Embracing the Other

Blum, Lawrence, Baron, Lawrence, Oliner, Samuel P., Oliner, Pearl

Published by NYU Press

Blum, Lawrence, et al.
Embracing the Other: Philosophical, Psychological, and Historical Perspectives on Altruism.
Project MUSE.  muse.jhu.edu/book/15766.

For additional information about this book
https://muse.jhu.edu/book/15766

For content related to this chapter
https://muse.jhu.edu/related_content?type=book&id=494576
PROMOTING EXTENSIVE ALTRUISTIC BONDS: A CONCEPTUAL ELABORATION AND SOME PRAGMATIC IMPLICATIONS

Pearl M. Oliner and Samuel P. Oliner

Since the publication of our study of rescuers of Jews during the Holocaust (Oliner and Oliner 1988), we have had the opportunity to discuss our findings with many groups. Almost inevitably, we are confronted with questions regarding its practical implications. What people want to know is what they can do to promote a more caring society. This chapter is an attempt to suggest some parameters for promoting altruism in society at large.

The phenomenon of rescue provides a particularly rich source for inducing such parameters because of its nature and scope. Rescue was not only an altruistic behavior but also an example of heroic altruism. Whereas altruistic behaviors generally involve some costs, rescuers risked their lives, and frequently those of their families as well. Moreover, whereas altruistic behavior on behalf of one's own group is not uncommon, rescue behavior was directed toward outsiders, a religiously and ethnically different group. Non-Jewish rescuers of Jews were but a fraction of the total population under Nazi occupation; their behaviors thus suggest an uncommon commitment that transcended group loyalties. But a deep commitment to altruism and a broadly inclusive one among large numbers of the global population may well be necessary for planetary survival.

The parameters for our proposal are rooted in a basic concept, which we call extensivity. We begin by explaining this concept and its evolution as suggested by the theoretical and empirical work
of others, and describe its empirical basis as it emerged from our study of rescuers. We then suggest its usefulness by applying it as the central focus for eight social processes that we deem essential for promoting extensive altruistic behaviors in diverse social institutions.

EXTENSIVITY: A CONCEPTUAL ELABORATION

As we define it, extensivity means the tendency to assume commitments and responsibilities toward diverse groups of people. Extensivity includes two elements: the propensity to attach oneself to others in committed interpersonal relationships; and the propensity toward inclusiveness with respect to the diversity of individuals and groups to whom one will assume obligations.

The construct attachment is perhaps most familiar in the context that John Bowlby (1969) used and developed it. Based on his observations of infant-mother relationships, Bowlby concluded that the desire for proximity was a compelling drive among infants, and the ways mothers responded to this need became the prototype for all subsequent human relationships. Further research has amplified as well as modified some of Bowlby's conclusions. Ainsworth (1967), for example, distinguished between securely and nonsecurely attached children, while yet others have concluded that Bowlby may have exaggerated the importance of the mother as an attachment figure, and that others, including fathers, other relatives, and even strangers could serve this purpose (Schaffer and Emerson 1964). What this research nonetheless shares in common is the assumption that attachment to some figure in infancy and early childhood is essential for healthy development. A sustained connectedness with an adult figure who provides security and stability in responding to children's needs presumably shapes fundamental conceptions about trust and nontrust, self and other, relationships and autonomy.

That the need for attachment may be a life-long issue has been proposed by developmentalists in particular, although the concept of attachment is variously labeled. Communion is the term that Bakan (1966) used to describe connectedness with others; he argues that it, along with agency or individuation, is fundamental to all human experience. Kegan (1982) terms it subject relations—embeddedness in the other or joining of the self with the other—which he views as one of the two ongoing processes of making meaning
throughout life (the other, object relations, involves disembeddedness and separation.) Chodorow (1974) as well as Carlson (1972) and Gilligan (1982) have emphasized that while interconnectedness and social relationships are fundamental maturity needs in both males and females, interconnectedness is more commonly the modality of women.

Most commonly, the word attachment implies interpersonal connectedness—that is, a sense of relationship with known others. The term is also generally used to suggest an intense form of interpersonal connectedness, reserved only for very special relationships. In this sense, it is conceived as a dichotomous state; one either has it or one does not. As we conceive it, however, attachment is a dimension—that is, a sense of interpersonal connectedness that ranges in intensities, from love at one pole to alienation (extreme detachment) at the other. In between is a broad continuum reflecting varