal relations, though he allows that the motivations of individuals may include benevolent as well as self-interested pursuits. First, Rawls fails to distinguish between benevolence (which is not required for justice anyway) and self-interest. And second, even if he were to make a clear distinction, cooperation based on self-interest and benevolence still lacks the breadth and depth required for self-governance. Rather, self-governance governed by civility requires, or may at times require, sacrifices that limit self-interest and extend across the boundaries of sentimental attachment to include civil interactions with others to whom we do not have a sentimental attachment. The elements of civility as related to self-governance are too important to be relegated to self-interest and to feelings of attachments. Simply put, our selfish egos and
changing emotions cannot be the sole guides that ensure and maintain self-governance. This position will be challenged in an upcoming discussion of civility wherein it will be argued that civility requires serving justice when we do not have sentimental attachments.

To amend liberalism's restricted sense of interpersonal relations, Sandel suggests that “community” be described “not just as a feeling but as a mode of self-understanding partly constitutive of the agent’s identity” (1996, 150). It is not merely that individuals have collective sentiments and pursue collective aims — what communitarians call “the good.” Rather, identity is defined to some extent by the interpersonal relationships in which individuals participate.

If identity is thus part of our agency, it is important to clarify what is meant by the term agency, since, as Sandel notices, “intersubjective and individualistic images appear in uneasy, sometimes infelicitous combinations, as if to betray the incompatible commitments contending within” (1996, 151). An important and irresolvable tension resides between individuals and the associations and societies that are reciprocally constituted. Recall from structuration theory that participation goes both ways (Giddens 1984). Associations and societies are constituted by the participation of individuals. Participation describes the way individuals find themselves from the beginning, participating in intersubjective relations (Harre 1998). Individual agency is then constituted by two elements: the capacity for choosing and the capacity for reflection. Capacity for choice relates to the capability of intervention into the affairs of the natural and social world. Capacity for reflection relates to the cognitive dimensions of critical appraisal required for self-governance in balancing the concerns of individuals and the
concerns of collectives. Self-governance is embedded also in the behaviors of civic participation and requires civility towards all actually or potentially intersubjectively contact, not just those with whom we feel sentimental attachments within my self-defined community.

The position of Rawls, and liberalism generally, take justice as primary and the nature of the moral subject as given. Communitarians focus on justice in the continuance of the existing community. Sandel, and the civic republicans generally, take the principles of justice as provisional and examine what must be true of the subject for whom justice is the first virtue and what must be required of justice in the context of the collective. Rather than attend to these well-argued positions, I propose to examine the conditions of self-governance.

The deontological self, according to Sandel, is a narrow theory of the person: “to be a deontological self, I must be a subject whose identity is given independently of the things I have, independently, that is, of my interests and ends and my relationships with others” (1998, 55). Rawls mentions that distancing the self from the self’s possessions is to both be related to the possession and distanced from it (1971, 129). Sandel explains that a crucial balance between self and its “possessions” is necessary:

To say that I possess a certain trait or desire or ambition is to say that I am related to it in a certain way — it is mine rather than yours — and also that I am distanced from it in a certain way — that it is mine rather than me.

The latter point means that if I lose a thing I possess, I am still the same ‘I’
who had it; this is the sense, paradoxical at first but unavoidable on
reflection, in which the notion of possession is a distancing notion. (1998, 55)

As Sandel explains, distancing is essential to the continuity of the self because “it
preserves for the self a certain dignity and integrity by saving it from transformation in
the face of the slightest contingency” (1998, 55). But distancing must be qualified; it is a
matter of finding the right amount of distance in relation to possession. Possession can
fade in two different ways into dispossession. The first is for possession to collapse into
identity as obsession. The second form of dispossession is disconnection. Possession is
connected with human agency and self-governance in both the capacity to choose and the
capacity of critical reflection. When the distance between possession and self collapses
into obsession, it is better said that the self no longer possesses it, but is possessed by it;
on the other hand, when the distance between possession and self drifts to dislocation, the
possession no longer has relation to identity. Both forms of dispossession are
disempowering.

The first form of dispossession involved in distancing is to recreate and preserve a
space that threatens to collapse. As Sandel describes:

Crowded by the claims and pressures of various possible purposes and
ends, all impinging indiscriminately on my identity, I am unable to mark
out the limits or the boundaries of my self, incapable of saying where my
identity ends where the world of attributes, aims, and desires begins.

(1998, 57)

In this form, the self is too closely tied to its possession and the distinction between self and its possessions are indistinguishable. The second form of dispossession involved in distancing is to recover and preserve a meaningful relationship between the self and its possessions. As Sandel describes:

The self is disempowered because dissociated from those desires which, woven gradually together into a coherent whole, provide fixity of purpose, form a plan of life, and so account for the continuity of the self with its ends. (1998, 58)

In this form, the self is too detached from its environment and is overly static and impermeable. In both cases the self is closed off from transformation, or, to refer to Weber’s (1968) “iron cage” analogy, the self is locked in an iron cage by its own doing. The raises concerns that needs theory appears incapable of addressing on its own if it is anchored in possessive individualism. It will become clearer in the next chapter that complementing needs theory with responsibilities unlocks the iron cage through appropriate actions and critical reflections.

While Anthony Giddens speaks of agency generally, here we can begin to add complexity to agency — as capability and reflection. Sandel separates agency into two
dimensions that can address disempowerment as a result of dispossession. The “cognitive” and the “voluntarist” can both cause and repair a different kind of dispossession (Sandel 1998, 58). The voluntarist form of agency repairs the detached through the choice of a plan of action in which the willing self intervenes in the course of events, as an exercise of capability, to possess an end and connects the self to a goal. The cognitive form of agency repairs over-attachment through the distancing of critical reflection. The cognitive dimension wedges between the self and the self’s possessions and restores the space by inwardly examining of the self as a subject of inquiry. Sandel explains that “when I am able to reflect on my obsession…it becomes more an attribute and less a constituent of my identity” and dissolves from obsession and becomes mere desire (1998, 58).

In the cognitive dimension of agency, the subject achieves self-governance not by will but by reflection. The differentiation of agency into these two dimensions clarifies, in Giddens’ terms, the capability of intervention. Agency as a choice for a plan of action refers to the routinization of action and the breaking away from routinization with the possibility of changing action plans to contribute to the transformation of social systems and social structures. Agency as critical reflection, on the other hand, refers to the cognitive aspects of knowledge systems and to the self-awareness of the subject’s relation to various possible projects and the connection between means and ends. This is an underdeveloped dimension of Giddens’ structuration theory and will be pursued below.

These two dimensions of agency can be separated analytically, as addressing different questions, though in reality they inform each other. The voluntarist dimension
of agency is suited for the question what shall I do; the cognitive dimension of agency is suited for the question who am I. The voluntarist notion of agency is the more recent, contemporary usage of agency in moral philosophy while the cognitive emphasis appeared prominently in classical ethical philosophy (such as Socrates).

In the liberal conception of agency, the notion of the *unencumbered* and *unconstrained* self addresses both aspects of agency. First, the unencumbered self is designed to check the influence of tradition and received aspects of the cognitive framing of explanations. Second, the unconstrained self is designed to check the limiting (and oppressive) aspects of social structure that limit available choices of action. The first addresses knowledge and self-awareness; the second addresses the capacity of achieving desired ends. The unencumbered self refers to the intrasubjective dimensions of the self; the unconstrained self refers to the intersubjective dimensions of the self. However, this is where the liberal conception of the subject is most vulnerable, because the intersubjective dimensions fade by focusing on individual needs and rights.

The intersubjective principles for individuals are separated according to duties that individuals have towards other individuals and duties that individuals have towards social institutions (Sandel 1996). First, duties towards other individuals are “natural duties” that “apply to persons irrespective of their consent, such as the duties to help others in distress, not to be cruel, to do justice, and so on” (Sandel 1998, 110). Such duties are “natural” in the sense that they are not tied to social conventions and traditions. Rather, such duties are the responsibilities individuals have towards other individuals, as individuals. Such duties represent the responsibility side of human ontology and form the
basic structure of civil society. Second, “obligations”, describe the “moral ties we voluntarily incur, whether by contract or promise or other expression of consent” (Sandel 1998, 110). The obligation side of the principles for individuals is an expression of the voluntary will side of human ontology and addresses the intersubjective agreements that we choose to enter and to be bound. Rawls, however, qualifies this second dimension. For Rawls, obligations can be annulled because they presuppose a proceeding background morality:

Obligations arise only if certain background conditions are satisfied. Acquiescence in, or event consent to, clearly unjust institutions does not give rise to obligations. It is generally agreed that extorted promises are void *ab initio*. But similarly, unjust social arrangements are themselves a kind of extortion, even violence, and consent to them does not bind. (1971, 112)

Rawls continues that it is “not possible to have an obligation” to arbitrary forms of government because obligations “presuppose just institutions, or ones reasonably just in view of the circumstance” (Rawls 112) but social relationships are different than relations to a government, even though they may include a few of the same elements. Rawls’ argument is based on the primacy of justice as antecedent and as a condition for interpersonal obligations. Obligations are dependent, therefore, upon voluntary acts, and voluntary acts are dependent upon conditions of fairness. Therefore, this underscores the
role of judgment in the evaluation of obligations, since conventions, such as promising and obligation are analogous to the rules of a game: “Thus along with most other ethical theories, justice as fairness holds that natural duties and obligations arise only in virtue of ethical principles” (Rawls 1971, 348). The question, then, is how are ethical principles generated within a framework that concentrates on unencumbered and unconstrained individuals? This is unproblematic in the language of liberalism and needs and rights if justice is served when individuals are free to choose and to act. It is more complicated in an intersubjective, relational conception of individuality that concentrates on situated and contextual selves.

For example, since contracts are “social facts” (Sandel 1998, 112), and social facts must be discussed from a perspective of contingency, not just a position of convention (Nozick 1972), agreements can be assessed from a number of positions. They can be assessed from the conditions in which participants entered the agreements or to the long term consequences of the agreement. As such, contracts can be viewed from the motivations of the participants, the means to achieve a given outcome, or the intended and unintended outcomes of achieving a contract; all are points along the continuum of the stratification model of structuration theory discussed earlier. Therefore, the consequences of agreements can be unfair for a number of reasons, as Sandel recognized:

One or the other party may be coerced or otherwise disadvantaged in his bargaining position, or misled or otherwise misinformed about the value of the objects being exchanged, or confused or
mistake about his own needs and interests, or, where uncertain
future returns are involved, a bad judge of risk, and so on. (1998,
114)

Though not exhaustive, these factors suggest that different persons are situated differently
and ensures that differences of power and knowledge persist, allowing that agreements
are continually influenced by factors to be assessed from a moral point of view.
As Sandel reaffirms, agreements are embedded in practices and rules and “cannot justify
anything on their own, but must depend for their moral consequences on some principle
independent of them” (1998, 115). However, a systematic moral framework does not
solve the dilemma, since a “convention about conventions only creates another social
fact” (Sandel 1998, 116). Therefore, even social contracts require the cognitive and
voluntaristic dimensions of self-governance, rooted in the intersubjective ethics of
civility.

Traditional contract theorists appealed to Natural Law as prior to particular
practices and conventions (Barker 194, x-xi). John Locke, for example, looked to the
Law of Nature to provide the foundation of agreements that provides a basis for other
agreements:

Thus the law of nature stands as an eternal rule to all men,
legislators as well as others. The rules that they make for other
men’s actions must, as well as their own, and other men’s actions,
be comfortable to the law of nature… and the fundamental law of
nature being the preservation of mankind, no human sanction can
be good or valid against it. ([1690] 1937, 129)

Rawls, and contemporary liberals, reject such teleological and metaphysically embedded
foundations, resulting in a liberalism that departs from John Locke and moves to an
unencumbered and deontological self. For Rawls, Kant’s appeal to transcendence is
also too heavily laden these with metaphysical assumptions. Rawls’ attempt is to provide
an Archimedean point, as Sandel explains:

…to find a middle way between conventionalism and arbitrariness,
to seek a standard of appraisal neither compromised by its
implication in the world nor dissociated and so disqualified by
detachment. (1998, 119)

To do so, Rawls posits an incomplete human ontology that dissociates individuals from
contexts and traditions. Rawls is attempting to evade the incomplete nature of the social
world. Essentially, Rawls is evading the necessary role of judgment, the necessary role
of tension in the open-ended and ongoing project of human social life. Rawls is
concerned to keep the unencumbered aspect in his theory of the person in his attempt to
keep the right prior to the good and choice as a priority in the voluntaristic notion of
agency. In doing so, Rawls limits self-governance to human rights, in the same way that
Burton limits self-governance to needs and fails to address responsibilities. Is it time to suspend the quest for foundations? Or is it time to accept participation and indeterminacy as a foundational feature of human ontology?

Two accounts of agency are needed for assessing agreements, which connects an account of the justification of the self with philosophical anthropology or a theory of the person. The first account of agency highlights the role of choice, the other emphasizes knowledge. Or, as stated earlier, these accounts highlight the voluntarist and the cognitive dimensions of agency. The voluntarist account is related to the capability to intervene or the power and will of the self. The cognitive account is related to the capability to understand the conditions and possibilities of the self, the conditions and possibilities of the social world, and the conditions and possibilities for change of the self and social world. In the voluntarist account, the ends are chosen; in the cognitive account, ends are discovered. Rather than separating these two accounts of agency, they need to be combined, since:

Actual agreements often turn out unfairly because of the various (coercive and non coercive) contingencies associated with the inevitable differences of power and knowledge among persons differently situated. (Sandel 1998, 125)

Merging the two accounts of agency blends power and knowledge into a robust account of human ontology. The capability of intervention is both an act of will and self-
discovery as participation with other intersubjective beings. Merging these two accounts leads to a more robust account of self-governance by inferring a responsibility side to complement basic needs and rights.

Sandel examines the limits of liberalism through the writings of John Rawls and finds that liberalism lacks an adequate account of the good. While not disagreeing with Sandel, this study argues that liberalism lacks an adequate account of self-governance. The deontological ethic, as a correction to utilitarianism that places priority in ends, posits that the self is first distinct and then forms relationships and engages in social action and agreements with others. As Sandel described, for liberalism, “we are barren subjects of possession first, and then we choose the ends we would possess” (1998, 133). According to the deontological ethic, what separates humans is prior to what connects them. To better understand the philosophical anthropology of liberalism, it is instructive to include its theory of community and to account for how a deontological self comes to acquire purposes and ends.

First, liberalism’s reliance on justice as freedom from... focuses on the constraining aspects of community and denies the positive and formative aspects of social life. Second, for a self to play a role in shaping the contours of its own identity require the faculty of critical reflection. The power of will is not enough to connect means and ends. What is also required is both self and situational knowledge.

Liberalism has a limited scope for critical reflection. The reflection of liberal subject, in the account given by Rawls, is directed at the assessment of the means and ends for attaining a goal and to the level of desire for a given agent. As Sandel explains,
the reflection involved in Rawls’ liberalism is not critical self-reflection, because it is oriented to assessing the conditions of action external to the subject or to the relative intensities of the subjects’ desires. For Sandel:

The reflection involved in sizing up the alternatives and estimating their likely consequences, is scarcely a form of self-reflection at all; it looks outward rather than inward, and amounts to a kind of prudential reasoning that could in principle be carried out with equal or greater success by an outside expert who knew relatively little about the agent but a good deal about the alternatives involved and the sorts of interests and desires they typically satisfy. The reflection involved in assessing the relative intensity of desires, looks inward in a sense but not all the way. It takes as its objects the contingent wants and desires and preferences of the self, but not the self *itself.* (1998, 159)

As noted, liberalism concentrates extensively on individuation of the self, ignoring participation in association as a formative dimension of subjective identity. Self-knowledge, for Rawls, is connected to the sentimental understanding of justice in that it is limited to the awareness of a subject’s wants and desires. Charles Taylor (1977) clarifies the connection between reflection and identity. For Taylor, reflection is separated between the reflection of a “simple weigher” and a “strong evaluator.” The “simple weigher” is minimally reflective in the sense of weighing desires and evaluating
courses of action to satisfy those wants. Compared to this thin reflection, is reflection of
the “strong evaluator” who provides a critical appraisal on the kind of human being one
is, not simply the kinds of desires a self possesses (or is possessed by):

Whereas for the simple weigher what is at stake is the desirability of
different consummations, those denied by his *de facto* desires, for the
strong evaluator reflection also examines the different possible modes of
being of the agent. Whereas a reflection about what we feel like more,
which is all a simple weigher can do in assessing motivations, keeps us as
it were at periphery; a reflection on the kind of beings we are takes us to
the center of our existence as agents… It is in this sense deeper. (Taylor
1977, 114-115)

In this way, liberalisms’ account of agency and reflection is limited to possessions and
sentiments (or, for Burton, needs) and concentrates on the voluntaristic side of agency to
define and then acquire. Sandel’s critique is sharpest on this point since in liberalism’s
account agency nearly disappears:

To arrive at a plan of life or a conception of the good simply by
heeding my existing wants and desires is to choose neither the plan
not the desires; it is simply to match the ends I already have with
the best available means of satisfying them. (1998, 163)
For Sandel, such aims and ends are not the product of critical, reflective choice. Rather, such a form of agency is sliding towards determinism where a “superficial introspection” allows one to “survey uncritically the motives and desires with which the accidents of my circumstance have left me; I simply know them as I feel them and seek my way as best I can to their consummation” (Sandel 1998, 163). Liberalism must, from the perspective of civic republicanism, go beyond assessing the intensity of desires to a critical self-reflection of assessing certain sorts of desires and its acquisition as responsible within the context of responsible participation in self-governance. Desires as such must be evaluated in terms of both intrapersonal and interpersonal self-governance. It is here that Rawlsian liberalism is again incomplete in the notion that individuals take no interest in one another’s interest, nor should they (Rawls 1971, 218). That individuals may possess the virtues of benevolence and love as a form of sentiment rather than insight remains a limited form of reflection. As Carter argues (in the following chapter), civility requires certain behaviors towards those not known nor loved and to whom we do not have sentimental attachments.

Subjects, to be self-governing, must be more introspective than simply to have immediate knowledge of wants. For Sandel:

To be capable of a more thorough going reflection, we cannot be wholly unencumbered subjects constituted in part by our central aspirations and attachments, always open, indeed vulnerable, to growth and transformation in the light of revised self-understandings. (1998, 172)
When Rawls inquires into the foundations of justice he concludes that justice concerns the “basic structure of society” (Rawls, 7). For a society to be just, therefore, justice must be the general framework of society and not simply an attribute of some individual preferences. Therefore, justice is a feature of social institutions and cannot be referenced solely to the sentiments of the participants.

Rawls may be correct that justice is the first principle. The question is whether the basic structure of a just society can be achieved with the unencumbered and unconstrained self? As Sandel explains, “for justice to be the first virtue, certain things must be true of us. We must be creatures of a certain kind, related to human circumstance in a certain way” (Sandel 175). Either we must maintain a certain critical distance from our immediate situation (Kant) or we must be an unencumbered subject of possession (Rawls). Either way, individuals must be essentially independent (Rawls 1980, 544-5). Posited by either of these positions is an individual autonomy predicated on a “disenchanted” (Weber 1948) moral universe without a discernable purposive telos. This is the universe claimed by the seventeenth century Enlightenment and most notably in the Scientific Revolution (Arendt 1958, 248-325; and Taylor 1975: 3-50). Only a world ungoverned by a meaningful order allows for principles of justice to be open to human construction and human choice (Sandel 179). Therefore, emphasis on constructing a meaningful universe accentuated the voluntarist rather than the cognitive side of agency: what can no longer be discovered needs to be created (Ackerman 1980, 356-368). As Kant summarized, individuals cannot wait for discovery of meaning because “they themselves produce the reality of that which they prefer” (Kant 1788, 68).
Individuals, freed from nature and a pre-given social order, in the liberal conception, are (or should be) autonomous agents of construction.

However, as Sandel argues, “the liberating moment fades before it arrives” (1998, 178). Either the deontological self is dispossessed, at the mercy of pre-established social institutions, “or the deontological self is dependent upon the administrative calculation of how to satisfy unchosen desires” (Sandel 1998, 178). Missing from the liberal-deontological conception of the subject is the cognitive dimension of agency — the critical self-reflection on both the subject’s role in the (re)construction of agency and the role of choice in weighing multiple desires and in (re)assessments of the connections between means and ends.

In conclusion, this chapter began with a discussion of the basic contours of liberalism and communitarianism and conceptions of the relation between the individual and the collective within these different perspectives. The bulk of the chapter is dedicated to a deeper analysis of the perceived limitations of liberalism in terms of a social ontology adequate for self-governing, with less attention given to the inadequacies of communitarianism. If successful, this discussion problematizes an exclusive focus on either individual needs or rights and points in the direction of further developing a social ontology consistent with structuration theory, discussed in the previous chapter, and the responsibility of self-governing. The unencumbered and deontological self of liberalism, presented by Rawls, are challenged by the stratification model of structuration and the double hermeneutic between agency and structure. At the same time, the discussion of the limitations of liberalism in terms of the voluntarist and cognitive dimensions of
agency adds crucial components of the discussion of agency missing in structuration theory. Giddens concentrates on the voluntarist dimensions of agency. Adding the cognitive dimensions of agency both embeds the individual in the intersubjective dimensions of social reality, as a criticism of liberalism, and, at the same time, offers optimism to critical situations discussed by Giddens in the previous chapter. Recall that, for Giddens, critical situations usher reversions to child-like cognitive dependencies. However, given the above discussion, critical situations can offer opportunities for critical reflections as well and will be explored in more detail in the following chapter.

While Giddens offers, this study argues, improvements to the limited liberal ontology, structuration theory can be better informed by a more thoroughgoing discussion of the responsibilities involved in self-governing. The following chapter will continue exploration into the responsibilities of self-governing by continuing the discussion of the requirements of the responsibilities of both critical reflection and actions for self-governing, building on the social ontology of structuration theory.
See Rainer Forst, *Contexts of Justice: Political Philosophy beyond Liberalism and Communitarianism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002) for a more detailed discussion of the different conceptions of justice in relation to the different “levels” of social participation. The history of the natural and social sciences have debunked neutrality — a deontological epistemology — as a myth.

It should be noted that in terms of criminal science and criminology, a more conservative approach to justice focuses on crime control and different forms of retribution.


For example, recall the differences between the contract theories of Hobbes and Rousseau. For Hobbes, individuals are self interested and no matter how bad life might be living under a sovereign, life under the sovereign is better than the “state of nature.” In stark contrast, for Rousseau, the original state of nature is the Garden of Eden and it is the elite who control the state that bring oppression and domination on those not controlling the state. Hobbes promotes obedience to authority while Rousseau promotes revolution if oppressed. Conceptually, these cognitive frames are carried into the Twentieth Century with Herbert Packer’s “crime control” and “due process” models in criminal justice.
6. Needs, Rights and Responsibilities

This section deals with human needs (or rights) by asking the question who is to do what for whom rather than attempting to list a set or class of needs or rights. This is the paramount question for conflict resolution: given the complexities of violent conflict, what are the different roles for the parties in conflict and for those who intervene as third-party actors, and what role might the different parties in conflict play in resolving or transforming a conflict from violence to politics (Lederach, 2002, 2005). Whereas needs theory asks, what are the unmet human needs (Burton 1979, 1990, 1993), shifting the discussion to responsibilities involves a greater range of possible variables. The discussion first centers on the work of David Miller and will attempt to clarify what is required of a responsibility approach to human needs. After examining Miller’s (2005) four approaches — causal, moral, capacity and communal — this study will argue that an interconnected or relational approach to responsibilities is most consistent with the reality of the complexity of the social world, as described within structuration theory. Rather than narrowing the possible alternatives, this approach to responsibilities is inclusive of the different approaches and is therefore complex rather than parsimonious.

The language and details of human rights now dominates international law and politics. One of the core elements of the following discussion centers on how broadly or narrowly human needs or rights are defined. First, political and civil rights — the right to
vote and not to be tortured, etc. — have received consensus from member states of the United Nations. Second, and more controversial, social and economic rights — the right to employment and health care, etc. — remain contested between member states of the United Nations (see Finnemore 2005). Burton’s needs theory reflects the full range of human rights as stated above, especially with the addition of group rights in the Universal Declaration, and a needs approach emphasizes especially social and economic rights through distributive justice. Some of the same criticisms of the imprecise nature of needs are mirrored in concerns over properly demarcating the terrain of social and economic human rights: “When we call something a right, we are claiming that it is urgent…but when almost every personal and political demand is couched as a right…the meaning and value of rights-talk can be undermined” (O’Neill 1996, 133). The same is true for the expanding list of needs, mentioned above. Why is the language of needs and rights so controversial? The implicit question behind needs and rights is the question of who bears the counterpart obligations or responsibilities to deliver on those rights? (Kuper 2005, ix). Or, said more succinctly, “Who must do what for whom?” (O’Neill 1996, 133). An account of concrete obligations of particular agents that correlate with specific needs and rights is not simplistic, especially given the rise of the processes of globalization. For example, power, resources, and capabilities are no longer exclusively attributed to states but are spread in the process of globalization to include various international nongovernmental organizations and multinational corporations (Kuper 2004). As will become more clear, responsibilities for needs (and rights) is even more complex and ambiguous. For example, Burton claims that structures and institutions must change to
fulfill unmet human needs, but, from the perspective of structuration theory, this task is not simple and straightforward and implies a full range of actors and resources, agency and structure.

Not only are the numbers and kinds of needs-claims variable, but the range of agents and institutions that potentially could be assigned obligations and responsibilities to meet them have increased. However, less energy is devoted to careful analysis on where the responsibility lies for fulfilling needs-claims.\textsuperscript{4} In meeting this challenge, Andrew Kuper suggests shifting the discussion from a “recipient-centered” articulation of needs to an “agent-centered approach, focusing on…those with the capacities and obligations…” to fulfill those needs (2005, xi). Kuper cautions, however, that we must be careful in correlating capacity alone too closely to responsibility: “the question is not one capacity, but whether…any responsibilities…are correlative” (2005, xii) to those human needs. Extending this insight, Onora O’Neill reminds that most approaches to needs and global justice assume that \textit{states} are the primary agents and view all other agents as secondary in accountability (2000). For Thomas Pogge, the main problem with a state-centric approach to the delivery of human needs is that it unburdens the private individual agent from responsibility (2005, 3-35). Given this understanding of human needs, it matters greatly whether needs are postulated as negative duties (not to coerce others), as freedom from…, or whether existing human needs may impose positive obligations and responsibilities (to protect and/or aid).\textsuperscript{5} If the state-centric approach is accepted, then private individuals are basically free to pursue their own interests, with
their primary moral responsibility simply to elect state leaders who pursue policies that work towards fulfilling human needs.\(^6\)

What is the case if private individuals have responsibilities that exceed a strictly state-centric approach? For this, principles of responsibility must be more clearly articulated, even though “few concepts in moral and political philosophy are more slippery than that of responsibility” and, as David Miller continues, we need to draw some distinctions around different kinds of possible responsibilities (2005, 97). Miller begins by distinguishing two types of responsibility, causal and moral.\(^7\) Causal responsibility refers to the role of an individual in the genesis of a state of affairs while moral responsibility, on the other hand, involves an appraisal of an agent’s conduct. Miller provides a useful example to clarify this distinction:

…[C]onsider the case where I am walking along the pavement, taking ordinary care, but trip over a raised paving stone, knock down the person in front of me, and injure him. Then I am causally responsible for the injury, but not morally responsible, because I have done nothing that attracts moral praise or blame. (2005, 97)

Moral responsibility involves failing to perform adequately one’s duty related to such questions as whether the agent intended the outcome, whether the outcome was foreseen, whether the behavior violated some standard of reasonable care, and so forth. Assigning responsibilities is not always as direct as may be inferred.
Attributions of responsibility are less clear when there are multiple agents whose actions can plausibly be linked to a given agents’ condition, such as those suggested by structuration theory. In attributing moral responsibility for meeting human needs, where is it located? For Burton, it is either leadership or social structures (1979, 1990). But much depends on the normative assumptions made of justified behavior. Take the case of deprived human needs of Iraqi children during the period of United Nations sanctions. If the UN had not imposed sanctions, more resources would have been available to fund health and social welfare in Iraq. Or, if Saddam cut military spending, the needs of the children could have been met. Both the UN and Saddam can be given causal responsibility for failure to meet the needs of the Iraqi children. How should we apportion responsibility between them, and can we do so without making moral appraisals of their conduct? If the conclusion is reached that Saddam’s regime posed a serious threat to other nations, and therefore the UN sanctions were legitimate, then Saddam’s policy may be given responsibility for the unfilled needs of the Iraqi children. If, however, the conclusion is reached that Iraq is a vulnerable regime threatened by surrounding enemies and justified in self-defense expenditures, then responsibility may be placed on UN sanctions for unfulfilled needs of Iraqi children. Either way, responsibility for the needs of the Iraqi children is determined by the normative assumptions about justifiable behavior.

When one asks who is responsible for the plight of the Iraqi children, two further questions emerge: where is moral responsibility placed for causing the condition of needs-deprived Iraqi children, and where is responsibility placed to alleviate this
condition? It is increasingly difficult to separate causal and moral responsibility in such cases. David Miller contends that too much energy has been placed on assigning blame, asking “who is responsible for bringing this bad situation about?” rather than seeking remedy, asking “who is best to put it right?” (2005, 102)\(^8\) The first question is historical. The second is capacity-oriented, assigning responsibility for present and future according to the available capacity of an agent best placed to provide the remedy.\(^9\) To these three distributions of responsibility — causal, moral, and capacity — David Miller adds a fourth — communitarian. The term is used here loosely to capture proximal ties existing within various groups (family, neighborhood, associations, ethnicity, national, religious, trans-national, and so on) that create relationships that generate responsibilities.\(^{10}\) Within the capacity approach, wealthier nations are responsible for the plight of the Iraqi children; within the communitarian approach, responsibility begins with the Iraqi population and broadens incrementally to include those with proximal relations to the Iraqi children and the Iraqi people.

After examining each principle in detail, Miller suggests that while all approaches seem *prima facie* plausible, none are adequate in isolation. Both the causal and moral approaches to responsibility rely too exclusively on the past. The capacity approach to assigning responsibility neglects how variations in capacity have arisen and the extent of the cost incurred by the agent(s) with the most capacity, therefore relying too exclusively on the present. The communitarian approach does not adequately address the relation between non-members or how responsibilities are distributed within communities. Similar to Anthony Giddens’ description of a possible impasse in social theory, David
Miller brings the discussion of responsibilities to a similar impasse, with similar options: one can despair at determining a general theory of causality, defend a particular approach and broaden the meanings of the terms within one principle and by arguing that all considerations about responsibilities are included in that perspective, or construct a multi-principle theory of responsibility that captures the strengths and bypasses the weaknesses of each approach.

In a multi-theory approach, for example, the Untied Nations, Saddam’s regime, the Iraqi people, and their neighbors each bear some share of responsibilities for the unmet needs of the Iraqi children in the earlier example. The United Nations could be held responsible for pursuing a just end by unjust means. Saddam’s regime could be held accountable of allowing unmet needs for propaganda (or other) purposes. The Iraqi people could be held responsible for not opposing and resisting Saddam’s regime more effectively. If this analysis is accepted, then no specific agent can be singled out exclusively as responsible for unmet human needs, and the agent bearing the largest share of responsibility (Saddam’s regime) is least likely under the circumstances to address the unmet needs. Rather than competing with one another, the allocation of different principles of responsibility to different agents complement one another, by addressing different aspects of responsibility. However, rather than simplifying the assessment of responsibility, this approach broadens the range, type and degree of differing agent’s responsibility.

A needs-centric approach, as outlined by Burton, narrows discussions of responsibility by assigning either causal or capacity responsibility, or combining causal
and capacity responsibility, to institutions and elites. This neglects elements of communal responsible and the more broadly defined understanding of the ever-present existence of capacity (to do otherwise) among all individuals (even those with unmet human needs).

David Miller, however, is too closely wed to liberalism and views those with unmet needs exclusively as victims and therefore attributes responsibility to agents other than those directly affected. This approach works with less difficulty when those with unmet needs are children, as in the above example of Iraqi children. But what happens to the attribution of victimhood in a case such as the Rwandan genocide? How are the events of May through June, 1994, to be understood? For example, were the Tutsi innocent victims of Hutu rage? Were the Hutu the victims of unmet needs caused by years of oppression and marginalization resulting from Tutsi policy? Are Tutsi and Hutu both victims of the legacy of the policies of colonial rule? When the case is limited to a discussion of children the analysis of responsibility is less complex than when discussing a case involving adults in which both parties are possible victim-offenders (Kaldor 2005). Attributing responsibility among adult populations involves assessment of the capacity of those individuals. To what extent are the motivations, means, and ends of action determined by biological needs? If the deprivation of basic causes a response, is the response necessarily violent? To what extent might needs-deprived individuals be considered responsible for their actions? What responsibility may be given to the neighboring nations and the international community for the genocide? Who is responsible to do what after the genocide? Expanding responsibilities to include all
those with capabilities, with agency, broadens the range of possible agents with responsibilities. Expanding the cognitive frame to include more possible actors coincides with a broader understanding of the voluntarist capacity of all (adult) individuals.

This broadened approach to responsibility, a pluralist approach, begins with the assumptions that unmet human needs should be remedied, agents should be encouraged to take responsibilities to meet needs, and a means of assigning different responsibilities is required. Answering the question who is responsible to do what is not limited to structures and elites but, in an analysis consistent with structuration theory, includes all (adult) members of society, even those who may be considered victims. For example, the injustice of the residue of the institution of slavery in the separate but equal laws in the southern United States were finally overthrown through the nonviolent activism and participation in social life by those who were themselves the victims of these social institutions, laws and norms (Ackerman 2000). Without blaming the victims for racial conditions in the United States, the so-called victims participated — exercised their agency — in their own emancipation. In this way, the victims were not simply passively awaiting another agent, or agents, to relieve them of oppression but were actively involved in self-governance. A discussion on this topic will follow in the next chapter.

Connecting causal, moral, capacity, and communal responsibilities is backward-looking, present-looking, and forward-looking, all of which are required for self-governance. Making these connections draws attention to the strengths of various connections and using multiple criteria ensures that different agents can be located in remedial responsibility. Similar to Giddens’ expanded social ontology in structuration
theory, this approach to responsibility is not parsimonious but rather adds complexity. For Miller, “...this complexity...simply mirror[s] the complexity of real-world cases” (2005, 112). This approach does not make assigning responsibility easier, but “it provides a way of thinking about them — highlighting their complexity — that may in the end prove to be more illuminating” (Miller 2005, 113). The expanded conception of responsibility disallows a mechanical application of principles and rather demands judgment in attributing which principles apply where. The cognitive dimensions of agency are activated in judgment and the voluntarist dimensions of agency are activated in expanding the range of agents with responsibility.

Miller’s use of the term responsibility is more similar to moral frameworks in assigning obligations and is less connected to how this paper uses the term responsibility to refer to the balancing dimensions of self-governing that include both freedom and obligations and the role of judgment. In broadening the understanding of responsibility, it is helpful to return to early attempts at eliminating the complexities of social ontology, such as Edmund Husserl’s attempt at phenomenology (Wood 2005). Rather than clearly defining the essential essence of individual existents, individuals in the social world are continually faced with freedom, restraint, and the duty of exercising ethical judgment (Weber 1919a, 1968).

One of the central motifs of Husserl’s phenomenological project is the impossibility of finally discharging context where we might be free from making judgments. Husserl labored at a continuing “stepping back” and finally concluded with his inability to collapse, once and for all, the ongoing persistence of human social life and
our contemplation of it. It is no more a sign of failure that the phenomenological moment must be repeatedly undertaken than we cannot eat the dinner to end all dinners or to say I love you in such a way that would never need repeating. Instead of resigning ourselves to the disparity of empty relativism, David Wood suggests focusing “instead upon the distinct and often compelling virtues of each mode of inhabiting the world” (2005, 3). For Miller, the task of properly assigning responsibilities is that it implicates many more actors which require more engagement and judgment in a given situation of deprived need.

Husserl’s attempt at disengagement leading to objectivity pointed rather to the “recessive dimension that interrupts the pretension to independence, autonomy, or closure of the dimension that has captured the space of representation” (Wood 2005, 3). This is a mode of engagement with phenomena rather than constructing layers of controlled conceptual operations on top of layers that moves in the other direction. This mode insists on the danger of closure and the danger of subjecting social phenomena to formal law or rule and affirms the necessity of ambiguity, incompleteness, negotiation, reflection, and contingency. As David Wood explained:

What we have called the step back calls into play the negative capability when it resists these pressures to prematurely resolve complex questions, when it refuses to pretend that boundaries that have been constructed are just there, when it refuses to agree that the way things are is the way it
must be, and when it consequently affirms the responsibilities of critical reflection and patience that flow from these refusals. (Wood 2005, 4)⁰¹¹

In both theoretical and ontological terms, it is stepping back from the fantasy of a final solution, of the seemingly attractive idea of reaching an end to ethical questions. The central issue we confront is that of agency, the agency of the individual agent and the necessity of making judgment.

Derrida has labored to work through the ethical dimensions of agency in terms of responsibility (1992, 1993, 1995). For Derrida, responsibility is required in responsiveness or openness to what is ambiguous and does not admit of a straightforward answer (1992).¹² For Derrida, this is the very ontological condition of human life. Whereas moral frameworks contain layers of concepts upon concepts and provide standard procedures for behavior, the ontological freedom and ambiguity of social life eschews such codes and rules (1993, 1995). For example, Kierkegaard’s analysis of Abraham — the father of faith — points at the possibility of the necessary suspension of moral frameworks. Moral frameworks prescribe obligations. Ethics, on the other hand, demands responsibility. For Derrida, “responsibility is excessive or it is not a responsibility” (1991, 118).¹³ Whether or not responsibility is viewed in the radical terms that Derrida suggests, responsibility is the very space of incompleteness that transforms obligations as an attribute of a subject to being an openness — capability — that makes possible a subject.¹⁴ This complexity can lead to despair.¹⁵ It can also, as Giddens and
Miller already noted, lead to increased and multiple opportunities for agents to act, engage, and possibly change the world (for the better).

To summarize, answering the question of who is responsible to do what for whom asks an initial question of the manner in which individuals conceive of themselves as members of a political community. Again, answering the question depends on the assumptions of what is a human being and how the social world works. Miller broadens responsibilities to include more agents in the political world, and to identify that different agents may have different kinds of responsibilities. The move to include more complexities in assigning responsibilities matches closely with Anthony Giddens’ depiction of robust social ontology. This points to both the voluntarist and cognitive dimensions of agency and focuses attention on the role of responsible judgment and virtue.

Ethics and the Cognitive Dimensions of Agency:

The following section deals with ethics and the cognitive dimensions of agency. Several complicated features are discussed: does ethics require a sociology and has the quest for clarity, ironically, made hidden crucial dimensions of social ontology. This leads to an emphasis on the role of judgment, begun in the last section, required in navigating and selecting moral frameworks and what they mean. If ethics is a demand for reflection and the social world is indeterminate, then there is no properly conceived ethical position that can be unquestionably held in a moral framework. Ethics therefore
demands judgment concerning critical reflection and ethical positions must live with ambiguity.

The cognitive dimension of agency involves an ethical orientation to thinking reflectively and reasonably about the modern social world and continues to direct attention to the importance of judgment. Bernard Williams raises the question of how far any philosophy “could help us recreate ethical life” and he continues with a sobering insight: “the demands of the modern world on ethical thought are unprecedented and the ideas of rationality embodied in most contemporary moral philosophy cannot meet them” (1985, vii). Williams states two possibilities concerning the current dilemma for moral philosophy: whether it utilizes an adequately informed sociology and whether its quest for clarity has actually hidden crucial dimensions of human ontology. Bernard Williams is asking whether analytical philosophy has properly considered the ontological questions of what is a human being and how does the social world works.

First, for Williams, moral philosophy presupposes a sociology: “For every moral philosophy offers explicitly or implicitly at least a sociology… And we can…only understand the claims of moral philosophy when the implications — the ‘social embodiment’ — of the prescriptions are fully considered. (1985, 23). Here, Williams is drawing attention to the underlying ontological a prior assumptions, or frameworks, from which moral philosophers attend when doing moral philosophy. For Zerubavel, in The Sociology of Thinking (1995), all thinking is intimately embedded, though not wholly determined, in the social world.
The second concern is the aim of clarity for analytical philosophy. Williams considers himself an analytical philosopher, though he contends that overemphasis on reason and clear understanding “have damaged ethical thought itself and distorted our conceptions of it” (1985, viii). In fact, Williams says that philosophy should not even try to produce ethical thought (1985, 17). He implies, similar to Weber (1919a), ethics is to describe how we think about the ethical, not to tell us which conclusions we should determine: “I shall claim that in ethics the reductive enterprise has no justification and should disappear” (1985, 17). Williams is emphasizing the role of judgment in the complexity and indeterminacy of social life.

Williams begins with Socrates’ question: “how should one live?” This phrasing is crucial for Williams since it does not ask the more common and contemporary question, what shall I do but, rather, is a question about a manner of life. This is not a question about what to do now, or next; rather, it is a demand for reflection on one’s life as a whole (1985, 5). This demand for radical reflection is why Williams does not start with questions, as do other moral philosophers, such as what is my duty or what do I want. Socrates’ question starts at a different point from those of obligation, desire, and need. The ambiguity inherent in the question how shall I live incorporates dimensions of both moral and non-moral categories. The question, as mentioned earlier, can be addressed from a position of self-interest and sentiments (Rawls and liberalism) as well as according to moral obligation (communitarianism). However, it is a deeper and more complex question, incorporating responsibility and self-governing as well. It is
ultimately a question about “what should I do, all things considered?” and, for Williams, “it does no harm that the notion is vague” (1985, 7).

Williams thus separates morality from ethics, and this is crucial to understand a position that accepts vagueness in contrast to a position that demands clarity. It is insightful to recognize that the origin of the term ethics is different from the origin of the term morals. Ethics is a Greek term emphasizing virtues of individual character while moral is a Latin term emphasizing social expectation and obligation (1985, 6), restating the demarcation between civic republicanism and ethics, on the one hand, and liberalism and communitarianism and morals, on the other hand.

“Ethical theories have to start from somewhere,” remarks Williams (1985, 93). After rejecting attempts, such as that of Rawls, to start outside ethics — deontology — and rejecting attempts to start from the inside, such as with the meaning of words (Moore, Principia Ethica, 1908), Williams suggests starting with ethical experience. Insights from the “linguistic turn” (Rorty 1967) in philosophy and from structuration theory draw attention to ethical life as expressed in social practices. Therefore, ethical understanding needs a discussion of social explanation (1985, 131). While social practices can be, or lead to, cooperation and social harmony, social practices commonly involve tension and conflict. How tension and conflict are perceived matters a great deal, for Williams, and must be better comprehended rather than merely resolved. In fact, Williams raises doubts about how far conflict reduction may be psychologically and ethically desirable since “conflict, in particular, ethical conflict, may be the appropriate response to some kinds of situations” (1985, 47). The role of ethics is to help us
understand conflicts, to anchor self-criticism, to guide reflection on social practice, and to remind us that the “only serious enterprise is living, and we have to live after reflection…[also], we have to live during it as well” (1985, 117). This directs attention to the need for critical reflection, the cognitive dimensions of agency, involved in self-governance.

Experience involves interactions with others, experiments with questions and answers based in assumptions about what people are like and the ways in which societies work, and could work. Williams asks whether the principle of parsimony is adequate for such a task. The principle of simplicity is a requirement of theoretical rationality and methodological clarity, but is the most economical explanation an adequate explanation? In a sharp criticism of theoretical and methodological parsimony, and of deontological moral philosophy such as Rawls, Williams writes:

\[\text{…the fact [of starting] out with so little luggage provides no presumption at all in its favor. The question can only be whether enough luggage for the journey it must make. (1985, 106)\]}

Why should theoretical simplicity and its methodological criteria be appropriate for the experience of interacting with others through experiments with questions and answers based in assumptions about what people are like and the ways in which societies work, and could work? When the clarity offered by theoretical parsimony and methodological economy is gained, is something lost? As Kenneth Burke (1941) remarked, every way of
seeing is also a way of not seeing. When we see we are actively involved in the social world drawing on our past and present cognitive experiences. In terms of Husserl’s phenomenology, there is no point of reference available for knowledge that is absent of context.

Every act of theorizing is a part of life itself. For Aristotle, a human being is not an immaterial soul, but is essentially embodied and lives a social life. This point is affirmed by many social scientists and coincides with the earlier discussion of structuration and the duality of agency and structure. For Williams, the aim of the ethical is “to construct a world that will be our world, one in which we have a social, cultural, and personal life” (1985, 111). Therefore, the turn to theory is rooted in ethical thought itself (Williams, 111), in reflection upon the conditions, consequences, and possibilities that are, and might become, available in a future social world in which individuals participate. Not all reflection leads to ethical theory. Explanations can be habitual, confirming what is believed, or explanatory reflection can be critical, revealing that certain beliefs or practices are not what they seem to be (Fuchs 2005). Ethics goes beyond mere critique and presents a formative answer. Critical reflection becomes ethics, I suggest, when the practical is informed by the theoretical and when the theoretical is informed by the practical in answering Socrates question “how shall I live?”

For Bernard Williams, this leads to the basic question between practice and reflection, “and it comes into question when someone stands back from the practices of society and its use of concepts and asks whether this is the right way to go on, whether these are good ways in which to assess actions” (1985, 46). Here, Williams
acknowledges that the role of the social sciences is to provide explanations of those local judgments and of the conceptual differences between societies (1985, 150). Moving from social science to ethics raises the question of whether this is a good way of living compared with others? This type of reflection is risky, for Williams, since “reflection can destroy knowledge” (1985, 148) and, therefore, “everything depends on what will be said next” (1985, 150).

Before answering this question, we must consider various ways of answering the question. It is a central component of structuration theory that social practices are contingent upon, and shape, local communities, and vice versa. When examining these social practices — “institutions” for Giddens (1984) — the debate is commonly portrayed as one between universalists — any group’s judgments must apply to all groups — and relativists — the judgments of one group apply only to that group. Williams presents the provocative thesis that both viewpoints are incorrect. Instead, a middle, relational, perspective is needed that mediates between the universalist and radical relativist, similar to the position of responsibility in self-governing.

Williams understands that conservatives and traditionalists are skeptical of the critical approach in reflection because they fear the uncertainty that seems to follow from it. For Williams, this is a valid fear. However, lest the critical skeptic too early enjoys self-applaud:

They are right to detest a certain liberal posture that makes a virtue out of uncertainty itself and, in place of conviction, enjoys satisfaction — the
equally intellectualists [sic] satisfactions — of a refined indecision. (1985, 169)

By placing emphasis on responsibility, this research argues that the lop-sided accentuation of a hermeneutic of complaint can move to a constructive hermeneutic that blends reflection and critique with a positive emphasis on constructive action in nonviolent problem-solving conflict resolution (this point is explored in more detail in following sections). The cognitive side of agency involves reflections that are indebted to socially informed categories and not simply to pure reason alone. Between a universalist and a relativist position is the relational position, based in a responsible reflection balancing the two extremes. The relational position is evident in structuration theory and the ethical considerations of participating and evaluating the social world. The next section explores in more detail what is involved in an ethics of responsibility.

**Weber and the Ethic of Responsibility**

Max Weber (1968) devotes very little energy to the topic of war and violent conflict in his two volume work *Economy and Society*. He writes a few sentences about power as the ability to do one's will over someone else. The remainder of *Economy and Society* is devoted to why we obey, to how we make decisions, why we decide to follow, and how we create legitimacy for our actions. He also pays close attention to both the intended and unintended consequences of actions and to the irony involved in historical
events as different groups collaborate with each other and coordinate social action and in balancing ideas and resources in the world. For Weber, the most radical changes come not from the centers of power but from the margins. Weber develops the “ethics of responsibility” (1919a) to deal with the uncertainties and fluidities in the social world and to develop an orientation for individual social actions.

The debate between liberals and communitarians marks one of the current debates in political theory. Where does one turn if it is recognized that both liberals and communitarians have valuable contributions to make and limitations? Rather than deliberating about which position is correct and which is false, is there a position that recognizes the insights of each while recognizing the limits as well? The following will argue that Max Weber’s “Politics as a Vocation” (1919a) discusses ethics not as a choice simply between two schools or options, such as between liberalism and communitarianism, but as a form of engagement that acknowledges insights and limitations from both positions. Weber is not attempting to eliminate ethical discussions and judgment from politics, as many alternatives in political theory have tried (Schluchter 1986). In sharp contrast to Weber’s project of the ethics of responsibility is Adam Smith’s “invisible hand” that views social order as best emanating from the spontaneous collection of the sum of free-moving individuals each pursuing their own self interest (Ezrahi 1992). Weber instead is discussing a stance towards politics for someone who chooses politics as a vocation and also for those who grant consent to leadership. This is important for this discussion because, as Burton maintained (1993), conflict resolution is
political philosophy. Weber might add, if conflict resolution is political philosophy, what kind of political philosophy is it?

Weber dismissed two prominent schools of thought oriented towards social action. He first dismissed the Realpolitik focus on fear and threat of coercion, the principle orientation of deterrence — the idea that peace can be achieved through force or the threat of force. Weber did not spend much time discussing this because he felt that this form of gaining accent was not legitimate — by legitimate, he meant that obedience with this type of rule was successful only in the short term because people will move out from under this form of rule as soon as they are able. History is filled with countless examples of where this is attempted and where the irony of unintended consequences work back to undermine this attempted form of rule. Burton (1979, 1990, 1997) also recognizes this insight of the irony of history in that deterrence does not deter (for very long). Second, Weber then dismissed the approach that relies on self-interest and reward alone. Weber dismissed an orientation towards politics that was concerned solely with the self-interest of the individual (or the state), with the desires only about the self, a self that is unconcerned with others in the social world, and only concerned with the image that the self presents and the desires of the self. Weber dismissed both of these because he felt they are vain. Both views are concerned only with the “vanity” of the self (1919a). For Weber, the self requires a project outside of itself. The unit of analysis for political life, for Weber, is not simply evaluated in terms of the individual or the collective, rather, it is a relational social category.
Weber insists that the debate about the “vocation” of politics is about what kind of ethical posture is appropriate for modern social life. Weber laments a framework of moral deliberation that operates as an “ethics of conviction” and an “ethic of ultimate ends” and contrasts both with an “ethics of responsibility” (1919a). Both the ethics of conviction and the ethics of ultimate ends are inadequate, for Weber, for appropriate social life because neither properly connects the motivations, means and ends of social action (1919a, 1968). From conviction, ethical worth is determined according to actions that issue from valued principles; from ultimate ends, ethical worth is determined by outcomes of actions. Weber eschews social action that overlooks the connections between the means and ends and social action that views other people instrumentally as ends for another’s pursuits.

Being connected and devoted to goals separate from the self is not the same, for Weber, as “vain self-reflection” (1919a). Rather, vain self-reflection is “personally to stand in the foreground as clearly as possible” which reduces action to “being concerned merely with the ‘impression’” that is made (Weber 1919a, 116). A self divorced from a cause cannot be a mature personality. Weber explains: “the serving of a cause must not be absent if action is to have inner strength” (1919a, 117). A self divorced from a cause lacks moral seriousness. However, establishing a commitment to a particular cause or goal is not enough, for several reasons.

First, the social world, especially politics, involves not only value orientations of one individual, but includes value orientations of many individuals and, therefore, actions in regards to one’s own values can conflict with the value orientations of other’s. Also,
actions in the social world can conflict with the actions of others. From this, Weber establishes his choice for an “ethics of responsibility” in modern social life.

Second, Weber then asks why people obey (1919a). Why do people follow orders? He provided the well-known typologies of legitimacy: traditional, charismatic, and rational-legal. These are “legitimations” that people provide for giving their accent to obedience. Weber did not dismiss any one of these positions — traditional, charismatic, or rational-legal — outright, but his description provided analytical frameworks, or typologies, available for critical reflection.\(^{18}\) Weber’s point is that compliance with a socio-political order based on perceived legitimacy contributes to long-term social stability because the consent and willingness of the followers provides the basis of social order. On the other hand, compliance based on fear and reward, compared to active consent, are unstable in the long run. Again, Weber here is in agreement with Burton that deterrence does not deter. Weber’s possible disagreement with Burton hinges on the extent to which meeting basic human needs is tied to, or becomes, self-interest alone as the “possessive individualism” of Macpherson, or, whether individuals have responsibility as well towards social action that includes ethical considerations of motivations, means and ends, that may differ from an analysis based on individual needs.

Before further discussing Weber’s conception of the ethics of responsibility, it is important to understand his beliefs about conflict. Weber believes that no honest observer of social life can deny the centrality and pervasiveness of conflict (\textit{Kampf}) as an everyday feature covering all aspects of human life: “Conflict cannot be excluded from social life.
One can change its means, its object, even its fundamental direction and bearers, but it cannot be eliminated” (1919a, 26). Weber emphasizes a range of available possibilities for conflict, whether in the struggle for material resources, the “inner struggle of mutually loving persons for the subjective values and therewith, instead of compulsion, an inner control (in the form of erotic or charitable devotion),” or the “subjective conflict in the individual’s own mind” (1919a, 26-27). For Weber, conflict is present whether or not it is explicitly recognized or expressed. In fact, Weber contends that peace is not the absence of conflict, but rather “is nothing more than a change in the form of the conflict or in the antagonists or in the objects of the conflict” (Weber 1919a, 27).

Tension is key to Weber’s understanding of the requirements of the ethical life. Far from simple rule-following, ethical life is rarely (if ever) unambiguous and conflict within the ethic of responsibility is constructed as a form of moral endeavor that emerges within the context of social interaction and within institutional life. The ethic of responsibility is Weber’s formulation of a stance adequate given the plurality of “spheres of life” (Lebenswelt) located in various modern institutional orders — such as, religion, legal systems, economic systems, politics and arts — and the individual’s view of the world (Weltenshauung) which is the conceptual or theoretical level (Levin 1981).

For the purposes here, moral philosophy represents a Lebenswelt and is embedded and demarcated in systematic relations to its rational application. Ethics, as used here, is more closely connected to Weltenschauung and the theoretical-reflexive level. Moral philosophy, on the other hand, is more closely associated with institutionally designed systems and rules. The tone of Weber’s distinction between the two — ethics and
morality — is established in the central question he raises in his speech, “Politics as a Vocation”: “What kind of a man is to be allowed to put his hand on the wheel of history?” (Weber 1919a, 115). Weber relates this to a more general question that circles throughout his discussion of modernity. Weber, along with other of his German contemporaries, developed the concept of “personality” (see Portis 1978; and Lowith 1982) as someone able to make good decisions given the indeterminacy of the social world. According to Weber, we are born individuals and persons, we must become personalities. This becoming is rooted in dedication to causes, values and goals and proceeds through the individual’s self-assessment as action that is rationally guided (Starr 1999). The personality is developed, for Weber, through a perceived consistency between action and meaning.

Weber’s conception of an ethics of responsibility is clarified when contrasted with vanity, as discussed earlier, and the ethic of conviction. The ethic of conviction presupposes a hierarchical and rationally ordered cosmos with accompanying non-conflicting values (this is similar to MacIntyer’s goal, discussed earlier). The individual’s responsibility begins and ends with obedience to the demand or action that accord with the cosmos, and the intention in obeying is the most important indicator of moral worthiness:

If an action of good intent leads to bad results, then, in the actor’s eyes, not he but the world, or the stupidity of other men, or God’s will who made them thus, is responsible for evil…The believer in [an ethic of
conviction] feels ‘responsible’ only for seeing to it that the flame of pure intentions is not quenched [sic]: for example, the flame of protesting against the injustice of the social order (Weber 1919a, 121).

Weber’s illustration of the person oriented by an ethic of conviction is the revolutionary who feels the inextinguishable demand for action on the basis of her convictions, and who, finding warrant for action in the rationally arranged cosmos, can embrace any means (withdrawal or violence) to bring about the desired ends. According to Weber, promoters of an ethic of conviction call that “The world is stupid and base, not I. The responsibility for the consequences does not fall upon me but upon the others whom I serve and whose stupidity or baseness I shall eradicate” (Weber 1919a, 127). For Weber, this view is problematic because the social means and consequences of action are ignored.

In fact, Weber notes, “the absolute ethic just does not ask for ‘consequences’ and that is the decisive point” (Weber 1919a, 120). The ethic of conviction operates from a simple thesis “from good comes only good” (Weber 1919a, 122). The crucial point here is that an ethics of conviction focuses on intentions and motivations of actions while ignoring the means and ends of actions. What is missing is an analysis of the results of action, the consequences of participating in social life, and the compromises that are made along the way. It is not that one type of social action is necessarily more or less rational than another type of social action. The point is that origins, means and ends must always be considered and evaluated. The tension in managing Aristotle’s virtues is
maintained in Weber’s tripartite connection between origin, means and ends of social action. Managing this tension requires continual effort.

After Weber simply dismissed two prominent forms of political thinking, Realpolitik and self-interest, he later provides a stance he believes adequate to the ethical necessities of power, action and reflection in the modern world. First, Weber acknowledged that individual citizens have a role to play in politics, if for no other reason than they assent to following leaders. Stated another way, leaders need followers and therefore citizens need to reflect on why they are following. In terms of vanity, Weber was critical of actions based solely on self-interest, whether from fear or reward, because these provide a flimsy basis for social order since they are apt to change rapidly if/as the circumstances change. Social stability is better served through legitimacy, by willing consent. In terms of motivations-means-ends, Weber was critical of approaches that did not consider all three, as stated above.

Weber’s ethic of responsibility has criteria — “passion and proportion” — that serve to properly orient social action (1919a). By passion, Weber refers having an object of sincere interest outside of one’s self, motivated by social goals and not simply one’s own self-interest. By proportion, Weber refers to the connection between motivations, means, and ends, that does not overly accentuate one element but keeps them in balance and considers each important in itself. For example, the ethics of conviction is concerned primarily with motivations, while the ethics of ultimate ends is concerned primarily with outcomes. For Weber, social and political action requires careful consideration of all three. As convenient as it may be to eschew the tensions involved in judgment, the risk
involved in sincerely listening to other points of view, and the uncertainty of living in a
social world that is an open system filled with interactions with other agents and follows
the unexpected contours of unintended consequences, this is not an appropriate
orientation, according to Weber. Weber’s ethic of responsibility is what I refer to as the
basic human responsibility of self-governance. The responsibility of self-governance
approach includes a concern for human needs. However, self-governance goes beyond
needs to include ways in which individuals participate in social and political life. This
participation in social and political life includes responsibilities individuals have towards
their own motivations and towards others. These responsibilities can then be evaluated in
terms of Weber’s model of the relations among motivations, means, and ends of social
action. In summary, although Weber provided ways to reflect on human social and
political action, he did not provide a moral framework to follow.

In this way, ethics is going beyond justifying moral frameworks. Ethics is the
social act of seeking legitimacy (Habermas 1996). Ethics is the further enhancing of
civic engagement and respect, among contesting moral frameworks. Legitimacy itself is
a relational attribute built on mutual recognition and reciprocity (see Gutmann and
Thompson 2004, 98). Mutual recognition and reciprocity can justify independent moral
frames, but legitimacy requires something new — a new relationship between
antagonists. New relationships require sincerity, a sincerity rooted in an authentic
concern, not instrumental strategic actions (Habermas 1985). In this way, responsibility
is not limited to a vain accentuation that only includes in an analysis one’s own needs,
but must include others in a civic-minded responsibility.
While providing a useful template to examine social action and criticisms of truncated accentuations pursued in other forms of political and social theory (described above), a necessary role for tensions and conflict, and a prominent role for careful reflection and judgment, Weber had very little to say about the ontics of judgment. He had very little to say about what to do in a particular situation. In this sense, Weber is in line with others who have focused on the ontological condition of judgment, from Aristotle to Williams, and with the openness and indeterminism of social life as presented by Anthony Giddens. If the above outline of Weber’s thought is correct, while Weber would agree with Burton in regards to the fact that individuals have needs, Weber would be critical with an approach that focuses exclusively on human needs and overlooks social action. Weber’s ethics of responsibility raises some difficult questions. If self-preservation that lacks passion “outside of itself” — a concern for something other than the desires and needs of the self purely for the sake of the self — is considered a vanity, does Weber’s ethics of responsibility promote sacrifice? If an ethics of responsibility can promote sacrifice, under what conditions? The next section will explore sacrifice and the ethics of responsibility in terms of civility.

Sacrifice

In his discussion of the limits of liberalism, Kahn reflects Weber’s (1968) definition of the state as having the monopoly on the legitimate means of violence and confirms bluntly that political power “is ultimately a power over life and death” (2005,
This power is most apparent at moments of conscription and criminal punishment and, according to Kahn, “no theory of the political is adequate if it fails to confront and explain the phenomena of sacrifice and killing” (2005, 230). A citizen may refuse to kill for the state, but no citizen can be excused from the possibility of dying at the hands of the state. Liberalism recognizes the possibility of violence and has, since Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau, placed violence in the hands of the state through the social contract (Kahn 2004). The intention of that grant is to eliminate the actual use of violence by the threat of overwhelming violence (Joas 2003). While liberalism secures its contribution by creating a system of checks and balances upon the state and by eliminating the legitimate use of violence by private citizens (except, perhaps, in extreme cases of threats to life and property). The appearance of violence, therefore, represents a failure of politics. At the same time, missing from liberal ideals is the concept of sacrifice because violence has been displaced from the core to the periphery, as international relations or as suppression of crime. Hans Joas contends that in liberalism “wars and violent conflicts” are “the relics of a dying age,” to be replaced by liberalism (2003, 30). A recent example is the “no-casualties” rule in that one could kill but not sacrifice (Kahn, 1999). Kahn is referring to the policy of the US military in the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan where the attempt is to keep US casualties at an absolute minimum by employing advanced technologies that keep US forces away from direct combat. Walzer (2005) and others, agree that this form of warfare is expedient but they raise questions whether this form of warfare is moral. Walzer, for example, asks if these can be considered “just wars” if military personal are protected at the expense of exposing civilians to greatly
increased risk. Kahn continues, the question of the morality is seldom raised because “Nowhere in the liberal accounts of the state does anyone die” (2005, 241). That some may die in the conduct of war is why liberal theory based on well-being or needs alone “fails at the moment of conscription” (Kahn 2005, 247). How is sacrifice understood in the context of self-governing? This question will be addressed following a brief overview of approaches to the political.

Liberalism is a cluster of ideas, a family resemblance, based on freedom from coercion. It therefore implies tolerance and the exercise of (religious) faith (Rawls, 1993: 146-50), which are embodied in the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States. While both are at the core of the birth of liberalism, liberalism has a much easier time with tolerating speech than with tolerating ways of life that are counter to the state (Kimlycka 1955; and, Taylor 1989, 13), such as social or cultural lifestyles and worldviews that deny the fundamental authority of the state. Ways of life, commonly described as culture, are revealed in social experience and derive from communities apart from the state. From this perspective, the so-called communitarian approach, meaning and virtue are developed in social life with others in the context of ongoing communities (Kymlicka 1995, 76-77). The language of commitment is familiar in the communitarian tradition (and may become a problem itself), but is largely missing from liberalism, as stated above. Given the acts of violence occurring in the name of commitment to a cultural community, means that communitarians “have no better understanding of politics” than liberals (Kahn 2005, 65). What is needed, therefore, is a conception of political conduct that balances the insights of each perspective, rather than the
accentuations provided either by communitarian or liberal conceptions of community and individuals. The question from an ethics of responsibilities approach to self-governing asks what kind(s) of commitments and sacrifice might be involved in creating and sustaining the positive liberty of the civic republican tradition?

Self-government straddles the communitarian and the liberal, the private and the public, with an ethics of responsibility (Weber 1919a). The voice of authority is the (possibly fallible) self, but not the deontological and unencumbered self of liberalism. Rather, it is a self understood as participating in the life of a (possibly fallible) community and required to make ethical judgments. Self-governing is experienced as a form of political resistance and engagement from the start, as direct action by the people (Hanson 1986; Greenfield 1993) that constitutes the self at the same time it constitutes the state and the community (Arendt 1963). Going one step further, according to Kahn, “a self-governing people requires individual virtue of its citizens, and individual virtue requires religious belief and practices” (2005, 103). Whether or not this is true, the position of this paper is that religious language is unnecessary to develop self-governing that is appropriately civic-minded. While the language of self-governance is held within the Protestant religious tradition, the language of religion is not required. The term civility, discussed below, also captures this meaning. Liberalism opens the capacity for critical self-reflection; communitarianism allows the formative project of governing. Combined, this allows for self-governing. For Isaiah Berlin (1969, 118), the negative liberty of liberalism is the freedom to act without coercion (of politics or community); positive liberty is the capacity to realize the self and the community that mutually sustain
each other. The question for liberalism is how to create a polity that is strong enough to secure individual freedom without itself becoming oppressive. Positive liberty responds to a different concern of the self — the meaning and sustaining of liberty — without becoming corrupted. An ethics of responsibility in self-governing captures both of these concerns. The ambiguities of ethics (Williams 1982), responsibility (Weber 1968; and Miller 2005), and governing (Kahn 2005) result from the ambiguities of self and social ontology (Giddens 1984). The self in civic republicanism is not a self informed solely by the self-interest of the independent ego. Rather what is required is a self informed by the voluntarist and cognitive dimensions of agency as an intersubjective self. The following section will begin to argue that the self of civic republicanism does not require religious sensibilities. Rather, the self of civic republicanism requires a self oriented to social action and informed by civil and political rights.

The emphasis on non-corruption in civic republicanism, as discussed in chapter four, begins to shed light on the importance of the ethic of responsibility in self-governance, and especially on the idea of sacrifice. In the civic republican tradition, the subject is only free to the extent that she is self-governing (see Weber 1968). Self-governing is not simply having the freedom to act to pursue one’s own interests or needs, but implicates the self in terms of its own flourishing (Aristotle), and, in terms of social action, the actions of the self influence other selves (Weber 1968). Recall that in liberal accounts of politics, nobody dies (Kahn, 2005, 241). In liberal accounts there is only protection from the state and from other citizens during the self-defined pursuits of the individual. While protection and pursuit of individual preferences are important,
according to more robust accounts of social and political life, this provides an incomplete account of social and political experience and requirements. The most basic right in the liberal state is the right to life (see Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau). This is the premise of Rawls’s (1971) original position and the possessive individualism of Macpherson. According to the needs theory of John Burton, individuals are willing to sacrifice their own selves for the acquisition of basic needs (which is why deterrence does not deter). However, the need for sacrifice would disappear once those needs were met through distributive justice. In this way, reflecting Sandel’s insight discussed in the previous chapter, Kahn argues, “Liberalism becomes a program seeking to transcend the political conditions of its own existence” (2005, 281). An ethics of responsibility in self-governing accepts the political conditions of its own existence, maintains a critical eye to culture and tradition, and participates in sustaining positive liberty. Sacrifice will be revisited in the final chapter. At this point, the next section will explore in more detail what might be included in an ethics of responsibility account of social and political action.

**Responsibility as Civility**

A responsibility approach to addressing the ontological questions of what is a person and how does the social world work begins by drawing a distinction between the subject and the citizen (as described earlier in the discussion of the civic republican tradition) and moves to explore what is required of the modern citizen, an individual who
not only has needs (liberalism) and obligations (communitarianism), but also has responsibilities towards other citizens (civic republicanism). The language and history of virtue provides insight into the basic human responsibilities that exist between needs and obligations in modern social and political life (see MacIntyre 1982). The modern virtue, according to Stephen Carter is civility. Recalling Derrida, that responsibility is costly, so too is civilly managing and resolving conflict in the modern world: “The measure of our commitment to the construction of civility is how much we are willing to give up to achieve it” (Carter 1999, 104). Said another way, the measure of our commitment to self-governing is how much we are willing to sacrifice to gain it.

For Alexis des Tocqueville, if citizens in democratic states fail to grasp “those ideas and sentiments which first prepare them for freedom and then allow them to enjoy it, there will be no independence left for anybody” (1969, 70). He cautioned, in a country that places little value on public virtue, there would be “subjects” but not “citizens” (Tocqueville 1969, 93-94). Mary Ann Glendon continues this caution by recognizing the possible unintended consequences of revolutionary movements and the difficulties in maintaining liberty: “Many threats to the social environment are the by-products of genuine advances” (2000, 311) and Robert Dahl (1990) warns all revolutionaries to contemplate what comes after the revolution. From this perspective, more is required from modern governing than meeting needs. Therefore, what is required in the modern world is a way to build society in the process of revolution itself, in the process of meeting basic human needs and in the process of resolving conflicts. To lessen the
effects of the unintended consequences of revolution, for overcoming oppression, and for resolving conflicts, the following will argue is the virtue of civility.

Thoughts and writings on the different virtues have focused on different qualities throughout the ages that have been considered virtues. MacIntyre’s (1981, 1999) history of virtue covers the transition of qualities of character that have been deemed virtues at different points in history. For example, the Homeric period focused on courage, physical strengths — especially those needed in battle — and familial loyalty. Aristotle distributed virtues as a balance, a “doctrine of the mean” between different vices — justice, prudence, courage, and fortitude. The early Christian church, in contrast, focused on faith, charity, humility and love as virtues. The virtues, therefore, are not universal but relate to differing social contexts. The virtues emerging during early modern Europe were based on “gentlemanly” conduct (Shapin 1994): how can individuals interact, disagree and resolve conflicts without resorting to dueling? Throughout the centuries, the virtues have provided models of right and good conduct within a given social circumstance. Anthony Giddens (1982) describes one of the two major changes in modern life as existing within the emergence of the modern nation-state; with the emergence of the modern nation-state emerged the category of citizen (see also, Greenfield 1990). The virtue now called upon in the modern world to govern our social and political affairs, according to Stephen Carter, is civility. Carter recognized that civility itself is an ambiguous concept:
Similarly, despite the growing concern, we seem to have trouble agreeing on exactly what civility is. Some people, when they think of civility, think of manners. Others think of proper standards of moral conduct, or a set of standards for conducting public argument. Still others think of willing participation in the institutions that enable our democracy to thrive, what has come to be known as the movement for civic renewal. Some long for a golden past. Others imagine a platinum future. And all of these views are partly correct: like the blind men and the elephant, the many observers of civility are talking about different parts of the same animal. (1999, 11)

Civility is a term not easily defined and reflects the complications and necessity of making judgments. Carter’s definition of civility is “the sum of the many sacrifices we are called to make for the sake of living together” (1999, 11). Civility is the “set of sacrifices we make for the sake of our common journey with others”, a “signal of respect towards others.” For Carter, we require civility “to mediate our relationships with those we do not love” (1999, 71). Civility is not a sentiment nor an affection (Carter 1999, 57), contra Rawls; rather, civility requires discipline to overcome our selfish interest and demonstrate our respect for our fellow human beings (Carter 1999, 184). Carter stresses the point that civility to others “does not depend on how much we like them” (1999, 98). Civility, then, emerges when citizens are not operating from a position of vanity, as Weber chastised, but from a concern for social action in terms of past, present and future responsibility, as similarly discussed by Miller.
Carter begins by asking “why should we worry about how we treat strangers who do not love us and whom we do not love?” Admonishing liberalism’s two sides, the “worship of property” and the “worship of our rights” or needs (1999, 96), Carter’s understanding of civility is nearly a paradox, civility requires sacrifice:

These sacrifices involve the surrender of something we can readily understand as large and important: the entirety of one’s worldly goods, the totality of one’s life… (1999, 103)

While sacrifice is little discussed in contemporary moral philosophy, the concept of sacrifice is deeply embedded in the Judeo-Christian tradition (Wilson 1989; Elias 1978). In these accounts, it is cautioned that to sacrifice for a friend or family member is little more than self-love. Rather, the duty to love our neighbor flows from the relationship itself, not from our feelings about the relationships. It is a requirement that we respect all equally. The Golden Rule does not depend on emotional intimacy, rather, it requires action towards others (Carter 1999, 105). Therefore, Carter insists that discipline, or what this study is referring to as the responsibility of self-governing, is paramount in controlling impulses and desires when interacting with others. This point is more subtle than it appears: civility towards others cannot be dependent upon how much we like them, civility is not limited to a neighbor we happen to like. Again, “the measure of our commitment to the construction of civility is how much we are willing to give up to achieve it” (1999, 104). Stated from Weber’s perspective, civility requires, first,
limiting vanity, and, second, an increase in critical reflection on the ways that further legitimate social and political life by connecting means and ends. From the discussion of agency earlier, civility requires both the voluntarist and the cognitive dimensions of agency.

At this point, one way to understand what this study is calling human responsibilities as an important aspect of self-governance is captured by this understanding of The Golden Rule. Carter provides several principles of civility. For Carter, the problematic feature of modern “incivility” is the failure to follow a few basic “rules” of civility: “Our duty to be civil toward others does not depend on whether we like them or not” (1999, 35) and “Civility requires we sacrifice for strangers, not just for people we happen to know” (1999, 58). Carter begins with the maxim that civility does not require familiarity. Psychologist Richard Sennet argues that the desire for intimacy in all our relationships is an enemy of civility, that interactions in civil society require respectful “associations and mutual commitments between people who are not joined by family or intimate association” (1978, 3) Sociologist Benton Johnson makes a similar point that civility allows us “to live with unknown others” without “transforming them into either brothers or enemies” (1988, 7, 10) The point is that we need not have emotional attachments — neither love nor hatred — to interact with civil regard for others. Carter refers to this as putting a “rein on our impulses” by allowing others privacy “for those who are making the democratic journey with us” (1999, 70).

This leads to another maxim: “Civility creates not merely a negative duty not to do harm, but an affirmative duty to do good” (1999, 71). This requires respect, and
perhaps even kindness, to others. For Carter, this is not accomplished by devising better laws. Then how can it be accomplished? Civility begins with the assumptions that humans, all humans (not just the ones we love) matter and deserve respect. Civility, then, constitutes basic human responsibilities that each of us have in relation to others. Basic human responsibilities are beyond mere freedom from oppressive regimes, freedom from commitments, and even freedom from sacrifice. This is not to suggest that personal choice and freedom are irrelevant; they certainly are. The point is that we are on a journey with other people, or, in Weber’s perspective, we are engaged in social action that impacts others (Weber 1968). A society that is free must allow for personal choice, but freedom and choice must be social action that is responsible not only for oneself but also for others. For Carter, “a society that is civil must always be bounded” (1999, 85). Carter here is referring to the bounded nature of moral obligations, the norms, or “rules” of a community (1999, 82). However, Carter, while speaking of the rules and code of moral conduct, is really speaking of the ethics of responsibility to exercise good judgment about the choices we make and the behaviors we exhibit in self-governing relationship with others. Conformity to moral rules and obligations displays commitment, but conformity by itself lacks ethical judgments. Historian Jaroslav Pelikan cautions a crucial distinction between “tradition” and “traditionalism.” Succinctly, Pelikan states that tradition celebrates the “living faith of the dead” while traditionalism is the “dead faith of the living” (1984, 65). Reverence for tradition is a guide, not a rule, and we should not surrender our critical cognitive faculties. Conformity for its own sake lacks ethical judgment. On the other hand, as Carter explains, suspicion about rules and norms
themselves is mistaken if simply “questioning authority is an end in itself” (1999, 87).

The difficulty is finding a balance between individual autonomy and freedom of choice and living in a community filled with obligations.

From this perspective, as individuals, we have the basic human responsibility to exercise moral judgment about the choices we make. Civility, as a virtue, requires the self-discipline — self-governance — to both abide by moral rules and to challenge them when they are immoral. For example, citizens need the faculty of self-governance and responsibility to discern when to disobey unjust laws — such as slavery in the American South — and when to obey just laws — such as not committing murder.

This brings the discussion back to The Golden Rule: Do onto others as you would have them do onto you. Carter dedicates a whole chapter of Civility, “Sacrifice and Neighbor-Love,” to explain what he considers to be a strange notion in modern society. It is so strange, in fact, that Carter appeals to theological categories in attempting to describe “the greatest benefit and the greatest difficulty” of behaving civilly towards “those we do not love” (1999, 100). Religion, for Carter, is both formative and communal, and, at the same time, can be critical and subversive. While religious categories and language may be helpful to understand sacrifice, they are not necessary. What is necessary is a responsibilities approach to self-governing.

In this way, civility (can) involve sacrifice. Just as we would prefer not to be the means to someone else’s end, as both Kant and the neo-Kantians observed, we must not make others the means to our ends. Likewise, just as we prefer not to be subjected to oppression by another’s strict adherence to moral codes of traditionalism if or when they
are in fact immoral, we must not subject others to the oppression of our adherence to moral codes of traditionalism if and when they are immoral. Carter chooses the word “sacrifice” as the surrender of something we understand as important — whether self-interest or traditions and community — as a description of “the measure of our commitment to the construction of civility [linked to] how much we are willing to give up to achieve it” (1999, 104).

Two general themes emerge in discussing civility alongside responsibility. First, civility is not the same as agreement. Second, civility requires communication and the articulation of criticism when appropriate. Therefore, civility requires disagreement and dialogue, in addition to responsibility. The connection between these as a mark of civility is not without tension (as Weber discussed earlier); for example, much incivility could be avoided if we simply agreed with each other all the time. However, as Carter explains, “civil dialogue over differences is democracy’s true engine: we must disagree in order to debate, and we must debate in order to decide, and we must decide in order to move” (1999, 132). Civility does not require an overall consensus, civility and disagreement can, and should, exist together. In fact, civility without disagreement is the limited form of civility found in communitarian forms of association. Disagreement without civility, too often, is the limited form of liberal (dis)association. This leads to another maxim of civility, for Carter: “Civility assumes that we will disagree; [but] it requires us to manage and resolve them respectfully” (1999, 132). Carter describes respectful dialogue, as debate, in much the same way as Jurgen Habermas does (1984): respectful communication requires open dialogue. Too often communication is monologue, or the
more general problem where we try to find ways to put “cherished positions beyond
debate” (Carter 1999, 132). For Carter this occurs either in the context of certainty of our
position or on a topic we are uncomfortable with, and both of these make (some) ideas
inexpressible. Therefore, to be dialogue, communication requires “civil listening” to
those who disagree with us and also in granting others the genuine opportunity to convert
us (1999, 136-140).

In this way, civility may mean to be tolerant of others and actions of which one
disapproves, but tolerance itself is not the panacea. Within the “mythology of modern
liberalism,” Carter explains, “a demand for tolerance is merely a substitute for a clear
argument on behalf of the freedom that is threatened; it is an effort to win, we might say,
without firing a shot”:

The temptation to cry tolerance is sublime, because it casts one’s
opponents as narrow-minded fanatics bent on interfering with basic
freedoms. But, like most temptations this one should be resisted. It
deadens democratic dialogue and betrays an uncivil lack of respect for
those on the other side of the question. It also evidences a lack of moral
confidence, suggesting there is risk in meeting the opposition in
debate…[T]here is always risk in genuine conversation, but that very
riskyness is what makes it genuine. (1999, 215)
The virtue of civility allows for dialogue independent of whether or not all parties agree on certain positions. Two aspects are involved in civil dialogue and civil listening: First, those who disagree may be misguided in their opinion and therefore can correct their position. Michael Perry (1991) makes an even deeper point: second, we ourselves could be wrong. It is the possibility of the second dimension, the possibility that the other person(s) may be right that requires civil listening. Here Carter introduces another maxim: “Civility requires that we listen to others with knowledge of the possibility that they are right and we are wrong” (1999, 139). Carter acknowledges that sacrifice is involved “because we must hear views we may detest, because we must be open to the possibility of their rightness” (1999, 140). Therefore, civility requires that “we express ourselves in ways that demonstrate our respect for others” (1999, 162). To be civil is not to suspend moral judgment indefinitely, but it can mean tolerating differences in beliefs and behaviors. This is Carter’s next maxim: “Civility allows criticism of other and sometimes even requires it, but the criticism should always be civil” (1999, 217). Criticism is appropriate when it reflects respect for both ourselves and the other person. This allows for another dimension. In many situations, especially in the context of prolonged conflict, both parties may be wrong! Or said in a more nuanced way: both parties may be both partially wrong and partially right. This moves the discussion from who is right and who is wrong to a discussion about how to live in civil society in civility.

For Carter, civility’s task actually discourages the resort to law to settle conflicts. Making an argument similar to Robert Cover (1986, 1601-1610) that law is designed to
generate threats that, ultimately, are upheld by violence, as Weber defined the modern nation-state, Carter views laws as “ultimately uncivil, because they are, at their core, ultimately violent” (1999, 223). Or phrased another way, Carter asks of all laws “is it worth killing for?” (1999, 223) Rather than creating more laws, what is needed is more civility. Both Carter and Cover are not so naïve as to eliminate all laws. Rather, they caution that underneath all law is state violence. Carter gives the example of non-compliance to the law during the civil rights movement. The civility displayed by the participants in civil rights movement who sat at the Nashville lunch counters represents Carter’s understanding of civility. In attempting to undermine the unjust system, they nonetheless did not create further injustice by violating the civil rights of others, nor did they resort to violence. Phrased another way, how violent are we willing to be to bring the dissenter into line? Civil dialogue and civil listening, therefore, are required much in advance of the creation of laws, and in the continuing evaluation of laws. Civility requires better democratic habits, practices and judgments, not better laws. Civility is what enables social interactions, including disagreements, to proceed without (the threat of) violence.

The practice of civility is the practice of self-governance. Civility expands human social ontology beyond a limited concern for basic needs, sentiments, rights and legal structures to include basic responsibilities we have to ourselves and to others in the ongoing project of social and political life. Civility is the balance between the liberal and the communitarian perspectives and requires both critical judgments (the cognitive dimensions of agency) and civil actions (the voluntarist dimensions of agency) of
individuals participating in the social world. Ultimately, the next chapter will argue, civility is nonviolent management and transformation of disagreements based in concern for others and concern for ourselves through respectful dialogues and respectful listening. Nonviolence can be justified by religious categories, but is not required. Civility is the form of social action based in critical self-assessment and respectful social interactions for the sake of our common journey with others. Civility is the connection between the ends of freedom from oppression and the means for achieving it. Civility builds a problem-solving conflict resolution society in the process of handling conflict and tension. How are individuals to discern, to pass judgment, on themselves, others, and the prevailing social and political systems? This involves the cognitive dimensions of agency, as discussed earlier and, first, an understanding that the social and political worlds are social constructions. According to the discussion above, civility requires both the voluntarist and cognitive dimensions of agency. The next section will explore in more detail the cognitive dimensions of agency involved in making judgments.

**Judgment**

Judgment is in a perennial tension, but little has been said about it specifically (Larmore 1987). Judgments can be based on different conceptions (worldviews) and judgments are usually made according to a social ontology that is either action-centered or structure-centered (Giddens 1976, 1984). For example, Burton, employing needs theory, makes judgments about unmet human needs that are the engine of conflict and
makes judgments about social institutions and elites that cause the conditions of unmet human needs. The following section will examine judgment according to Aristotle and the virtues and outline some of the epistemological complications involved in making judgments, returning to earlier considerations of the indeterminacy of social life and the risks involved in making judgments.

Why has judgment been overlooked in Anglo-American moral philosophy? Theories of decision-making, choice and preference do exist in social and political theory, but these fail to capture the intricate and perennial tensions involved in judgment. More often, they are reduced to truncated understandings of human ontology: either action-centered or structure-centered (Larmore 1987). In fact, for Larmore, there seems little that can be stated explicitly about judgment even though areas of moral experience, especially areas of social relations and interactions, require judgment. That judgment is indispensable does not mean that it has been adequately described or clarified and yet it is especially in areas of moral disagreement and conflict where judgment must be exercised.

The nature of moral judgment, what this study calls ethics, is peculiarly difficult to describe. Part of this dilemma is that the tradition of moral philosophy “by so often neglecting the importance of judgment, has handed down to us so few attempts to make sense of it” (Larmore 1987, 14-15). Could it be that moral judgment, by its very nature is resistant to systematic and theoretical analysis? Ethics informed by virtue means going beyond justifying moral frameworks. The ethics of civility means seeking mutual legitimacy for further enhancing civic engagement and respect. Legitimacy is a relational attribute built on mutual recognition and reciprocity (Gutmann and Thompson 2004, 98).
This is similar to Lederach’s (1998) argument that an inclusive approach to transforming conflict without a predetermined end state is needed to transform violence into politics, since, in dealing with the past in the present, the future itself is created. What is involved, for Lederach, is the creation of a new relationship, with neither of the previous moral frameworks maintaining complete legitimacy, but working together to create legitimacy by working towards the future. Whether or not this is the case, the predominant path of Anglo-American discourse in social and political theory has sought to clarify the general principles of the exercise of moral action, not the complexities and ambiguities in systematizing judgment (Larmore 1987).

The idea of moral judgment is associated first with Aristotle. Reacting against what he understood to be Plato’s belief that virtue consists entirely in the knowledge of general principles, Aristotle protested that judgment, not just formal knowledge, is required in the exercise of moral action. For Aristotle, judgment is the discernment of the knowledge of rules in response to the details of a particular situation (Nicomachean Ethics, 1104a9). Training and practical experience, for Aristotle, play a vital role in the acquisition of judgment because judgment is received both through formal training and by performing right actions. Since training and experience are crucial in the acquisition of judgment, the moral life of a community informs the virtues (Nicomachean Ethics, 1106b36). From this perspective, the deontological and unencumbered position of liberalism, and therefore needs theory, is inadequate to develop the virtues of social life, the practice of living with others.
Before clarifying what Aristotle is referring to when he speaks of virtue, it is helpful to understand his famous “doctrine of the mean.” Aristotle’s doctrine of the mean refers to virtue — the midpoint between opposing vices — as a way to avoid acting in an extreme and doing not too much nor too little, but just the right amount in a particular situation. Aristotle’s doctrine of mean refers to virtue — the right use of judgment — as “relative to us” and not calculated through the use of a general rule (Nicamachean Ethics, 1106b36). Aristotle provided a few guidelines for what he considered to be virtuous actions guided by judgment:

1. We should endeavor to avoid the extreme that we are more inclined by nature to pursue;
2. We should learn what errors we typically make, in order better to avoid them in the future; and
3. We should be on our guard against the lures of pleasure.

(Nicamachean Ethics, Book 2, Chapter 2)

Aristotle’s rules of thumb concerning judgment are vague and defy systematic general explanation outside of their particular applicability to particular people in specific situation. It appears, then, that only judgment can shape this practical syllogism into meaningful directives. About what moral judgment is, he had little to say (Larmore 1987, 6). These guidelines do seem a good starting place for Weber’s ethics of responsibility and his criticism of orienting social action solely in terms of individual

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self-interest and vanity. The emphasis on avoiding habits that we generally pursue
directs attention to the cognitive reflexive component of agency. Neither Aristotle nor
Weber viewed the virtues and moral judgment as isolated from the interests or needs of
the individual alone.

One of the few Anglo-American modern moral philosophers to acknowledge the
importance of judgment in moral experience is Adam Smith. In *The Theory of Moral
Sentiments*, Smith admonished his contemporaries for having forgotten what Aristotle
had known, that the “rules” of virtue “are loose, vague, and indeterminate” (1969, 517).
For Smith, the virtues should be conceived in two related ways. The general rule or
behavior that is associated with a particular virtue, because it is imprecise, must be
supplemented with an idea of the characteristic sentiment upon which the virtue is
founded (1969, 284-93). However, Smith soon conceded that the characteristic sentiment
of a virtue undergoes a wide range of diversity from circumstance to circumstance (for
example, friendship involves a wide range of actions that constitute its goodness;
sometimes friends give unwavering support and sometimes they challenge). However,
an ethical approach based on emotions or sentiments is much less stable than judgments
based on virtues derived from other principles, such as loyalty (MacIntyre 1982) or
civility (Carter 1999). Also, recall that for Weber an ethics motivated by sentiments too
easily leads to vain decisions and is not a proper orientation that deals adequately with
the means and ends of social action (1919a).

More recently, Hans Georg Gadamer (1960) appealed to Aristotle’s account of
judgment as a framework both of ethics and the interpretation of texts. Following
Aristotle, Gadamer insists that judgment is not the implementation of method. For Gadamer, this would confuse ethics with the “technical,” thoroughly rule-governed, organization of experience that for him is characteristic of the natural sciences, not of life in the social world (1960, 290-295). The relative absence of method in moral judgment — ethics — is compensated by the extent to which, in exercising judgment, we belong to a socio-historical tradition (see also, Heidegger 1962). History and socio-cultural relationships are embedded within who we are as individuals. Gadamer insists, with Aristotle, that the acquisition of ethics — moral judgment — requires training in the performance of right conduct, and that the formation of character emerges within a socio-historical community in which moral considerations are important. Gadamer’s appeal to training, tradition, and socialization captures important aspects of moral judgment, especially Aristotle’s notion of prudence. However, the person of judgment does not simply repeat earlier experiences and concerns of a community that were deemed successful in the past, because the world around the community may change and also because social processes (may) have unintended consequences. Rather, the person of virtuous judgment exercises creative insight and moral imagination. The mere fact of participating in a tradition fails to grasp the innovation and risk involved exercising moral judgment in a particular situation and in a particular socio-historical tradition.

According to this perspective, although we can understand what kinds of situations may call for the exercise of moral judgment and the kinds of tasks that moral judgment is to accomplish, there is very little that can be said about moral judgment itself, especially in terms of systematic general laws. The ethics of responsibility
connects the individual to the complexity of the social context, requiring reflection on the connection between the dynamics of motivations-means-ends. It is this complexity that cannot be reduced to a final systematic statement (Gadamer 1960; Giddens 1984; MacIntyre, 1982).

The inability of exemplary scholars to give a general, satisfactory, account of what the exercise moral judgment consists, according to Larmore, “is not lamentable, but exemplary” (1997, 19). We appear, he continues, to be able to say a good deal about what the exercise of moral judgment is not and not what it is. The inability to discern a general theory of moral judgment should not be so surprising given the dominant understanding that theoretical, or “technical,” understanding relates empirical phenomena to a correlation with law(s). For Larmore, however, the distinctive feature of moral judgment cannot be reduced to rules and laws:

To understand some empirical phenomenon, we believe, consists in discerning the laws to which it is subject. Accordingly, we believe we have an adequate theory of some intentional human practice, if we can reconstruct the rules, both explicit and tacit, that characterize it (if we are committed reductionists, we will look for nonintentional, e.g., physiological, law-governed redescriptions of it). The distinctive feature of moral judgment, however, is the way in which (if considered as an intentional practice) it transcends the explicit or tacit rules upon which it only partially depends. (1997, 20)
Rather, it is better to think of moral judgment in terms of the ability to interpret general rules in responding to particular situations. This is how Weber used *verstehen* — meaning — as the orientation of social sciences: the “rules” of social life require interpretation (1968).

What this means, according to Larmore, is that exercising moral judgment is to “outgrow the simplifications that have beset us” (1999, 151) and eludes the notions from which moral philosophers have generally operated. The dimensions of moral complexity exist because virtue cannot be understood simply as adherence to principle, since the moral codes and rules that accompany the virtues require the use of judgment to know when and how to exercise virtues. Judgment as an ethical exercise begins to include concerns similar to social science research — how do we establish correct knowledge and correct action given the complexity of the world and our limitations epistemologically and the ever-changing world filled with unintended consequences (Giddens 1984; Wood 2005)?

Larmore correctly noticed the epistemologically complex issues of judgment involved in a robust social ontology such as described in structuration theory. Another complexity that remains, related to epistemology, is the inherent indeterminacy and historical irony, noted by Weber (1930, 1968), of the modern social world itself. The indeterminacy is not due to lack of sophistication of the social sciences (Giddens 1976; Wood 2005), but, first of all, because individuals are endowed with agency and, second, because social actions always have unintended consequences.
First described as the end of ideology or post-industrial society (Bell 1960) to refer to a post-political vision (Mouffe 2005, 35) managed through consensus in political life, now social life, according to Ulrich Beck and Anthony Giddens, is lived as a "reflexive modernity" (Beck 1997). Reflexive modernity refers to the "post traditional" (Giddens 1994) world that is characterized by loss of the unquestioned legitimacy of a single hegemony. Instead, various and sometimes contradictory traditions exist along with non-traditional sources of legitimacy. In traditional society choices of action for individuals are prescribed by custom and require less reflexivity. In post-traditional times questions of behaviors become matters requiring more reflexivity as individuals become more aware of the constructed state of society. The post-traditional is also characterized by "manufactured uncertainty" (Giddens 1994) in a "risk society" (Beck 1997). The novelty in the post-traditional world is located in the shift from "external" risk created by nature to "manufactured" risk — humans are now creating risk through "the very impact of our developing knowledge upon the world" (1994, 44). The core component is the recognition of the role of indeterminacy and unintended consequences. Uncertainty and risk are necessary components of social life to account for the "side-effects" (Mouffe 2005) of instrumentally rational action and for the reflexive capabilities of human agents.

Ulrich Beck (1997) proposes that politics needs to be reinvented to handle the transition from the belief in sustainable progress and the mastery of destination that characterized early stages of modernity to an awareness in later modernity that techno-industrial developments can have side-effects that turn into drastic problems — such as
environmental degradation. In this sense, the irony is that “rational” progress can turn into the unintended consequence of self destruction (Mouffe 2005). For Beck, we must acknowledge that the risks confronting the world of advanced industrial societies cannot be dealt with properly through traditional institutions — the nation-state and collective identities. Therefore, a “sub-politics” emerges based in grass-roots organization that is extra-paramilitary and is no longer linked to traditional class or party lines. This new “risk society” challenges the basic tenets of political science because sub-politics:

Is distinguished from ‘politics’ in that (a) agents outside the political or corporatist system are also allowed to appear on the stage of social design (this group includes professional and occupational groups, the technical intelligentsia in companies, research institutions and management, citizen’s initiative, and so on), and (b) not only social and collective agents but individuals as well compete with the latter and each other for the emerging power to shape politics. (1994, 22)

By “sub-politics,” Beck means a shaping of politics from below and increased inclusion in the arrangement of society of those formerly outside the public political sphere. Sub-politics, for Beck, also reverses the marginal-core arrangement of politics and establishes a new relationship between the community, as Mouffe explains, “whose motto could be ‘no rights without responsibility’” (2005, 58). What is at stake, Giddens proposes, is a new relationship between the individual and the community and between authority and
democratic governance. For Giddens, the “third way is a widening of democracy that forms a new partnership between individuals, civil society, and state governance. The third way envisions a post-traditional decentralized society anchored in an active trust that maintains social cohesion” (1994). Post-traditional society does not abandon the welfare state, but modifies it to create a “redistribution of possibilities” guided by citizens who are “responsible risk takers” (Giddens 1994, 25-29).

Giddens’ expansive “social reflexivity” transforms emancipatory politics that focuses on constraints into “life politics” that concern decisions, not limited to emancipation from constraints only but relate to human capabilities (Giddens 1994). Giddens is critical of liberalism that places the state in the center of politics and economic life because it is ill-prepared to grasp the emerging quality of individuals to participate in civic life and therefore misses the potential for greater democratization which those processes entail (Giddens 1994,25-29). Mouffe summarizes the critique of liberalism:

They [liberals] cling to the traditional institutions of the welfare state without realizing that the concept of collective provision has to be rethought and that, since we now live in a more open and reflective manner, a new balance between individual and collective responsibility has to be found. (2005, 57)

What is involved is a turn to an expansive conception of self-governance that is equally concerned with responsibilities of the individual and responsibilities of the community
and the state towards possibilities. What is also involved is a new conception of responsibility that broadens to include all citizens in forming and transforming social structures (Giddens 1984, 1994).

For Giddens, and Beck as well, post-traditional society and the concerns of life politics cannot fully be understood within the more traditional left/right political framework but requires a new “generative politics” according to which:

- the desired outcomes are not determined from the top; situations are created in which active trust can be built and sustained; autonomy is granted to those affected by specific programmes or policies; resources are generated which enhance autonomy; [and,] political power is decentralized. (1994, 93)

The central idea that moves through all of these five dimensions is “active trust”, which Giddens contrasts to “passive trust” of early periods of modernity. Passive trust is invested in expert-systems. Active trust, on the other hand, must be generated because, with the inclusion of reflectivity in expert-systems as well, expert knowledge must now be democratically validated. Giddens, continuing Beck’s analysis, argues for further democratizing of the main institutions of society by opening them to debate and contestation. With active trust in post-traditional society, traditions and institutions are required to justify themselves in dialogic democracy. Returning to the earlier discussion
of civility, it is through civil behaviors that active trust can be generated between individuals in a post-industrial social world.

For Giddens, active trust is generated less by collective identities than by individuals. This development coincides with the interrogation of tradition during the post-industrial period and, consequently, greater autonomy of action to be defined by sub-politics or life politics filled with uncertainty, risk, and unintended consequences (Giddens 1994, 90). Trust will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter. The important insight at this point is that instrumental rule-following and strict adherence to method cannot adequately account for a future social and political world that is indeterminate (Woods 2005). In this way, addressing current and future situations, especially those of conflict, is better addressed by Burton’s problem-solving approach than by a puzzle-solving approach. Therefore, to complement legal structures, social norms, and puzzle-solving methodologies requires a civic republican ethics of responsibilities. Fulfilling human needs is an important component of self-governing; however, it is not enough. At the same time, what is required is to actively engage in participatory problem-solving, appropriately placing trust in others and in being a trustworthy agent in whom others can trust.

Political philosopher Ernest Laclau (1985) and virtue ethicist Alasdair MacIntyre (1981) search for a new hegemony to replace pluralism in post-traditional modernity. It seems unlikely, however, given the discussion of Giddens and Beck, drawing on Weber, a new hegemony will successfully emerge and endure given the reality of modern pluralism. Rather than searching for a new hegemony to escape politics, the goal should
be to move to a politics of inclusion that uses tension and conflict as a motor of
democracy to drive self-governance (Mouffe 2005).

A substantial question remains in political philosophy: can rationally-based,
inclusive dialogic democracy overcome discord by generating consensus? Is the end of
politics near? Can the political realm move to an arena of instrumental puzzle-solving?
Chantel Mouffe argues, by contrast, that the political cannot be resolved by rationalism
“for the simple reason that every consistent rationalism requires negating the
irreducibility of antagonism” (Mouffe 2005, 12). In contrast to the communicative ideal
of the free speech act of Jurgen Habermas (1991), Mouffe writes that a universal rational
consensus actually put democratic thinking on the wrong track (2005, 3). The urge for
consensus, rather than creating the conditions of reconciliation, is the denial of the
political and disagreements actually are “played out on the moral register” (Mouffe 2005, 5).
In this way, the sharp demarcation between “we” and “they” is a battle for the we that
is good to win over the they that is evil — an enemy to be destroyed — as long as a
rational consensus is desired. Rather, Mouffe insists the first task is to acknowledge
while there is no rational solution to a conflict, at least not a rational solution available
from the position of the present and parties in disagreement must therefore recognize the
legitimacy of their opponent. Contrasting antagonism where the parties do not share
agreement on the process of settling disagreements, the task of democracy is to transform
antagonism into “agonism” (Mouffe 2005, 20), and violence into politics, where the
conflict is accepted but the image of the adversary is not an enemy image. This is to
move from a purely adversarial model to a model of relationships that are based on mutual respect.

Weber first wrote of the irreconcilable struggles between lifeworlds as they move on the path of rationalization (1968). Mouffe continues this insight and locates irreconcilable struggles within the historical development of political philosophy in the West:

Many liberal theorists refuse to acknowledge the agonistic dimension of politics…in the construction of political identities because they believe it would endanger the realization of consensus, which they see as the aim of democracy. What they do not realize is that, far from jeopardizing democracy, agnostic confrontation is the very condition of its existence. Modern democracy’s specificity lies in the recognition and legitimacy of conflict and the refusal to suppress it by imposing an authoritarian order.

A healthy well-functioning democracy, from this perspective, therefore, requires tension between competing legitimate democratic political positions. Consensus around ethico-political ideals — universal liberty and equality — is important, but disagreement about the meaning of these terms and how they should be implemented is always contested. What is at stake, as Beck and Giddens have recognized, is the power relations around which a given society is structured. It is a real struggle, not simply a misunderstanding to be clarified by a new hegemony. This struggle is to be played out within the conditions
of democratic procedures. The requirement of democratic procedures for decision-making is rooted in epistemological and empirical indeterminacy that reflects the ontological nature of individual and social life.

In summary, Carter, Mouffe, Giddens and Beck all suggest that primary importance must be given to both how conflicts are handled and the difficulties in predicting outcomes as well as the difficulties for the elite to control conflicts and social systems. In answering who is responsible to do what, the discussion is expanded to include a much wider range of actors than elites and the social structures they control. This chapter broadens the earlier discussion of agency by focusing on the post-traditional importance placed in active trust, and the discussion of trust will continue in the following chapter. For Mouffe since conflicts are a necessary component of social life, the means for dealing with conflict is important. The attempt to dissolve tensions, according to Mouffe, is part of the problem, not the solution. This leads to the discussion of Gandhi, nonviolence, and the irony of sacrifice. The next chapter will argue that the complexities of the indeterminacy of the social world are better addressed by the reflective problem-solving mandate of the cognitive dimensions of agency and through the voluntarist dimensions of agency that promote civility through nonviolent action.
Karl Jaspers (2001), in *The Question of German Guilt*, asks a very similar question. Jasper’s terms “causal”, “political,” “Moral,” and “metaphysical” are used in much the same way as Miller’s four terms. However, for the purposes of the literature on conflict resolution, Miller’s “capacity” fits better with the literature on third party interventions.

Kenneth Boulding (2001) in the puzzle-solving mode, writes: “…there is a ‘dismal theorem’ in of political science, which states that all the skills which lead to a rise to power unfit people to exercise it. Institutions can certainly be devised to offset this principle. But we have thought so little about this problem that we have not even begun to propose solutions” in “Future Directions in Conflict and Peace Research”, *Conflict*, 42.


For a further discussion of range of problems associated with the nexus of problems around defining and assigning accountability see Andrew Kuper, *Democracy Beyond Borders: Justice and Representation in Global Institutions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).


This is the approach to social order presented by Adam Smith: allow complete freedom to atomistic individuals and social order will emerge spontaneously. The critique of this position is that Smith turns a vice — individual narcissism — into a virtue.

Karl Jaspers (2001) increases the list to four types of responsibility: causal, moral, political, and metaphysical. Since Miller captures the general meaning of “guilt”, his categories are used here. In terms of an ethics of responsibility, it may be useful in the future to explore in more detail if these differences further elucidate an ethics of responsibility.

David Miller, “Distributing Responsibilities”: 102. This is also a point that Howard Zehr (2002) develops in terms of the restorative justice approach to crime.
A variation of the capacity approach is the vulnerability principle, defended by R. E. Goodin in *Protecting the Vulnerable: A Reanalysis of Our Social Responsibilities* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985) and suggests that responsibilities be assigned according to an agent’s relation to another’s vulnerabilities.


Jacques Derrida, "'Eating Well', or the Calculation of the Subject", *Who Comes After the Subject*, trans. by E. Cadava (New York: Routledge, 1991): 118. For Derrida, “A limited, measured, calculable, rationally distributed responsibility” is already on its way to becoming a moral obligation and no longer fully participates in the engagement of social life required of ethics.

This incompleteness is similar to Heidegger’s expression *das Nichts*, the “Nothing” in which the Nothing is not a thing but an experience that gives access to things: “for human existence the nothing makes possible the openness to being as such.” For Heidegger, the Nothing is beyond logical consistency and distinguishes Being from beings—the ontological difference. Self-governing involves acceptance of this ontological position.

Jean Paul Sartre diagnosed this aspect of modernity.

See especially *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* where Weber (1936) examines the historical irony that austerity and radical otherworldliness, rooted in religious life and based (at least partially) in the doctrine of predestination was, the engine that drove the development and success of capitalism in the West and especially in the United States.

This is closely connected with Weber’s understanding of the connection between means and ends — an individual should never be a means to another’s ends. Relationships should not be purely instrumental but should rather be based in ethical concern for self and the other.

To understand one of the reasons Weber did not provide explicit advice for the details of political decision-making is, in “Science as a Vocation,” because he felt the professor’s role was to analyze society, not to tell people what to think.

For example, when authority is derived from culture, such as the Amish rejection of state compulsory education requirement beyond the eighth grade, as in Wisconsin v. Yoder, 406 U.S. 205 (1972).


Communitarians, such as the legal scholar Mary Ann Glendon and the political sociologist Amitai Etzioni, argue that, in the West, to much emphasis is placed exalting the individual’s autonomy while ignoring obligations to the community. See Mary Ann Glendon (2002) in Rights Talk and Amitai Etzioni, The New Golden Rule: Community and Morality in a Democratic Society (New York: Basic Books, 1996).

See Max Weber (1968) in Economy and Society for a more thorough discussion of the relation between means and ends.

Here Carter is in agreement with the long tradition of “conflict sociology” dating back to Marx and Weber. See Randall Collins, The Four Sociological Traditions (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).


See Anthony Giddens (1984 and 1979) for a more detailed account of human ontology and the common accentuation that are decidedly oriented towards decisions of individuals or how they are constrained by structures.

This portion of Aristotle’s ethics is often termed “prudence”. Three remaining virtues are justice, fortitude and temperance.

Alasdair MacIntyre (1981) contests that virtues based on emotions, or sentiments, are less stable than virtues based on other principles, such as loyalty, humility, etc.
This similar to the understanding of capabilities approach to that taken of Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum.

Mouffe cautions that, in the event that political order fails to achieve a healthy dynamic around the expression of conflict, a danger arises that conflicts can be ordered around essentialist forms of identification or non-negotiable moral values. For Mouffe, antagonisms can take many forms and it is illusory to believe they can ever be eradicated.

7. Responsibility and Nonviolence

The emphasis on the indeterminacy of the social world and the necessity of judgment, presented throughout this paper and especially in the previous chapter, is located squarely within the ontological openness of human social life as presented by structuration theory in the duality of agency and structure. In terms of agency, what orientation should be taken towards such a social world? The following will help to clarify both the cognitive and voluntarist dimensions of agency. This is important for a responsibilities approach to self-governing and will explore the insights of nonviolence as an approach to address the indeterminacy of the social world and the requirements of making judgments. Drawing especially on the insights of Weber’s ethic of responsibility and Giddens’ structuration theory, I will build on the argument that parties in conflict, no matter how oppressed, always have agency, and that expressions of agency are crucial in order to move from violence to politics. Trust, as mentioned in the previous chapter, is crucial to modern social life and will be examined according to maxims that implicate both the cognitive and voluntarist dimensions of agency, especially in the double hermeneutic between biography and epistemology. The concept of sacrifice is revisited and connected to research on prosocial behavior, leading to a discussion of Gandhi and principled nonviolent action.
First, in terms of the recognition of the indeterminacy of the social world, Georgia Warnke summarizes the outcomes of the response in the social sciences as moving to hermeneutics and therefore having “no one ‘correct’ or exhaustive view of a given society’s shared meanings; nor is there a set of standards or procedures that could guarantee our agreement on one canonical interpretation” (1993, 11). Without a “correct answer” to the difficult question of “who is responsible to do what”, she continues that the most important implication of the hermeneutic turn to issues of justice therefore requires a “hermeneutic conversation” and the importance of finding institutional ways of supporting space in which different voices can be heard (Warnke 1993, 12). The principle characteristic of the interpretive turn is abandoning the attempt to find a grounding in universally valid and foundational principles of justice in features of human conduct or rationality (Warnke 1993; White 2009), and, one could add, human needs. At the same time, language itself, discussed below, has limits for expression. The following continues these insights, further explores the possibilities of judgment, and moves to address the voluntarist dimensions of agency. This will serve to complement the cognitive dimensions of agency, in moving from oppression to liberty through the act of sacrifice and civility. This discussion of the cognitive dimensions of agency continues the work of earlier chapters and will lead to an extension of Burton’s problem-solving approach. This is a fairly mundane assertion, yet overlooked by many: not only are dialogue and ideas important, so too are behaviors. The limits of language are complemented by the action and behavior components of communication. For example, the work and practice of Mahatmas Gandhi will be used to examine the connection
between agency and an ethics of responsibility. These connections will illustrate how nonviolent action incorporates the motivations — means — ends continuum and builds civility in the process of prosocial revolutionary change. This is a move from needs-based conflict resolution to liberty based in self-governing.

**The Reciprocity of the Cognitive and Voluntarist Dimensions of Agency**

So how might individuals and society adjudicate between different conceptions of justice and manage disagreement on the principles of justice and the actions and practices appropriate for justice? The first step is to revisit the term institution in structuration theory. Recall that institutions are reproduced behaviors in the routine of living daily life, they are not things that exist apart from social reproduction by capable agents (Giddens 1984). An adequate account to the foregoing question requires, first, some general account of the activity of reflecting on basic beliefs and assumptions — the cognitive dimensions of agency — as noted earlier, and second, further institutionalizing the actions of individuals — the voluntarist dimensions of agency — that promote justice.

Stephen White suggests the two most familiar ways of envisioning cognitive reflection — uncovering foundations and choosing frameworks — are insufficient because of the ontological-ethical status of human social life (White 2009, 66-71). White contends that, as meaning-creating (and not simply needs-possessing) species, humans tend towards, on the one hand, envisioning ourselves as discovering a foundation that possesses authority, or, on the other hand, as choosing the framework of interpretation.
that gives priority to one value over others. Accordingly, individuals either discover foundations or choose values. For White, these two dualisms are “too one-sided…[W]e do better to affirm a model that captures the basic qualities of both discovery and choice” (White 2009, 67).

First, the foundations model is based on the discovery of the truth and reflection is to serve enhancing conviction to that truth. However, while search, discovery and reflection leads to deeper commitment, they should not be equated necessarily with increasing certainty of knowledge or access to truth (White 2009, 68). Operating from the foundations model locates the other who disagrees with my views and stands between truth and myself. The persistent tendency is to script the other as an obstacle to further elaboration and implementation of truth (Warnke 1993). This is well-known in conflict resolution. In terms of possessive individualism and needs theory, selecting the foundation of human needs joins communitarianism in viewing the other (elites or structures) as the obstacle to the fulfillment of the truth of human development.

Second, in terms of the framework model, the activity of reflection is a periodic check-up between the relationship between our judgments and everyday life. The supporting structure of belief is chosen or affirmed and its authority rests on the voluntarist way that it is an act of will. It is the self, not the framework, which has agency to do otherwise according to one’s values and preferences. The framework model is aimed at gaining clarity for the purpose of greater control. The problem, according to White, is that when we have committed ourselves to such a task, “we have thereby implicitly embraced an ontological figure of humans as sovereign entities” (White 2009,
70). As Adorno (1966) and Foucault (1979) realized in different ways, once this occurs, we fashion ourselves as wills whose reason is in no need of chastening. In terms of human needs and possessive individualism, selecting the framework of needs theory joins liberalism in giving preference to the value of individual choice.

If both foundations and frameworks are limited and limiting conceptions, what model better adheres to the insights of the interpretive turn? Habermas suggested the free-speech act, but as discussed earlier, re-distributive justice is required first, before communicative action is free from asymmetries. Given the pluralism in understanding and foundations, or in Weber’s terminology the “plurality of life worlds” (1968), the task is to work for “institutional solutions that can be ‘faithful’ to all the differences” (Warnke 1993, 159). One solution is to simply accommodate differing interpretive stances (Taylor 1989) or, as Walzer mentions:

When People disagree about the meaning of social goods, when understandings are controversial, then justice requires that the society be faithful to the disagreements, providing institutional channels for their expression, adjudication mechanisms, and alternative distributions. (1993, 313)

Conversation is important to a hermeneutic approach to questions of justice, because the attempt to justify one’s own position to others (may) allow reform and revision of interpretations (Arneson 2009; Freeman 2009; Habermas 1984). However, neither
Taylor nor Walzer consider how this might be done in concrete daily life. This is even more complicated when considering if pathological interpretations, as discussed by Lukes earlier, should be tolerated.

Rather than appealing to foundations or frameworks, Taylor (1989, 91-96) suggests an articulations approach that involves both discovering and choosing, but goes further to include creation. The foundations are acquired through frameworks of language and the creative act — meaning to the individual — is also delivered through language. This is the articulation approach. Bringing foundations into language is a creative act, and no meanings stand fully apart from language. Giving language to foundations and frameworks enables the construction of meaning and understanding. At the same time, meaning and understanding cannot be fully articulated because they are experiences imperfectly represented by the limits of language itself (Giddens 1985; Taylor 1989, 18, 22, 34, 334, 419). The linguistic turn in philosophy, especially with Wittgenstein (1953), Heidegger (1962), and Gadamer (1960), honors the anxiety of finitude and imperfection, rather than avoiding or suppressing it. In terms of articulation and reflection on the two-fold process of discovery and creation, something less than full-articulation is possible, and thus “the next other I meet may hold something crucial to a fuller understanding…” (White 2009, 70). When discovery and creation are conceived this way, White argues, “It is not difficult to see how virtues of carefulness and humility toward the other are prefigured more clearly…” (White 2009, 70). These considerations check the tendency to view the other as obstacle or instrument, and rather to view the other as a fellow traveler. Language enables communication, but meaning cannot be
fully articulated. Even if foundations exist, they are still available for (and require) interpretations.

The cognitive dimensions of agency point in the direction of better examination, clarification and criticism involved in reflecting on assumptions of thinking about the ontological questions and the foundations and frameworks used in answering the ontological questions. The limits of articularity demonstrate that as useful as language can be, it cannot do everything. In terms of the resolution of conflict, it is now that an appeal to the voluntarist side if agency is made. If language cannot express fully, and if it is susceptible to strategic manipulation (Habermas 1991), what other options are available to the individual?

The voluntarist side of agency, the capability to do and to possibly do otherwise, adds clarity at the limits of articularity. If we all make assumptions about ontology, both enabled and constrained by frameworks, if language is incapable of complete expression, and if judgment can have pathological or “infantile” susceptibilities (Lukes), what next? Jurgen Habermas (1985) cautioned against communicative discourse manipulated through (instrumental) strategic action. If this is true, then language itself is limited to the extent that language alone can move a situation from intractable conflict to resolved conflict, from conflicting relationships to cooperating relationships. It is now time to turn to the action side of individuals as a possible answer to the question. A turn to behavior does not erase the possible necessity and usefulness of speech, but broadens the act of communication. Both words and actions serve to communicate.
Civility, as discussed earlier, is communicated both in word and deeds, just as assessments of truthfulness of testimony are evaluated partially in terms of biography. Even if full articularity were possible, the need for assessment of speech is still required (for example, someone could fully articulate a non-truth). In the following discussion, it will become clearer that judgments involve assessing both actions and words. In A Social History of Truth (1994), Stephen Shapin linked the cognitive and voluntarist dimensions of agency by exploring the assessment of truth claims in early modernity, specifically through the development of modern science. During the age of discovery (Borstein, 1985) incredible accounts of unknown and unseen phenomena were presented for evaluation to the Royal Academy.\(^1\) To begin, Shapin examines the grounds of factual knowledge because “there is a massive mismatch between dominant characterizations of the sources of knowledge and the ways we secure that knowledge” (1994, xxiv). Shapin criticizes epistemological models based on direct individual experience, and “objective” science generally, which are to supplant the testimony of others, because:

Knowledge is a collective good. In securing our knowledge we rely upon others, and we cannot dispense with that reliance. That means that the relations in which we have and hold knowledge have a moral character, and the word I use to indicate that moral relation is trust. (1994, xxv)

The epistemological question is therefore tied to social conventions and to the attribution of motivations. The paramount question, then is, “whom to trust?”; since the
identification of trustworthy agents is necessary to the constitution of any body of knowledge. In this sense, “social knowledge” and “natural knowledge” are hybrid entities:

What we know of comets, icebergs, and neutrinos irreducibly contains what we know of those people who speak for and about these things, just as what we know about the virtues of people is informed by their speech about things that exist in the world. (Shapin 1994, xxvi)

Shapin introduces the importance of “free-action” and “virtue” as general indicators of reliable testimony and reliable sources (1994, chapter 2). This connects biography and epistemology, since ascent to truthful testimony mobilizes local knowledge of trustworthy agents, or who can be considered reliable to tell the truth (Shapin 1994, chapter 4). Defining truth, therefore requires judgments of testimonies, and judgments of testimonies involves judgments about the distribution of skill, judgments about what the world is like and judgments about the moral characteristics of individuals. The attribution of truthfulness is linked to characterizing a person as one of honest integrity, because “there is no point at which participants could help themselves to a pure form of ‘thing knowledge’ since,…schemes of plausibility are built up through prior decisions about who, and in what connections, count as a trustworthy source” (Shapin 1994, 287). Even in the natural sciences, disputes about phenomena are also disputes about people, their virtues and capacities. Shapin concentrated on evaluating the testimony around
three episodes — the size of icebergs, the existence of water pressure, and the paths of comets — and discovered that the character of the reporter and the reporter’s location or relation in a social context (did they have incentive to deceive?) played a crucial role in the evaluation of testimony — it could be qualified, modified, or disqualified.

Shapin refers to the general schema of evaluation as an “epistemological decorum” that connects biography and epistemology, and provides seven maxims for the evaluation of testimony:

1. Assent to testimony that is plausible;
2. Assent to testimony which is multiple;
3. Assent to testimony which is consistent;
4. Assent to testimony which is immediate;
5. Assent to testimony from knowledgeable or skilled sources;
6. Assent to testimony given in a manner which inspires just confidence;
7. Assent to testimony from sources of acknowledged integrity and disinterested. (1994, 212)

These seven maxims involve skill in judgment on part of both the reporter and the evaluator. These maxims point to counter-maxims that are also available to disqualify testimony and run in the opposite direction. Shapin explains: “The commonsensical rules pointing in one direction are all shadowed by rules pointing in the other, which, when articulated in the context of practical action, seem equally mundane and rational” (1994, 232). At the same time, it is not clear which maxims are more important or less important, or how many serve to qualify or disqualify knowledge. If there are no
explicitly formulated rules to select which maxim or counter-maxim to follow, the evaluation of testimony is a skill-like activity requiring critical reflection and judgment. The only maxim Shapin found no counter-maxim is the seventh—the maxim that counseled assent to testimony form people characterized by their integrity and disinterestedness (1994, 237).

The importance of integrity — truth-telling — and disinterestedness — no apparent motivations to disguise the truth — though using different terminology, connects back to Weber’s ethics of responsibility — lack of vanity and a straightforward moral connection between motivations, means and ends that takes into account the social component to action. This also connects to civility in terms of our relationships with others. Evaluating testimony is part of the cognitive dimension of agency and includes critical reflection. However, the complications of epistemological judgment, if Shapin is correct, direct attention to biographical and voluntarist dimensions of agency. Cognitive dimensions are not only socially-embedded, as discussed earlier, but, now, these socially-embedded dimensions are assessed in terms of individual biography and behaviors. Also, in terms of articularity, actions can fill-in-the-blanks of what cannot be fully contained in language.

Both behaviors and testimonies inform judgments. Therefore, in terms of an ethics of responsibility approach to self-governing, interpersonal relations impact the judgment assessments of others. In terms of emancipation and self-governing, what types of action(s) by agents fuel conflicts and what types of actions fuel conflict resolution? What types of actions build trust?
Sacrifice Revisited

The role of sacrifice for civility, as mentioned by Carter, and missing in liberalism, gives some insight into how the action side of agency can inform the cognitive side of agency. Recall that “no theory of the political is adequate if it fails to confront and explain the phenomena of sacrifice and killing” (Kahn 2005, 230). In the conflict resolution literature, the politics of identity has gained increasing attention, especially since current deadly quarrels take place primarily as intrastate rather than interstate conflict (Kaldor 2009). Is sacrifice counter to affirmation of the integrity of the self and identity? The following introduces Fanon’s discussion of sacrifice and explores whether sacrifice “articulates” something that complements or even transcends language.

The theme “struggle for recognition” is now fashionable either as a critique or vindication for different efforts to obtain cultural recognition or to affirm both individual and collective identities (Kaldor 2009). In terms of social and political theory, Hegel’s themes of master and slave in *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807) are the general context for much of the discussion to follow. For Jurgen Habermas (2001), the development of modern social and political philosophy is marked by increasing concern for issues of legitimacy and social integration, given the “fact of pluralism”, and has turned procedural and communicative, not metaphysical. This leads, according to Charles Taylor, to a “politics of recognition” in which self-identified oppressed groups make explicit demands for equality. John Burton includes recognition as a basic human need (1990, 1997). But, in terms of recognition, who is responsible to do what?
Axel Honneth recognizes that the struggle for recognition is actually located between a liberal de-ontological approach to politics and ethics on the one hand and communitarian concerns for the good life on the other and relies on “morally motivated struggle” (1996, 1). Recognition is complicated because it can take the form of a possession, in Macpherson’s terms above, yet it is generated and defined through and by an intersubjective relation between subjects. Honneth draws from Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* and demonstrates how Hegel takes political thought in a different direction, away from Machiavelli and Hobbes (and self-preservation) and towards an intersubjective conception of self-hood absent in much of early modern political theory. Franz Fanon (1991, see also, 1968) carries the discussion of recognition to a more radical critique located within the dominant liberal leaning towards possession, and rather connects liberty in “the gift.” The gift is characteristic of a basic human responsibilities approach to overcoming oppression.

Honneth (1996) suggests what is needed is an understanding of the social world that would help clarify the nature of the struggle and specific claims being made in a social struggle. Franz Fanon, in this context, focuses on a particular form of power, imperial power that creates the colonial condition, to provide insight into the intersubjective conception of self-hood in terms of the modern “master-slave” relation. In *Black Skin, White Masks* (1968), Fanon defines the colonial condition as one in which the colonial reality reaches stages in which feelings of disrespect gradually become dehumanization and the struggle against oppression is either muted or transformed into desires for participation in the dominant culture (1968, 1991). This resembles Hegel’s
condition of the slave as one whose humanity is being collapsed into the category of property. At this point, Fanon asks “What does the Black man want?” and to answer this question Fanon pursues a philosophical anthropology approach from the perspective of the slave, from what is universal to the slave. Fanon’s immediate answer is that “the Negro wants to be like the master”, which is the main object of criticism in Fanon’s work (1968, 8).

A paradox emerges here in Fanon’s writing. The relation of master and slave is reinterpreted in the logic of “the gift.” In *The Wretched of the Earth* (almost) everything has been taken away. The coloniz

possibilities of giving are restricted or eliminated. Generosity is allowed but flows only one way, as an expression of generosity or as an apolitical virtue of the master. In the colonial condition, only one group is allowed to give — the masters. The gift or the act of giving is tied to the “right of property” which functions as the main marker of self-

identity. Property becomes a more complex phenomenon since even human subjects can collapse into the category of objects and possessions. What is, or becomes, basic in a system of lordship and oppression is the relation between the subject and property. The end result is an extension of possessive individualism in which the liberty of the subject frequently collapses into freedom and equality of choices in possessions. The danger in defining liberty with possessions, according to Maldonado-Torres, is that it is a self-

referential politics that threatens social change movements overall and leads, at best, to only minimal structural changes:
The problem…resides in self-centered claims for redistribution. In other words, the danger is when the struggle for recognition is reduced to questions about respect, freedom, and equality of subjects who aim to overturn the system of lordship and bondage by coming finally to possess something of their own and to be recognized as proprietors. (2005, 149)

Said another way, this happens when social and economic equality is in the foreground and civil and political responsibilities recede into the background.

Conceiving the struggle for recognition in such a way, as the capability to participate in property, does little to change structural components of society that foster pathological modes of recognition and limit possibilities of what Romand Coles refers to as “a coalition politics of generosity” (1997). Franz Fanon discovered in the lived experience of the colonized and oppressed “black” that they are not recognized as people who can give. For example:

It was always the Negro teacher, the Negro doctor. I knew, for instance, that if the physician made a mistake it would be the end of him and of all those who came after him. What could one expect, after all, from a Negro physician? ... The black physician can never be sure how close he is to disgrace … No exception was made for my manners, or my knowledge of literature, or my understanding of quantum theory. (1968, 117)
For Fanon, the ability to *give* is more radical than the ability to *possess*. For Fanon, this is the demand that the oppressed need to make. For Fanon, giving is risky because it requires an original act of openness. The problem is the logic of lordship and bondage because the master resists entering into the logic of ordinary ethical intersubjective contact.

For Fanon, the capability to possess may be a necessary condition of overcoming oppression (and satisfying survival needs), but it is not sufficient and should not become the sole goal or *telos* of the liberation process. Rather, liberation comes with the task of “restor[ing] things to their proper places” (Fanon 1991, 88). The proper places for Fanon are not limited to individual possessions alone, the logic of objects, but continue to include the logic of the gift which is enactment of intersubjective contact through giving and receiving. In short, the struggle for recognition is in this way a struggle for liberation motivated not by increased possessions but in forming an ethical community, a community of both needs and responsibilities. For Fanon, the master is also required to struggle for recognition if giving and receiving are to take non-pathological forms. For Fanon, liberation is a struggle for enacting the reciprocity of human responsibilities in an ethical community, not simply a struggle for individual freedom and equality. This is a crucial point, to move beyond recognition as needs-based to recognition as intersubjective gift-exchange. A basic human responsibilities approach to recognition is an ethical act of giving and receiving. The limitations of the logic of recognition demonstrate the possibility of social and political transformation through the process of the ethics of responsibility in self-governance.
Fanon is pointing to the conditions of civility. Of course, for Fanon, when love and fraternity are lacking, one option is to fight (1991, 218), but this is not the only option. The question of whether or not Fanon’s devotion to “love and fraternity” is the best approach will be left aside for the moment (recall that for Carter civility is directly for those whom we do not have sentimental attachments). Perhaps it is better phrased as civility that guides self-governance in an ethical response to the other. However, what is important from Fanon is his innovative view of subjectivity: the self is not only able to receive, but the self is also a gift that gives. Or, said another way: a person has not only basic human needs but also basic human responsibilities. There are no simple recipes for political action and interpersonal relations, hence the need for critical ethical considerations within and between moral frameworks. But Fanon does provide clarity of priorities. He proposes that a struggle for recognition be taken primarily as a struggle for genuine human intersubjectivity, not a struggle for possessions (objectivity). For Fanon, it might be stated that participatory democracy takes precedents over distributive democracy and that civility takes precedents over possessions. Fanon is proposing a teleological suspension of recognition by proposing, in my words, the risk of civility in both giving and receiving from the other. Fanon is not, as in Kierkegaard’s or Marx’s formulation, only suggesting the teleological suspension of the ethical in the revolutionary moment of violence and war. The gift and reception of civility are not to be later achieved in a utopian future, but to be ever-present in on-going intersubjective relations. The end is built in the process of change.
How would Burton understand Fanon? From Burton, the revolutionary impulse to overthrow oppression, bondage, and inequality is justified. In fact, it is natural given the human biological drive (need) for self-preservation (1979, 1990, 1997). Burton’s audience appears to be primarily elites who control and influence social structures and social structures that lead to oppression and bondage. The appeal to human nature (especially needs) de-criminalizes rebellions to overcome such violations and sends a warning to would-be oppressors. Did Burton intend his writings to be applied by the oppressed themselves? And was Burton too closely tied to the politics of recognition and possessive individualism critiqued by Fanon?

To begin answering these questions is to explore a bit more what is meant by giving and receiving: What does the slave have to give to the master, and what does the master have to give to the slave? For Fanon, both the master and the slave are incomplete. The discussion moves form a politics of recognition to a critical ethics of liberty. Fanon and Burton are both critical of the master (elite) for lack of intersubjective ethical relation with the oppressed for more obvious reasons. The more complicated question is: what has the slave to give to the master? Hasn’t the slave already given enough? For Fanon, the slave has a role in the completion of the master, the completion in this sense in humanizing the person, “the master,” by the master realizing through the process of intersubjective contact with the slave that the slave has something to give. But the slave cannot complete the master as slave. The master is blind to the humanity of the slave because the master objectifies the relationship in terms of possessions. The slave’s
role, *the gift*, to the master is to humanize the slave through the intersubjective encounter (Fanon, 1991).

This is a crucial point, to move beyond needs-based analysis of a situation and include, alongside needs, a responsibilities-based scenario that includes a gift of civility. Levinas, recalling the “problem of the Other” from Sartre, starts to capture this complication when he writes the “concern ‘for others’ as a source of responsibilities to assume with regard to one who, by all evidence, ‘does not concern us’” (Levinas 2004, 92). Or, according to Sartre, the Other is also that to whom I am called to serve and ‘bad faith’ becomes the attempt of the self, whether master or slave, to hide this from the self (1996, 445). According to the stratification model of the individual in structuration theory, encounter with Otherness is the very genesis of the self and necessary for the formation of the human subject. Taking the subjective self as the ultimate source of meaning, therefore, carries dangerous consequences (Levinas, 2004). For Levinas, ethics is “first philosophy,” not simply because it is practical philosophy linked with the realm of human action but because ethics accounts for the very formation of the acting and reflecting self. The Other is constantly a destabilizing and constructing force, just as the I can be a destabilizing and constructing force upon the Other.

**Prosocial Behavior**

One way to approach the idea of sacrifice and ethics as first philosophy and the civility of self-governing through an ethics of responsibility, is to examine different
approaches to prosocial behavior. To further inquire into Carter’s concept of civility and Weber’s ethic of responsibility, the social science research on prosocial behavior connects the ethics of intersubjective relations with the gift of social and political equality. However, a general social psychological theory of prosocial behavior does not exist (Fetchenhoaur et al 2006, 232). Prosocial refers to the willingness act in ways as “to help others in need…and to be fair and considerate,” and while widely recognized, it is less obvious why individuals display prosocial behavior in one situation and not in another (Fetchenhaur et al 2006, 3).

Commonly studied as the individual trait of altruism, most research focuses on the personality dispositions for the explanation of prosocial behavior (Bierhoff and Rohmann 2004; Graziano and Eisenberg 1997) and has been framed primarily in socialization (or structural/functional) models in which prosocial norms are internalized and form prosocial personalities (Durkheim 1964; Hoffman and Hirschi 1990; and, Parsons and Shils 1951). Studies of prosocial behavior can shift to studies of “social dilemmas” (Dawes 1980) in which “free-rider” problems (Olsen 1965) are examined either from rational-choice models or more specifically on game theory models (Axelrod 1984; Coleman 1990). These studies approach prosocial behavior in terms of incentives to cooperate. Evolutionary biology joins the discussion by shifting self-interest in altruistic behavior from the individual psychological level down to the level of the gene (Dawkins 1976) and with the central idea that predispositions towards cooperative behavior maximize inclusive fitness and survival of the species (Wilson 1979). Bateson (1991) argues the “empathy altruism hypothesis” and focuses primarily on internal rewards that
might result from prosocial behavior aside or without material rewards and has been confirmed in a number of studies (Bateson 1991; for an overview, see Bierhoff 2002). Pruitt and Rubin’s (1986) study examining “concern for self” and/or “concern for other” in the dual-concern model argues that selfish verses prosocial behavior does not coincide with rational verses emotional, though they suggest that when high levels of concern for self is combined with high levels of concern for the other, the outcomes of conflicting situations is more stable and the parties enjoy higher levels of satisfaction. Others, such as Piaget (1967), Kohlberg (1981), and Gilligan (1982), focus attention on the stages of moral development that correlate with stages of cognitive development. Despite the differences, these approaches are consequentialist, or rewards-based (with the possible exception of Pruitt and Rubin), and examine various sanctions involved in prosocial behavior connected to the voluntarist side of agency.

What these approaches to prosocial behavior have in common is an explicit or implicit emphasis on incentives and sanctions to engage in prosocial behavior. The study of prosocial behavior is largely conducted in terms of the benefits of cooperation (Axelrod, 1996). Therefore, prosocial behavior can support either communitarian or liberal arguments, depending on the accentuations and reasons for cooperation. Despite the lack of a general theory of prosocial behavior, developments in cognitive psychology and microsociology, reflecting the earlier discussions, demonstrate the importance in “framing” or “defining” a situation in influencing choices and behaviors (De Dreu & Boles 1998; Kahneman & Tversky 1984). The cognitive dimension of agency is influenced both by inter-situational contexts that relate to institutional and personality
traits (Hofstede 2003; Miller 1984; and, Van Lange, 1999) and is also intertwined with motivational factors (Fitzsimmons and Bargh 2003).

**Nonviolence?**

If prosocial behavior is viewed as a virtue, rather than simply a means to an end, is anything gained? Said another way, if prosocial behavior adds clarity to the ethics of responsibility in self-governing and is itself a virtue and not simply a form of instrumentally oriented action, might the idea of sacrifice be better understood? In this way, prosocial behavior that is derived from the responsibilities of self-governing in acknowledging another’s civil and political rights could be the gift that Fanon employs.

If prosocial is framed as a virtue, the writings of Mahatma Gandhi shed insight on connecting sacrifice and prosocial behavior to counter possessive individualism of liberalism without succumbing to oppressive possibilities of communitarianism. One of the drawbacks to much of the prosocial literature is that it is framed in terms of “solidarity” (for examples, see Fetchenhauer et al 2006). Rather, in terms of the virtue of civility it is better phrased as an ethics of responsibility towards strangers, not those with whom we do or might form sentimental attachments. Recall that Derrida wrote that responsibility is excessive, or it was not really responsibility at all. Gandhi, both steadfast in principles and successful in leading a social movement to overcome colonialism, writes often of sacrifice. His actions are not led by solidarity and
sentiments, but by an ethics of responsibility that connects motivations — means — ends by orienting his practice around principles based on the virtue of prosocial behavior.

Gandhi distinguishes his form of nonviolence from more traditionally understood “passivism” in that the nonviolent attitude requires action, because being nonviolent leads to rising against injustice (1940).\(^\text{10}\) Gandhi did not simply articulate the overthrow of colonialism in hermeneutic protest, Gandhi oriented his approach on nonviolent action, communicating the virtue of civility in the act of protest. For Martin Luther King, the act of civil disobedience, such as the lunch counter sit-ins in Nashville, Tennessee, serve to dramatize the injustice of the system with the use of force against action based in civility (Ackerman and Duvall 2000). Gandhi, preceding King, is clear that nonviolence requires social action and is required in social action. Language and framing are important, but equally important is action, the voluntarist side of agency. But some action may be more important in terms of undoing oppression, resolving conflict, and sustaining a just social order.\(^\text{11}\) If sacrifice is important in this context, what kind of sacrifice is required?

None of the social and political theorists mentioned previously in this study mentions nonviolence explicitly. So for critiques of nonviolence this study will begin with the critique offered by Barrington Moore, Jr. Moore, writing on “India and the Price of Peaceful Change” (1964), questions the reasoning and the impact of the revolution led by Gandhi. For Moore, Gandhi looked to an idealized past for the model of the good society and was “incapable of understanding the problems of the modern world” (1966, 378). The issue facing India under British rule, especially the peasant and the village
artisan, was that they were “suffering from the intrusions of capitalism.” From his perspective:

If one thing at least is certain, it is that modern technology is here to stay and will before long spread throughout the rest of the world. It is perhaps equally important that whatever form the good society may take, if it ever comes, it will not be that of the self-contained Indian village served by the local artisan symbolized in Gandhi’s spinning wheel. (1966, 378)

Moore was highly concerned about the “violence of normal times” (1966, 14). The violence of normal times adds a further range of cases, such as those of structurally induced starvation, disease, industrial violence, etc (Harris 1980) and is contained within conceptions of “structural violence” (Burton 1979) where various elements of the social system act with implicit violence against other members of society through exploitation or other forms of injustice. From this perspective “man-made features of the world would have to be eliminated before the ideal of peace on earth could be said to have been achieved” (Harris 1980, 11). How should these man-made features be eliminated?

For Moore, India was both democratic and non-modern. It seems that Moore wanted to make a point about violence, democracy and modernity. For Moore, India is a democracy because its post-colonial elite chose not to modernize, eschewing the violence needed to disrupt the bonds of traditional society. The lesson Moore is offering is that when the bourgeoisie is weak and no actor is prepared to use violence to disrupt the
structures of traditional society, modern society will not emerge. Moore, similar to Burton (1979), argues that it is for pragmatic reasons of overcoming oppression and furthering democracy that revolutionary violence represents the teleological suspension of the moral categories of violence. In a letter to The Harvard Crimson, Nov 8, 1967, Moore writes:

In the first place, it is morally and politically impossible to equate the violence of those who resist oppression — or oppressive situations anywhere in the world — with the violence of the oppressors themselves…Secondly, the historical record provides rather strong evidence, though certainly not proof, in support of the thesis that attacks on law and order, including revolutionary attacks, have under certain conditions helped to create new systems of law and order with greater freedoms.

Moore simply does not agree with Gandhi that nonviolent efforts can produce massive restructuring of social structures. For example, the “bourgeois revolution” was a violent revolution that abolished the domination of the traditional landed elite and brought capitalist democracy to England, France, and the United States (1967). For Moore, it seems doubtful that radical changes in rigid social structures can be achieved through nonviolent action.
Theda Skocpol (1973), a student of Moore, offers insightful criticism of the “Moore thesis.” Rather than concentrating on the domestic bourgeoisie as a revolutionary force, Skocpol adds complexity to the rational-choice models common in political science by insisting that a revolutionary situation requires a “crisis of the state”, often provoked by international actors in the form of economic or security competition. A crisis is a challenge that the state cannot meet given its current institutional constraints. In response, elites (and the army) become divided over what to do and loyalty to the regime weakens. This is the precondition of revolution. If no socioeconomic or security crisis exists there will be no successful revolution and it makes little difference whether Marxist proletarians or deprived groups want a revolution.

Skocpol differentiated political and social revolutions. A political revolution is a change in state institutions. A social revolution is a political revolution and a change in social structures. In addressing oppression, Burton and Fanon are both seeking a social revolution, not simply a change in political order. Skocpol argues against the more common “political conflict theories”, “aggregate-psychological theories”, and much Marxist thought because they all have “a shared image” of the revolutionary process:

First, changes in social systems or societies give rise to grievances, social disorientation, or new class or group interests and potentials for collective mobilization. Then there develops a purposive mass-based movement – coalescing with the aid of ideology and organization – that consciously undertakes to over throw the existing government and perhaps the entire
social order. Finally, the movement fights it out with the authorities of the dominant class and, if it wins, undertakes to establish its own authority and program. (1979, 14-15)

Skocpol points out that this image of revolution presupposes an algebraic formula in which a critical mass of population have unmet needs and are disgruntled (1979, 16).

Drawing on historical accounts, Skocpol argues that “while revolutionary movements and ideologies “have helped cement the solidarity of radical vanguards…and have greatly facilitated the consolidation of new regimes,…no successful social revolution has ever been ‘made’ by a mass-mobilizing, avowedly revolutionary movement” (1979, 17).

Acknowledging the crucial variable of the state in any account of revolution is not to eliminate the importance of contentious collectives. For Skocpol, the crisis of the state allows room for dissident organizations. If and when a state crisis emerges, what will fill the vacuum? It is here that the insights of Charles Tilly can complement Skocpol. For Tilly (1979, 2007), mobilization is the process by which a group goes from being a passive collection of individuals to actively participating in public life. Recalling the discussion of Potamaki in the opening chapter, and combining the insights of Skocpol and Tilly, the questions become, first, when and under what conditions does the state perceive itself to be in crisis, second, which mobilized groups step in to fill the vacuum and, third, what international factors are involved?

This moves the discussion from domestic issues to the international context. How might nonviolence support a social revolution? For some, it does not. A common
perception is that nonviolent action is incapable of achieving success against a ruthless opponent. For example, Martin Caedel believes that nonviolence can succeed only when opponents are relatively humane, as the British were in India (1987, 157). For Michael Walzer (1977), nonviolence only succeeds when soldiers and political officials on the other side have a moral code that prevents them from wantonly killing unarmed civilians. For example, the practice of nonviolence is unrealistic against such tyrants as Hitler or Stalin. For Walzer, nonviolence is not a moral response to injustice (1977, 331-3).

Howard Ryan provides perhaps the only comprehensive critique of nonviolent theory that may have been written. For Ryan, there are circumstances of harsh oppression where strict adherence to nonviolent tactics and philosophy may be unwarranted and where armed resistance is needed (2002, 10). As Ryan observes, nonviolent advocates oppose violence on moral or practical grounds, and typically both. Ryan’s first criticism is that proponents of nonviolence often contradict their espoused principles in practice. For example, Gandhi recruited Indians to fight for the British in World War I, thousands of American pacifists abandoned their nonviolent principles and supported the war against Hitler, and Martin Luther King, Jr. demanded federal troops or police protection for civil rights demonstrations. His second criticism is against the proposition that violence is inherently evil and that nonviolence represents an absolutist ethics unable to deal with the complexities of modern political life. Ryan’s third objection is the tendency to overemphasize the effectiveness of nonviolence and the ineffectiveness of violence. For Ryan, these are biases that represent a mechanical condemnation of all violence. In contrast, Axelrod’s famous “Tit for Tat” game
theoretical model displayed the importance of a quick and firm retaliation to curtail further acts of aggression. In Ryan’s example:

As any schoolboy knows, a bully can often be deterred only by violence or the threat of violence. I learned this my junior high school days, when a bully picked on me almost every day…I tried to reason with him, but he would not listen. One day I decided enough was enough, and I threw myself at him with everything I had….He never picked on me after that day. (2002, 13)

For Ryan, violence can be pragmatic. The belief that violence begets violence is based on a larger misreading of history. When violent revolutions fail (and most revolutionary attempts do fail) nonviolent advocates immediately blame the violent tactics and methods of the struggle. By focusing solely on tactics, for Ryan, nonviolent advocates fail to account for the myriad of other historical variables available. His fourth objection is that any movement, violent or nonviolent, that seriously challenges ruling powers is likely to evoke a violent retaliation, thereby increasing the overall level of violence. In this way, nonviolence can beget violence.

Ryan’s fifth concern with nonviolence is that “the importance of suffering in nonviolence may be greater than some advocates wish to acknowledge” (2002, 24). Suffering, risk, and sacrifice are inevitable components in a process of social change. For Ryan, the problem with nonviolence is that it relies too much on people’s ability or
willingness to sacrifice and suffer. Nonviolent tactics are embraced by most social movements and during much of the lifespan of the social movement because they are pragmatic. The difference is that most contemporary movements are not committed to nonviolence in principle and would consider the use of a mix of violence and nonviolence acceptable. Therefore, what distinguishes the nonviolent model of change from other progressive models is nonviolence remains committed to remaining nonviolent when many reasonable people would consider armed action a legitimate form of action (Ryan 2002, 25). The nonviolence model relies on courageous suffering and employs a “jujitsu effect” (Gregg 1959). The logic is that the more those in power attack nonviolent resisters, the greater the public sympathy for the nonviolent resisters and the more the public turns against the oppressive power (Lakey 1973). One way nonviolent resistance is successful is because those administering the violence (such as individual policeman) gradually de-escalate the violence as it seems less-and-less legitimate to use force against nonviolence. Therefore, fewer casualties are suffered in nonviolent resistance. For Deming (1971), this is the reason nonviolent struggle is the most practical form of struggle. What is less addressed is the length of the duration of the struggle and how to sustain a prolonged nonviolent revolution amide fierce oppression and attack. It is therefore that nonviolent resistance works best in contexts where governments cannot sustain prolonged repression (Ryan 2002). Much of the discussion of the effectiveness of nonviolent action for radical social change in the face of repression is in terms of the domestic relation between the challengers and the state (Lakey 1973; Black 1981).
These criticisms, according to David Cortright (2008), reflect a common misunderstanding of how the nonviolent method works. Nonviolent action does attempt to reach the conscience of the adversary, but its effectiveness does not depend solely on this appeal. Rather, nonviolent action “seeks to alter the political dynamics in a struggle by appealing to and winning sympathy from third parties and thereby undermining the power base of the oppressor” (2008, 227). Nonviolent action succeeds when it creates the conditions conducive to bargaining and negotiation. This is accomplished when it erodes consent that sustains corrupt power (2008, 228). One way nonviolence can be effective is to build a crisis in the state, recalling the insights from Skocpol, and to gain third-party support sooner rather than later.

Nonviolence may not be effective in every situation. Presumably, it would not be effective in those situations that involve an immoral tyrant who has unwavering international third party support. But there are examples of nonviolent success in extreme circumstances. During World War II many Danes and Norwegians resisted Nazification through mass noncooperation (Sharp 2005, 135-40; Ackerman and Duvall 2001, 207-39). Nonviolent resistance to Soviet domination ultimately led to the success of the velvet revolution of 1989 (Havel 1990) and helped substantially to bring and end to the Milosevic regime in Serbia in 2000 (Cortright 2008, 229).

Nonviolent methods can also be unsuccessful, for Gandhi, if those who struggle nonviolently against injustice and oppression lack adequate courage or are not prepared to sacrifice. For Cortright, the willingness to suffer for the cause of justice is a key component of Gandhi’s method and accounts for its political impact (2008, 229). What
needs to be addressed at this point is that nonviolent action is not a monolithic enterprise and that different orientations, means and ends of nonviolence action exist.

Robert Burrowes, in his study of nonviolence, separated nonviolence in typological terms as either pragmatic or principled. Burrowes summarizes:

Practitioners of *pragmatic* nonviolence believe it to be the most effective method available in the circumstances. They view conflict as a relationship between antagonists with incompatible interests: their goal is to defeat the opponent and, if this entails any suffering (short of physical injury), to inflict that suffering upon the opponent. Practitioners of *principled* nonviolence choose it for ethical reasons and believe in the unity of means and ends. They view the opponent as a partner in the struggle to satisfy the needs of all; if anyone suffers, it is the practitioner of nonviolence. More fundamentally, this practitioner may view nonviolence as a way of life. (1996, 99)

Said another way, the pragmatic approach to nonviolence is instrumental and shares an affinity with liberalism, while the principled approach is prosocial, connecting the means and ends in an ethic of responsibility. The pragmatic approach to nonviolence fits within the liberal framework. The principled approach fits the ethics of responsibility. The principled approach, espoused by Gandhi, incorporates concern for the other and includes possible sacrifice of oneself as a crucial dimension to escape vanity, as discussed by
Weber. The willingness to suffer is perhaps the most difficult conceptual phenomena to digest and makes little sense within needs theory or liberalism. The language of virtue ethics fits Gandhi’s principled nonviolence since Gandhi appeals to nonviolence, not for meeting human needs, but for “regulating mutual relations whether political, economic, social or religious.” The key here is the respect for the civil and political rights of the other during the process of revolution. This is the gift of the oppressed.

Those who directly challenge repressive authority may face hardships, physical harm, and death. This is true whether the authority is challenged by violent insurrection or by nonviolent noncooperation. Willingness to risk is evident in the act of challenge. Even though fewer casualties are produced through nonviolent actions (Cortright 2008, 230), the burden of physical suffering falls entirely on the challengers. This may seem immoral, but it is crucial to success. For Sharp, when oppressors resort to violence they are displaying weakness and desperation (2005, 384-4, 410-12, 416). It is the irony of nonviolent methods that political calculations are turned upside down: “those who suffer physical harm often win, while those who employ physical force lose” (Cortright 2008, 230). For Barbara Deming (1971, 209-211), “vengeance is not the point, change is…A liberation movement that is nonviolent sets the oppressor free as well as the oppressed.” Is this the gift that Fanon suggests? The point of this discussion is not to come to a definitive answer if nonviolent action is more effective than other forms of action; this discussion is concerned more with locating and describing an ethical stance appropriate for nonviolent action as a way to explore civility in more detail.
In terms of Weber’s ethic of responsibility, passion is evident because Gandhi’s goal was the “putting of one’s whole soul against the will of the tyrant.” Also, equally important in terms of Weber’s ethic of responsibility, is that principled nonviolence is not motivated by vanity. For Gandhi, “nonviolence has to cultivate the capacity for sacrifice of the highest type in order to be free from fear” because it “is the greatest” power at the disposal of mankind. With a twist of irony, Gandhi writes:

Just as one must learn the art of killing in the training for violence, so one must learn the art of dying in the training for nonviolence. Violence does not mean the emancipation from fear, but combating the cause of fear. Nonviolence, on the other hand, has no cause for fear. The votary of nonviolence has to cultivate the capacity for sacrifice of the highest type in order to be free from fear. (Harijan, July 20, 1931)

Gandhi continues that violence is needed for the protection of things, of possessions, while “nonviolence is needed for the protection of one’s honour.” Gandhi continues the insights of prosocial behavior. Gandhi considers nonviolence a virtue and a virtue of ethical importance in terms of the prosocial transforming of social relations and structures. In fact, Gandhi wrote: “nonviolence is the greatest force available at the disposal of mankind.” Connecting with Carter’s understanding of civility, Gandhi viewed nonviolence as a virtue that extends to all interpersonal relations: “It is no nonviolence if we merely love those that love us. It is nonviolence only when we love
those that hate us.” Though Gandhi placed individuals at the center of society and saw satisfying needs as an important social justice goal (Burrowes 1996, 106), he attached equal importance to individual responsibility, especially in terms of overcoming oppression. Contrasting Gene Sharp’s pragmatic nonviolent action as “technique,” Gandhi is explicit that principled nonviolence is both an individual and social virtue. Gandhi acknowledges the irony of the civility of nonviolence when he writes: “It is a matter of perennial satisfaction that I retain generally the affection and trust of those whose principles and policies I oppose.” It is the gift of civility exercised in principled nonviolent action — the voluntarist dimension of agency — and provides a positive answer to Shapin’s question of whom to trust: a principled nonviolent actor can be trusted to respect the civil and political rights of the adversary.

For Gandhi, the virtues of nonviolence are similar to the virtues of the heroic ethic (see MacIntyre 1982), especially the virtue of courage. Writing after the American Civil War, Williams James raises some persistent questions about passivism because “it is hard to bring the peace party and the war party together, and I believe that the difficulty is due to certain deficiencies in the program of passivism.” James himself was against war, but he realized that many pacifists were “all too weak” and writes:

The manly virtues which the military party is so afraid of seeing disappear in peace. We should get toughness without callousness, authority with as little criminal cruelty as possible, and painful work done cheerily…I spoke of the moral equivalent of war. So far, war has been the only force that
can discipline a whole community, and, until an equivalent discipline is organized, I believe that war must have its way. (James 1910)²²

Gandhi’s principled nonviolence is an attempt to answer the call of William James.

Gandhi admires courage, and even “prefers violence to cowardice,” but claims that “nonviolence is the summit of bravery…and does not permit of running away²³…because nonviolence cannot be taught to a person who fears to die.”²⁴ Gandhi is in agreement with Weber, discussed earlier, that fear does not sustain legitimate social action and that fear is also a form of vanity — concern for the self. Gandhi admires the courage involved in nonviolence and sacrifice. At the same time it is not seeking martyrdom but holds on to principles of civic virtue and a willingness to suffer oneself rather than cause others to suffer. For Gandhi, the willingness to suffer is based upon the simple reason that in pursuing action, the actor may be wrong. If these actions are wrong, only the nonviolent actor suffers.

For Gandhi, violence has negative consequences for both the wielder and the receiver of violence. Therefore Gandhi understood principled nonviolence as connecting motivation, means, and ends. For Weber, the ethics of responsibility required a connection between the motivations, means and ends of social action and for Gandhi nonviolence maintains the consistency between them. Gandhi’s insight is to create a fluid connection between them with the principled approach to nonviolence and incorporates the ethics of responsibility in resolving conflict. Gandhi explains: “Nonviolence is ‘not a resignation from all real fighting against wickedness.’ On the
contrary, the nonviolence of my conception is a more active and real fight against wickedness than retaliation whose very nature is to increase wickedness."\textsuperscript{25} This is perhaps most clear because “there is hope for the violent man to be some day nonviolent, but there is no hope for the coward.”\textsuperscript{26} In fact, Gandhi was adamant that “I must not let a coward seek shelter behind nonviolence.”\textsuperscript{27}

It is a small step, for Gandhi, to include suffering or sacrifice in the context of nonviolence, or “the ancient law of self-sacrifice.”\textsuperscript{28} Gandhi is appealing to the consent theory of power by turning to “non-co-operation” and “civil resistance” as both the means for training in the virtue of nonviolence and for producing civil (nonviolent) outcomes. Gandhi admires civility and to add clarity to the role of suffering, Gandhi connects suffering and sacrifice to Truth. For Gandhi, nonviolence is a methodological imperative. Gandhi begins with the fallibility of individual human beings and includes both the cognitive and voluntarist notions of agency and considers nonviolence the best approach because “if this kind of force is used in a cause that is unjust, only the person using it suffers. He does not make others suffer for his mistakes.”\textsuperscript{29} Gandhi is offering the methodology of nonviolence as a way to approach the free-speech act of Habermas and also as a form of interpersonal relations based in noncompulsion because truth cannot be written into a constitution but must be adopted voluntarily.\textsuperscript{30} Nonviolence as a virtue extends beyond attitude and includes social action. Nonviolence towards others is a methodological imperative for Gandhi even in the practice of nonviolence itself because there is no “complete science of nonviolence.”\textsuperscript{31}
For Burton (1984), conflict is resolved when the outcome meets the needs of all the parties, which most frequently involves major policy and structural changes (1990) and, therefore, oppression is overcome and needs are satisfied after society is restructured (1979). Burton’s problem solving approach in many ways can be understood as nonviolent action, perhaps even of the Gandhian variety. However, for Gandhi, women, children, young and old, and men can participate in nonviolent action and nonviolent action is not limited to the number of chairs available in a conference room nor must nonviolent action await structural changes (Ackerman and Duvall 2000). Burton’s connection to nonviolence is only implicit in his writings. Burton never explicitly inquires into nonviolent action and this is consistent with and not required of needs theory. Nor does Giddens rely on nonviolence in structuration theory. However, from a structurationist account of social ontology, recall that social reality is (at least partially) re-constituted by individuals and individuals can always do otherwise. The crucial distinction for principled nonviolence is that individuals are participating in ways that do not reconstitute ongoing structures of oppression (see Jabri 1996). While needs theory justifies the rebellion of the oppressed, Gandhi’s principled nonviolence, if the arguments in this study are valid, help to reconstitute a just society in the process of revolution. For the immediate purposes of this argument, principled nonviolence actively involves the oppressed in the positive restructuring of social structures.

For example, Gandhi — evaluating the voluntarist side of agency — writes that the British have not taken India, but that the Indian population has given India to them:
I object to violence when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is permanent. I do not believe that the killing of even every Englishman can do the slightest good to India. The millions will be just as badly off as they are today...The responsibility is more ours than that of the English for the present state of things.\[32

Gandhi incorporates two ideas to account for the imperial control of India. First, Gandhi implores the population to action: the responsibility for the state of affairs, or unmet human needs, is at least partially on the Indian population. But Gandhi is not an advocate for just any form of action, he insists on nonviolence. Second, the use of violence is only a temporary solution: the British may leave, but how will Indians self-govern? Gandhi calls on the population to exercise their capability to do otherwise, in Giddens’ phrasing, and participate in active noncooperation with unjust laws of the British. For Gandhi, “...things of fundamental importance to the people are not secured by reason alone but have to be purchased with their suffering.”\[33 Donnelly makes a similar point in securing human rights and self-governance as did Carter’s understanding of civility, recalling the civic republican tradition of Pocock and Skinner, mentioned earlier.

The use of his two ideas, truth and willingness to suffer, are connected in nonviolence. First, his understanding and practice of truth offers methodological insights, as an insight into epistemological clarity gained as a stance towards self and other wherein nonviolence is a means to gaining greater factual knowledge. Nonviolence, in this usage, is active in participation in social life and is inclusive in
listening to the voices of others, even the adversary. In this way, nonviolent action can proceed before structural and policy changes are made. After establishing the cognitive dimensions of agency, Gandhi moves to the voluntarist dimensions of agency and includes nonviolent action as way of connecting the means and ends. Nonviolence as an ethics of responsibility refuses to cooperate with oppressive structures and through the means of protest serves to dramatize structural (or real) violence of the system. But Gandhi did not wait for structures to change and to become nonviolent themselves, his actions, and those of many others with him,\textsuperscript{34} incorporated Giddens’ insight that no matter how oppressive structures may be, individuals have the personal capability to do otherwise and have the collective power to change structures since institutions are the collections of routinized behaviors. The key to prosocial behavior is the civility present in the cognitive and voluntarist dimensions of agency. This does not excuse oppressive systems and elites who control them; it points to ways that agents can change systems and build civil society in the process of the revolution itself. Consistent with Weber, Giddens, and Gandhi is the civility of the prosocial behavior of nonviolent action.

A common misperception is that nonviolent action is incapable of achieving success against ruthless opponents (Cortright 2008). For some, nonviolence “takes too utopian a view of the enemy” (Caedel 1987, 157). In this view, nonviolence is effective only to the degree that an appeal can be made to the conscience of the adversary. Michael Walzer, challenging the efficacy of nonviolence, writes that nonviolence is only effective when soldiers and political leaders have a moral code that prevents them from killing unarmed civilians, otherwise, it is a “disguised form of surrender or a minimalist
way of upholding communal values after military defeat.” In neither case, for Walzer, is nonviolence a moral response to injustice (Walzer 1977, 331-33). These criticisms reflect a common misunderstanding of how nonviolent method works.

Principled nonviolent action does attempt to reach the conscience of the adversary, but its effectiveness is not solely dependent upon an appeal to conscience (Cortright 2008). Direct nonviolent action, as Gandhi and King demonstrated, incorporates various forms of civil noncooperation seeking to alter the political dynamics in a struggle by “appealing to and winning sympathy from third parties and thereby undermining the power base of the oppressor” (Cortright 2008, 227). The exercise of excessive force undermines the legitimacy of the adversaries authority and serves to “rob the opponent of the moral conceit” which is “the most important of all the imponderables in a social struggle” (Niebuhr 1932, 250). For example, as Cortright explains:

In the US civil rights movement…the ugly displays of segregationist violence in Selma and Birmingham, Alabama in the 1960’s, directed against the disciplined nonviolence and courageous dignity of African American protestors, shocked the conscience of Americans and people around the world and rapidly undermined the power of southern hardliners, generating an overwhelming political consensus in favor of civil rights. (Cortright 2008, 226)
The significance of the third party effect can scarcely be overstated. It is in this way that nonviolent civil disobedience creates the conditions conducive to bargaining and negotiations (Ackermann and Duvall 2000). Vaclav Havel describes the nonviolent dissident movements in 1989-90 eastern and central Europe as an “existential movement” that provides hope for “the moral reconstitution of society…[and] the rehabilitation of values like trust, openness,…and responsibility” (1990, 99).

The importance of responsibility as prosocial action is evident in Gandhi’s conception of nonviolence as a way of life (Naess 1974). The implicit insight from Burton is nonviolent problem solving. But Burton never develops these insights further for conflict resolution, opting instead for the approach of liberalism and the focus on fulfilling needs. The question is whether conflict prevention — preventing violent and structural conflict before it appears — can be grasped from the liberal conception of persons and society. If Giddens, Weber, Sandel and Gandhi are correct it seems doubtful that liberalism, while useful in undermining oppression, can move from a hermeneutic of complaint to build and maintain a just social order. Liberalism directs attention to injustice, but is less capable of the formative project of building a just society. Basic human responsibilities of self-governance complements basic human needs and builds civility in the process of change — connecting motivations, means and ends — by building society in the process of the revolution itself. Said another way, liberalism serves to critique domination but is ontologically too narrow to fully account for the capabilities of individuals (to do otherwise) and the responsibilities incurred, because we all participate to some degree in the structures and institutions of society, and we could
do otherwise. The language of sacrifice and responsibility involved in self-governing is not captured in liberal frameworks and therefore finds difficulty in answering the question of civility “how much are we willing to give up to achieve it?” Principled non-violent action serves conflict resolution and *provention*.

Principled nonviolence remains in tension with physical force, such as the police and various international peacekeeping missions. Gandhi acknowledged this possible role of physical force when he writes that “even man-slaughter may be necessary in certain cases” if a “man runs amuck and goes furiously about, sword in hand, and killing anyone…” then “taking life may be a duty.”\(^{36}\) Gandhi’s point is that it takes courage to take a life, and this courage is more virtuous than “running away and leaving dear ones unprotected.”\(^{37}\) However, even though Gandhi acknowledged that policing may be necessary at times when a man “runs amuck,” he was very clear that nonviolence is the preferred form of social behavior. The principled approach to nonviolence, Gandhi argues, can answer James’ call “to inflame the civic temper as past history has inflamed the military temper.”\(^{38}\) In this way the principled approach to nonviolence incorporates the passion and proportion of Weber’s ethic of responsibility.

Turning again to the American Civil Rights Movement, using a human responsibilities framework adds different dimensions that do not appear in the liberal-needs framework.\(^{39}\) First, the organizers were adamant that the civility in recognizing justice, such as the ethics of responsibility in human relationships, be presented to all, not just those with whom they loved. The movement was not designed to replace or defeat the opponents, but to live in society with the opponents and create a future society of
inclusion. The student participants were using principled nonviolence to dramatize the injustice of the separate but equal laws and norms of the American South. They acknowledged the possibility of sacrifice and were willing to suffer. They used their agency to bring institutional change. They dramatized both the injustice of the system and their capability of courageously participating responsibly in civil society. Ackerman and Duvall (2000, 468) summarize Twentieth-Century nonviolent movements as teaching “individuals how to assume responsibility for their own action and make decisions about the substance of goals and the process of reaching them.” They were practicing virtues and building civil society in the process of revolution and working towards conflict prevention.

A basic human responsibilities approach turns to nonviolence because it incorporates the indeterminacy of human life in the cognitive and voluntarist dimensions of agency in answering what civility is. Pragmatically, transitioning from violence (means) to politics (ends) represents one of the most difficult conflict resolution tasks (White and Klaasen 2005). If nonviolent means are utilized to transform social structures, institutions, and policies, the ends of social stability and justice — civility — are established in the process of transformation itself. Principled nonviolence as motivation, means and ends engages the ethic of responsibility to self and to the social world through the process of self-governance, reaching from the individual mind to the political reality of living with others into the future by creating desired social relationships and social structures through the process of critique and protest itself. Without dismissing the importance of human needs, a responsibilities approach helps to
answer who is responsible to do what: we are all, to some degree, responsible. This statement can be taken in several ways. The positive interpretation is that even the oppressed always have some capability to do otherwise and can participate in their own emancipation.
Shapin (1994: 213) noted the predicament when travelers to remote places conveyed surprising knowledge that did not fit with the English understanding of the world: “The problem with crediting traveler’s tales was two fold. First, if the tales were regarded as worth telling, they frequently and naturally, conflicted with what was already known about the world; hence, they possessed inherent credibility-handicaps. Second, they were commonly told by people about whom one knew little or nothing, by people to whom might legitimately impute an interest— to entertain, to sell books or peddle products—in fabricating testimony or embroidering the truth, or by people whose reliability was accounted suspect or compromised in the general culture which related integrity and truth-telling.”


Fanon was indebted to Hegel who drifted away from the self-preservation impulse of Hobbes and Machiavelli and maintained the emphasis of Locke upon property, which Fanon finally critiqued.

Herein lies the Marxist theory of alienation.


See Kelly Oliver, *Witnessing: Beyond Recognition* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2001) for a discussion of Fanon’s understanding of the limitations of recognition alone in the struggle for liberation.

See Gandhi, *Harijan*, April 20, 1940.


*Harijan*, January 13, 1940.

*Mahatma II, Young India*, August 11, 1920.

*Harijan*, September 1, 1940.

*Harijan*, July 20, 1931.

*Harijan*, July 20, 1931.


See Gene Sharp, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action* (Boston: Porter Sargent, 1973) for the pragmatic approach to nonviolent action and civilian-based defense that operates primarily for the use of instrumental nonviolent action. It is unclear whether or not participants in this choose this approach simply because they lack military means. Also, the attitude towards the other is one of defeat, not future cooperation.

*Young India*, March 17, 1927.


Gandhi, *Young India*, May 28, 1924.


Gandhi, *Young India*, October 8, 1925.

Gandhi, *Young India*, June 16, 1927.

28 Gandhi, Mahatma, II, Young India, 1920.

29 Gandhi, Indian Home Rule, 1909.


31 Gandhi, Harijan, February 22, 1942.

32 Gandhi, Young India, May 21, 1925.

33 Gandhi, Young India, November 4, 1931.

34 For many examples, see Peter Ackerman and Jack Duvall’s A Force More Powerful: A Century of Nonviolent Conflict, (New York: Palgrave, 2000).

35 See Arne Naess, Gandhi and Group Conflict: An Exploration of Satyagraha—Theoretical Background, (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1974).

36 Gandhi, 1926, Young India, November 4.

37 Gandhi, 1924, Young India, May 28.

38 James, 1910, “The Moral Equivalent of War.”

39 See Peter Ackerman and Jack Duvall (2000) for a summary of twelve 20th Century cases of successful nonviolent struggles, including the American Civil Rights Movement.
8. Conclusion

This study began as a reflection on the recent question posed by conflict scholar-practitioners: where do we go from here. In the first chapter, both Howon Jeong and John Paul Lederach suggest that the field of conflict resolution suffers from a dearth in theory. One prominent theory available for conflict resolution scholar-practitioners is John W. Burton’s human needs theory. Therefore, this study examines the ontological claims, or position, of needs theory. Burton developed needs theory in reaction to realism and deterrence theory. For Burton, (protracted) conflicts exist because basic human needs are not being met. Without denying needs theory, this study suggests that adding basic human responsibilities can complement needs theory. The belief underpinning this research is that needs theory operates as a critical tool for assessing the oppressive and structurally violent elements of social life and that satisfying needs may be a necessary step towards resolving conflict. However, needs theory lacks a formative agenda upon which to build and sustain a society that can transform violence into politics – building just and more peaceful social institutions requires more than removing the sources of oppression and structural violence. To complement this shortcoming of needs theory basic responsibilities is added as a way to build civil society in the process of resolving conflict, to better aid in the transition from violence to politics, and to aid conflict prevention. The assertion made above is that by reframing conflict resolution in
terms of self-governance informed by responsibilities illuminates a constellation of challenges and opportunities that are not treated from a needs theory perspective. This study examines needs theory in the context of social and political theory.

The second chapter examines the assessment of needs theory from the perspective of various conflict scholar-practitioners. First, Joe Scimecca shifts attention away from biology to sociology by demonstrating that ontological human needs can be derived from a non-genetically determined basis. Mary Clark agrees that “social embeddedness is the essence of our nature” (1990, 49). This opens the way for a more thorough sociological account of needs. Karen Gillwald challenges needs theory because she believes needs theory lacks a formative agenda for dealing with incompatible needs. The assessment of needs, therefore, is not as straightforward as they first appear. Richard Rubenstein asks if needs theory can go beyond the level of truism and generate new insights. He also suggests that conflict can play a role in the positive maturation of the human being. For these scholar-practitioners, needs theory provides a useful critique of contemporary social arrangement and structures of oppression. However, none are convinced that needs theory, as developed to date, is fully adequate to resolve conflict.

To address these perceived shortcomings of needs theory, this research relies on another technique promoted by Burton — problem solving. To engage in problem solving is to examine the general assumptions and the framework used to describe and explain phenomena. The remaining chapters engage in the problem solving task by examining the ontological assumptions of needs theory and by including insights from social and political theory to complement needs theory.
Chapter Three, “Liberalism and Political Theory”, explores the conceptual architecture of the ontology of needs to theory in order to locate needs theory in relation to political theory. This study located needs theory within liberalism — high appraisal of the individual and freedom from constraints. For C. B. Macpherson, liberalism can support “protective democracy” or “developmental democracy.” Macpherson’s insight is that protective democracy — focusing on the protection of possessions and freedom from state coercion — has overshadowed developmental democracy — the fulfillment and empowerment of the individual. However, this study argues that Macpherson’s critique of liberalism does not go far enough because he simply wants to shift the object of possession. Needs theory has a family resemblance to liberalism. This study argues that in needs theory needs are individual possessions and emancipation is viewed primarily as freedom constraints and therefore has an underdeveloped understanding of responsibility.

The discussion moves to the contemporary debates in political thought. First, the liberal-communitarian debate is examined in terms of the relation between the individual and the collective. Both are over-accentuations: liberalism gives too much priority to the individual and communitarianism gives too much priority to the collective. However, each perspective offers insightful criticism of the other position. I argue that civic republicanism, rather than fleeing from judgment, embraces judgment as a necessary feature of justice and social life. Civic republicanism’s emphasis on self-rule in the consideration of both individual freedoms and collective obligations provides the starting point for developing a basic human responsibilities perspective. In this perspective communitarian collective obligations and liberal need/rights are connected to making
judgments about their proper relation in different situations. This moves the discussion from the needs theory focus on emancipation to an approach that emphasizes self-governing. This leads to a more robust discussion of social theory, more specifically, to find a social theory adequate to handle the dynamics the responsibilities of self-governance.

Chapter Four, “Social Theory”, focuses on the agent-structure issues in social theory with special attention on power and capability. The purpose here is to continue the discussion of the shortcomings of the social ontology of liberalism and needs theory by focusing on dimensions of agency. In short, liberalism and needs theory is too closely allied with structural-functionalism. Structuration theory provides a robust social ontology that addresses the shortcomings of structural-functionalism. For Giddens, structural-functionalism lacks a theory of action. Rather than viewing action and structure as antimonies, they should be viewed as a duality. Neither should be given priority because they reciprocally (re)produce each other. Burton insists that oppressive structures must change, but he is less clear about what social structures are and how social structures change. In Burton’s account, when needs are unmet, structures must change to meet them. For Giddens, this is partially true. What is missing is the power of individuals to always have the capability to do otherwise. Individuals participate in the reproduction of social structure, both in terms of order and change. Once these are addressed, increased possibilities of transforming social structures are created through the agency of individuals.
While this increases ontologically accuracy it also adds complexity to human social life. Vivienne Jabri (1996) uses structuration theory to understand how war and violence can be institutionalized into daily practices. This is a conservative use of structuration theory. For Jabri, elites generate a hegemonic war discourse reconstituted by enough members of society to reproduce the system that enables war as a legitimate form of human conduct. For Giddens, hegemonic structures of domination generate counter-strategies and counter-discourses in the historical irony of unintended consequences that in turn challenge dominate social orders. This study is concerned with the “the capacity to make a difference” (Giddens 1984, 29) available to agents and practices that do not serve the reproduction of systems of domination.

The insights of needs theory and the emphasis on structural change are not invalidated by structuration theory but become dimensions of structuration theory that help account for the motivations and provide critique for structures of domination. Jabri drops structuration theory at its most promising point. Jabri searches for an “emancipatory transformative social theory” (1994, 177) and turns to Habermas and distributive justice, rather than staying with structuration theory. This is unfortunate because Jabri ignores the optimism available in structuration theory: anyone and everyone can participate in the emancipation process and in transforming violent and oppressive structures.

Structuration theory is ontological not ontic. Structuration theory is not parsimonious and better serves a meta-critical evaluation framework to assess the strengths and weaknesses of other research programs (whether accentuation is on action
Structuration theory links an adequate account of meaningful action with the analysis of its unanticipated conditions and consequences. Revisiting power as described by Lukes points to the necessity of judgment in discerning the appropriate stance towards the complexity of the exercise of power in the social world. The question is raised whether or not Giddens fails to utilize the insights of structuration theory fully when considering “critical moments” that disrupt daily routines (1984). For Giddens, severe and prolonged disruptions of daily routine lead agents to regress to “childlike attitudes of dependency” (1984, 125). For Aristotle, in contrast, it is the attitude of constancy of personality in certain ways that defines the person as virtuous and the ability not to regress to childlike dependency. Giddens acknowledges that he has yet to fully investigate the role of judgment in critical situations. This study fills that gap by turning to virtue ethics and a responsibilities approach to self-governing because they maintain the critical and dynamic tension of social life and incorporates this into the undetermined natures of agency and structure.

Chapter Five, “Freedom and Responsibility”, asks a slightly different question. The question is not what do individuals need, what are the obligations of the state to its citizens, or what obligations do individuals have towards the collective. Rather, the question to guide the study further is how can individuals self-govern. Judgment becomes an important topic again. To better address this question, the work of John Rawls is explored in more detail to clarify the position of liberalism. For liberalism justice is embedded in the act of choosing, possession of needs/rights, and freedom from constraints. Liberalism, however, fails to acknowledge both the grounds and the
consequences of decision-making. It is the lack of intersubjectivity and the formative dimensions of socio-historical context that gives a restricted form of agency. This is referred to as the deontological and unencumbered self of liberalism (Sandel 1998) which are inadequate for self-governing. Gained from this discussion of Rawls is an appreciation that a more robust conception of agency has two dimensions: cognitive and voluntarist. The voluntarist dimension refers to the capacity to act; the cognitive dimension refers to the capacity for critical and second order reflection. This also adds crucial components to the discussion of agency missing in structuration theory. Giddens concentrates on the action side of agency. The cognitive dimensions of agency both embeds the individual in the intersubjective dimensions of social reality, as a criticism of liberalism, and offers opportunities of critical reflection in critical situations (not just reversions to childlike dependencies). Adding this dimension, building on the social ontology of structuration theory, improves structuration theory because it opens more challenges and opportunities for transforming social structures.

Chapter Six, “Needs, Rights and Responsibilities”, rather than asking which needs are unmet, begins by asking the question who is responsible to do what. The implicit question behind needs and rights is the question of who bears the counterpart responsibilities or obligations to deliver on those rights and needs. For Burton, structures and institutions must change to fulfill unmet human needs. From the perspective of structuration theory, however, the task of changing institutions and structures is not simple and straightforward and implies a broader range of actors and resources. To add clarity to this problem, different kinds of responsibilities are considered (Miller 2005).
Causal responsibility refers to the attribution of the immediate role of an agent or structure in the genesis of a state of affairs. Moral responsibility, on the other hand, involves an appraisal of conduct — was the outcome intended and was the agent mindful of the harm being caused, etc. Capacity responsibility asks who is best to fix a given situation, assigning responsibility for alleviating present and future suffering according to available capacity to provide a remedy. Communitarian responsibility refers to proximal ties to those suffering, beginning with the immediate neighbors and extending as far as group identity ties might exist. Miller suggests a multi-principle approach to responsibility is needed to capture the strengths and curtail the weaknesses of each in isolation. In terms of Burton’s need theory, the main problem with a state/structure-centric approach to meeting human needs is that it unburdens the private individual from responsibility (Pogge 2005). From a structurationist perspective, attribution of responsibility involves the complexity of the relations between agency and structure. Recall that agency and structure are reciprocally constituted, though not in a relation ruled by determinism. Another point is that by connecting causal, moral, capacity, and communitarian responsibilities presents an account that considers the past, present and future. Another issue is that a focus on the “root cause” of conflict (Burton 1997) fails to account for social systems created in and during the conflict process (Jabri 1994). However, what is gained in ontological accuracy is lost in descriptive and explanatory parsimony. Indeterminacy and ambiguity are features of social life. This more complex account of responsibility confronts the central issue of making judgment. This brings
attention, again, to assumptions of what is a human being and how the social world works.

Bernard Williams (1985) insists that discussions such as the attribution of responsibility be informed by an adequate sociology. Williams, as Giddens, contends that overemphasis on clarity obscures the crucial role of judgment in dealing with the complexity and demands reflection. Therefore, it makes a great difference whether these reflections are rooted in assumptions of self-interest and sentiments (Rawls and liberalism) or according to obligation (communitarianism). Reflection, for Williams, is a procedure for thinking about moral categories and involves both theoretical and practical considerations. For Williams, the starting point for ethics is not universalism, such as needs, or radical relativism, but is instead a relational position that mediates between these positions. This position I argue is the responsibilities of self-governing approach that is mindful of indeterminacy and ambiguity of human social life.

Max Weber (1919a) develops an “ethics of responsibility” approach for critical reflection adequate to the modern social world. He dismissed social order based in fear and coercion (realism) and social order based in self-interest and self-preferences (liberalism). For Weber, neither is a “legitimate” form of social authority and therefore both are unstable. Rather, stable social forms are based in legitimacy which is granted by citizens in consent. The question then is why do people obey. For Weber, stable social systems are constructed if people obey because they believe it to be legitimate. Weber’s main point in developing an ethics of responsibility is that legitimate social action requires a logical connection between the motivations, means, and ends of social action.
To clarify Weber’s position requires investigating further what he understands as social action. For Weber, motivations of fear and self-interest (“vanity”) are not adequately social; they are devoted to the individual ego. Weber’s possible disagreement with Burton is the extent to which needs are derived from self-interest alone as the possessive individualism of Macpherson. According to Weber, the worst “sin” of a politician is “vanity” because actions are based in either fear or reward for the individual. For Weber, individuals have responsibilities to others in social action that includes ethical considerations of motivations, means, and ends that goes beyond individual needs and desires. For Weber, contrasting the ethics of responsibility are the ethics of conviction and the ethic of ultimate ends. The ethics of conviction is concerned with pure motivations, ignoring means and ends, and the ethics of ultimate ends is concerned with outcomes, ignoring motivations and means.

For Weber, the ethics of responsibility has two criteria — passion and proportion — that serve to properly orient social action. *Passion* refers to having an object of sincere interest beyond the individual self and serving social goals and not simply self-interest. *Proportion* refers to continual reflection on the motivations, means, and ends of social action and for keeping a balance among them. The responsibilities of self-governance approach developing in this study includes a concern for human needs, but goes beyond needs to include ways in which individuals participate in social and political life and the responsibilities they have towards their own motivations and towards others in terms of the relation between the means and ends of social action. In this way, responsibility is not limited to reflection on one’s own needs exclusively or on vain
aggrandizements of the self but includes civic-minded responsibility. Weber wrote of the ontology of judgment, not of the ontics of judgment. Weber’s ethics of responsibility raises some difficult questions. First, Weber continues the arguments presented in this study for the indeterminacy and ambiguity of human social life. Second, if social action motivated solely by self-preservation is vanity, is sacrifice promoted in an ethics of responsibility, and if so, under what conditions?

It is argued that in liberal accounts of politics sacrifice is ignored (Kahn 2005) and may be overstated in communitarian accounts (Kymlicka 1995) which means that communitarians have no better understanding of politics than liberals (Kahn 2005, 65). The question for a responsibilities of self-governing approach asks what kind(s) of sacrifice might be involved in creating and sustaining positive liberty? For self-governing the voice of authority is the possibly fallible self, but not the deontological and unencumbered self of liberalism. Rather, it is a self understood as participating in the ongoing life of a possibly fallible community. The possibly fallible aspects of the self and the community demands ongoing ethical reflection and judgment. Self-governing is a form of political resistance and engagement (Greenfield 1993) that constitutes the self at the same time it constitutes the community (Arendt 1963; Giddens 1984). Liberalism opens the capacity for critical self-reflection; communitarianism allows for the formative project of governing. Self-governing combines the insights of both perspectives. What is required is a self informed by both the cognitive and voluntarist dimensions of agency.

A responsibilities approach to self-governing begins by drawing from a sociology adequate to inform the ontological position of the modern individual — structuration...
theory. The importance of incorporating indeterminacy, ambiguity, and judgment has been noted as crucial in reflecting and participating in the social world. The modern virtue is civility and “the measure of our commitment to the construction of civility is how much we are willing to give up to achieve it” (Carter 1999, 104). From this perspective, more is required than meeting needs. However, civility is another term filled with ambiguity. Carter presents several guidelines for civility based in respect for others. First, “our duty to be civil toward others does not depend on whether we like them or not”…and “civility requires we sacrifice for strangers, not just for people we happen to know” (1999, 35, 58). Second, civility is “an affirmative duty to do good” (1999, 71).

Civility, from a responsibility of self-governing approach, requires abiding by moral laws and challenging them when they are immoral. This requires the exercise of critical judgment about the choices we make. Two general themes emerge in the discussion of civility. First, civility is not the same as consensus but may require active disagreement. Second, disagreement requires civility in respecting others positions and risking the possibility that we might be wrong. Carter discourages the resort to law to settle disputes because law is designed to generate threats and is upheld by ultimately by violence. Civility therefore expands human social ontology beyond a limited concern for basic needs, rights, and legal structures to include basic responsibilities we have towards ourselves and towards others in the ongoing project of social and political life. Civility is the connection between the motivations for justice, the ends of liberty, and the means for achieving it. In this way, civility combines the cognitive and voluntary dimensions of agency.
Civility, as both a critical and formative project, requires judgment. Judgment has been largely overlooked in Anglo-American philosophy and is peculiarly difficult to describe. For Larmore, there is little that can be said explicitly about judgment, even though it is required in areas of moral experience and social interactions (1987, 14-15). Could it be that ethical judgment by its very nature is resistant to systematic analysis? Whether or not this is the case, the predominant path of Anglo-American social and political thought has sought to clarify the general principles of the exercise of the ontics of moral action, not the complexities and ambiguities in the ontology of judgment. For Aristotle, training and experience are crucial in the acquisition of judgment. From this perspective, the deontological and unencumbered self of liberalism is inadequate to develop the virtues needed for social life. Aristotle gave a few guidelines for what he considered to be virtuous actions guided by judgment: we should avoid the extreme we are most likely to pursue; we should learn the errors we typically make and avoid them in the future; and, we should guard against the lures of pleasure. Aside from a few guidelines, little can be said about moral judgment itself, especially in terms of systematic general laws. The dimension of moral complexity cannot be understood simply as adherence to rules since judgment is required to know how and when to apply different virtues (Wood 2005).

The problem is not that social and political science have failed. Rather, the epistemologically complex issues of judgment at the ontic level are grounded in the indeterminate ontological condition of individual and social life, as described by the dimensions of agency and unintended consequences in structuration theory. For
Larmore, to acknowledge this is to “outgrow the simplifications that have beset us” (1999, 151).

This post-traditional world involves reflexivity over the loss of a single hegemony. The current age of plurality of traditions is marked by increased uncertainty and risk (Giddens 1994; Beck 1997) which include the side-effects of instrumentally rational action. For Beck, the risks involved cannot be dealt with properly through traditional institutions — the nation-state and collective identities. Therefore, a “sub-politics” emerges that increases political involvement from those traditionally uninvolved in politics. What emerges are new arrangements between the individual and the community and between authority and democratic governance. For Giddens, what is required in the new social condition is a shift in the understanding of the state as protector and the individual as pursuing her own self-assigned goals to social conditions that do not abandon the welfare state but modify it to create “redistributions of possibilities” in which all citizens are “responsible risk-takers” (Giddens 1994, 25-29). The state is important, but is not at the center of political life. This new conception of risk and responsibility is broadened to include all citizens in forming and transforming social structures (Giddens 1984, 1994). Fulfilling needs is important to self-governance, but post-traditional society requires more from its citizens. What is required is active engagement and participatory problem solving. Giddens calls this the shift form emancipatory politics to “life politics.” Rather than searching for a new hegemony, the goal should be moving to a politics of inclusion that uses tension and conflict as a motor of democracy to guide self-governance (Mouffe 2005). This broadens the discussion of
agency by focusing on the importance of active citizenry, the inability of elites to control social systems, and the requirement of trust in others. An added dimension is what is required of oneself to be considered a trustworthy by others. To accomplish this requires connecting the cognitive and voluntarist dimensions of agency.

Chapter Seven, “Responsibility and Nonviolence”, draws upon the emphasis of ontological indeterminacy and judgment required of the modern individual. In terms of agency, what orientation should be taken towards such a social world? The discussion clarifies the cognitive and voluntarist notions of agency, required for a responsibilities of self-governing approach, and turns uneasily to the insights of nonviolence. Drawing especially from Weber’s ethic of responsibility and Giddens structuration theory, this discussion builds on the argument that parties in a conflict always have agency and that positive relational expressions are crucial in the move from violence to politics. Trust, mentioned in the previous chapter, is further explored to connect the voluntarist and cognitive dimensions of agency. The difficult concept of sacrifice is revisited in connection to research on prosocial behavior and leads to a discussion of Mahatmas Gandhi and nonviolent active participation.

To begin, the question is raised as to how individuals and collectives might adjudicate between different conceptions of justice and the actions and practices appropriate for justice. Foundational attempts to ground knowledge, such as needs theory, are insufficient due to the ontological-ethical condition of human social life (White 2009). Conversations are crucial but meaning and understanding cannot be fully articulated in language. When this is taken into account “It is not difficult to see how
virtues of carefulness and humility toward the other are prefigured more clearly” (White 2009, 70).

The cognitive dimensions of agency encourage better examination, clarification, and criticism in the process of reflecting on the ontological questions, foundations, and frameworks employed. These possible limitations of assumptions, plus the limits of articularity, suggests the limits of discourse in general. If we all make assumptions about ontology, if language is incapable of complete expression, and if judgment can be pathological, what next? In terms of addressing disagreements and conflicts the voluntarist dimensions of agency offers some insights. The voluntarist side of agency, the capability to do and to possibly do otherwise, can fill the gaps due to the limitations of verbal communication. The turn to (prosocial) behavior does not ignore the possible necessity and contribution of speech but broadens the act of communicating. Shapin (1996) explored the connection between biography and epistemology by examining the way in which assessments of truth-claims are tied not only to speech but also to actions. The evaluation of testimony has no explicitly formulated rules to follow and therefore is a skill-like activity requiring reflection and judgment. The best reliable source is testimony from people characterized by their integrity and lack of vain self-interest (no apparent motivations to disguise the truth). Evaluating testimony includes critical reflection and the evaluation of actions. Therefore, actions help to fill the gaps of verbal communication. In terms of an ethics of responsibilities approach to self-governing, interpersonal relations — both speech and actions — impact assessments.
The role of sacrifice for civility, demanded by Carter but missing in liberalism, gives insight into how the voluntarist dimensions of agency can complement and inform the cognitive dimensions of agency. But difficult questions remain. Is sacrifice counter to the affirmation of the integrity of the self and identity, prominent in much of the conflict resolution literature (Kaldor 2009)? Franz Fanon (1968) took the discussion of recognition beyond the liberal leaning towards possession and needs by articulating a radical understanding of “the gift” that the oppressed (can) gives to the master. Fanon offers a radical critique of the slave if the slave simply wants to trade places with the master, or to be master. Generosity, or the ability to give, is restricted when the relationship is collapsed into possessions. The danger in defining liberty with possessions is that it leads at best to only minimal structural changes. For Fanon, the ability to give is more radical than the ability to possess. In this way, the struggle for liberation is the struggle for enacting the reciprocity of human responsibilities in an ethical community, not simply the struggle for individual freedom and needs. Fanon is pointing to the conditions of civility. How are the oppressed to understand and use Burton’s needs theory?

To begin to answer this question is to explore in more detail what Fanon means if the struggle for recognition be taken primarily as a struggle for genuine human intersubjectivity. The complicated question is what has the slave to give the master. Hasn’t the slave already given enough? The slave’s role, the gift, to the master is to humanize the slave through intersubjective encounter.
One way to approach the idea of sacrifice and ethics as “first philosophy” (Levinas 2004) is to explore the social science research on prosocial behavior. Commonly studied as altruism, prosocial behavior refers to the willingness to act in ways as “to help others in need…and to be fair and considerate” (Fetchenhaur et al 2006, 3).

Most approaches to prosocial behavior have in common explicit or implicit emphasis on incentives and sanctions to engage in empathy and altruism. If, however, prosocial behavior is viewed as a virtue rather than simply a means to an ends, is anything gained? If prosocial behavior adds clarity to the ethics of responsibility in self-governing and is itself a virtue and not simply a form of instrumentally oriented action, might the idea of sacrifice be better understood? If prosocial behavior is framed as a virtue turning to the writings of Mahatma Gandhi shed insights into the connection between sacrifice and prosocial behavior and counters the possessive individualism of liberalism without succumbing to the oppressive possibilities of communitarianism. The other shortcoming, aside from instrumentalism, of the prosocial literature is that it is framed in terms of solidarity. This study argues a better framing of prosocial behavior is in terms of Carter’s civility which is oriented by Weber’s ethics of responsibility towards strangers, to those with whom we may not have emotional attachments.

One of the most radical examples of prosocial behavior is Gandhi’s approach to principled nonviolence. Gandhi’s method of nonviolent action combines the cognitive and voluntarist dimensions of agency — connecting motivations, means, and ends — in Weber’s ethics of responsibility. Gandhi considers nonviolence a virtue of ethical importance in terms of the prosocial transformation of social relations and social
structures. In terms of the importance of trust for Giddens and Beck, and Shapin’s question of whom to trust, the principled nonviolence actor can be trusted to respect the civil and political rights of her adversary. Many times Gandhi writes of the importance of the willingness to sacrifice and endure suffering. For Gandhi, suffering and sacrifice are not good of themselves and should not be sought (this would be instrumental behavior that serves the vanity of the self). Rather, nonviolence is a methodological and behavioral imperative: the practitioner of nonviolence does not make others suffer for a mistake the activist might make. Gandhi did not create a radical polemic between violence and nonviolence as much as he created a continuum between cowardice and courage. On this continuum, Gandhi was most critical of cowardice. Both violence and nonviolence require courage. For Gandhi, the difference is that violence preserves possessions and nonviolence preserves people. In this way, violence is destructive while nonviolence is constructive.

None of the social and political theorists mentioned in this study aside from Gandhi explicitly mention or address nonviolence. Is nonviolence worthy of consideration? For Gandhi, the use of violence is only a temporary solution; nonviolence is the best way to overcome oppression and injustice and sustain justice. Gandhi did mention his approach was an experiment in nonviolence and that no science of nonviolence has been developed. Max Weber develops a stern critique of two approaches to social action: ethics of ultimate ends and ethics of conviction (1919a). Weber, in reaction to Leo Tolstoy, cautioned against approaches to social action that fail to acknowledge the logical connection between motivations, means, and outcomes. For
Weber, principled nonviolence is too likely to be concerned with the purity of motivations and unconcerned with the means and ends of social action. Also, advocates of principled nonviolence may be unwilling to do the difficult work of sustaining a modern nation state and the monopoly upon violence. For Weber, the work of modern state politics is too complicated for principled nonviolence. For example, should the domestic police force be dismantled? If the key to an effective nonviolent strategy is to convince a third party to get involved, is the nonviolent movement simply relying on someone else to offer threats of force?

Nonviolence is part of a tradition dating back hundreds of years and originating in religious and philosophical principles that have evolved over thousands of years. This is not to deny occasional inconsistencies of pacifism and peace movements more broadly: “A persistent naïvité, a tendency toward utopianism, and inadequate grasp of the unavoidable dilemmas of security,” but these limitations do not remove nonviolence as underpinning legitimate social movements and scholarly discipline (Cortright 2008, 334). The presence of “unavoidable security dilemmas” in the modern social world is perhaps most troubling for a principled approach to nonviolence. Even Gandhi recognized this dilemma when he wrote of the necessity and justice of stopping a “mad man” by physical force if necessary.

The large question is the extent to which nonviolence can excuse acts of oppression and killing on behalf of nonviolence. Nonviolence does not support punitive justice for the sake of retribution. But what about the present and future, when a mad man runs amok? This is the security dilemma. What is the possible role of nonviolence
when facing an atrocity such as the Holocaust administered by the Nazi regime? Should the Jews in Germany be criticized for not actively participating more in nonviolent action? Some may make that argument, but that is not the necessary argument here. Rather, drawing from the insights of structuration theory, principles of nonviolence, and Theda Skocpol’s theory of social revolution, the point is to draw more third party actors into stopping the Holocaust. This form of analysis relies less upon the German Jews actively resisting the Nazi regime than it does upon others who could influence the administration of the genocide. In terms of structuration theory, those directly administering the genocide have immediate access to the institutions of genocide. The Holocaust was not carried out simply by a few individuals but was a massive coordinated effort involving police force and the German military, civil servants (such as Adolf Eichman), and to some degree the general German population. A coordinated effort of non-cooperation to fulfill the command of genocide could have created sizeable barriers to carrying out the genocide (for a successful example of this method see the Danish response to German occupation during World War II in Ackerman and Duvall 2000). If non-Jews in Germany were better oriented towards the prosocial behaviors in the principles of nonviolence, then administering the Holocaust would have faced fierce obstacles. The point is that structuration theory offers many more occasions and actors that can effect social change outside of war. War is one option among many!

Perhaps it is also best said that nonviolence promotes restraint rather than violence. In addressing a situation in which a madman is running amok, it is better phrased that a more realistic stance to nonviolence is one of non-killing. It is important
here to draw a distinction between physical restraint and killing. Absent in much of the nonviolent scholarship is the possible role of physical restraint. To help clarify this point, I will draw upon debates about restorative justice. Restorative justice is a “new way of thinking about crime” (Zehr 2002) in which punitive justice is to be replaced with healing and accountability, operating generally within the parameters of principled nonviolence. While many restorative justice advocates might wish to abolish the current criminal justice system in the United States (Zehr 1985), others challenge whether or not this is feasible or just (Zehr 2002). Rather than abolishing all prisons and police forces, it is acknowledged that they do perform a necessary security function. The point is to make prisons and police forces less violent. The point is not to abolish the criminal justice system. The point is to curtail the effects of the violence of punishment. For example, people are not sent to prison to be punished, incarceration and separation from society is the punishment. Restraint and incarceration may be necessary at times for the good of the individual to prevent committing more crime and for the good of society. In this way, nonviolence is an ideal to be approximated.

Also, nonviolence guards against simply replacing the master with the slave and keeping the oppressive institutions in place. The gift of nonviolence may be non-cooperation and noncompliance itself. When broadened to include the presence of justice, rather than just the absence of war, the principles of nonviolence serve the broader efforts of democracy and social justice. Viewing nonviolence as prosocial behavior, rather than passivism, incorporates the agency components of structuration theory. In this way, nonviolence informs the constructive efforts of building civil society.
in the process of revolution and protest. Needs and rights are not diminished, but when complemented with responsibilities incorporate the courage and risk of living civilly with others while working to build more just social institutions.

Just war theory mandates that soldiers must assume increased risk to themselves to further protect civilian populations (Walzer 2005). This is a form of prosocial behavior and the exercise of responsibility in self-governing. A question to be further explored is the extent to which increased risk of restraining, rather than killing, a mad man serves justice. Glenn Paige (2002) argues the term “nonkilling” serves better to diagnose the pathology of lethality. For Paige, this is a first step in addressing the violence-accepting politics that has failed to suppress violence by violent means. Nonkilling allows for further critical re-evaluation given the possible fallibility of human cognition. For example, evidence gathered in the future can exonerate the incarcerated; further evidence can only honor the memory of someone who has been killed.

John Burton was pursuing needs theory with the best intentions of further developing (or discovering) laws of human behavior that drive protracted conflict so that these conflicts can be solved and future conflicts can be prevented (1990, 1997). The question of laws in the social sciences raises some difficult questions. Laws generally mean universal laws that exist in the natural sciences. Leaving aside the question of whether or not laws exist in the natural sciences (Collins 1985), a discussion of laws in the social sciences is more problematic. For Giddens, there are no universal laws in the social sciences because generalizations depend upon actor’s reasons, in a “mesh” of
intended and unintended consequences of action. This is why generalizations do not have universal form:

For the content of agent’s knowledgeability, the question of how ‘situated’ it is and the validity of the propositional content of that knowledge — all these will influence the circumstances in which those generalizations hold.

(Giddens 1984, 345)

The point Giddens repeatedly makes, and discussed by conflict scholar-practitioners at the beginning of this study, is that it matters a great deal what are considered the guiding principles of social analysis and what types of casual relations are involved since there are no purely objective laws in the social sciences. The consequences of this ontological position lead to epistemological insights. For Weber, Carter, Fanon, and Gandhi it is the loss of epistemic privilege of any one position and the need for adequately informed provisional judgment. For Weber this is the ethic of responsibility. For Fanon, this is the gift. For Carter, this is civility. For Gandhi, this is principled nonviolence.

“The real puzzle for social scientists is not war and violence but a more unusual phenomena: peace” (Gregor & Robarchek 1996, 160). In terms of peacebuilding, the task becomes one of better coordination and collaboration among those working to construct peace and justice because agents and structures are part of the same process. If social practices re-constitute social institutions (Giddens 1984), then a form of social
revolution that builds civil society in the process of revolution does not face the daunting
tasks of re-constituting social institutions than an approach that utilizes asocial or socially
destructive means to secure a revolution. This study is a “critical reflection at the core”
(Lederach 2005, 22) of needs theory. John Burton claims that conflict resolution is a
political theory, what kind of political theory is it? If the above discussion is legitimate
needs theory serves as critique of oppressive structures and should inform those in
positions of power. However, the extent of usefulness of needs theory to those who are
oppressed is questionable. In Max Weber’s words, needs theory serves as a starting point
for investigation and not an end point in analysis. In seeking to address the lack of a
robust theory in conflict and peace studies this study attempted to “examine and re-
examine” the ontological assumptions (Burton 2001, 9) of needs theory by comparing
needs theory to other social and political theories. If Giddens, Weber, Sandel, Carter and
Gandhi are correct it seems doubtful that liberalism, while useful in undermining
oppression, can move from a hermeneutic of complaint to build and maintain a just social
order. Liberalism directs attention to injustice, but is less capable of the formative project
of building a just society. This study locates needs theory as a liberal political theory and
has attempted to incorporate the insights from structuration theory and civic-
republicanism to complement needs theory. Rather than focusing exclusively on needs,
the responsibilities of self-governing were introduced as a way to build civil society in
the process of social transformation.
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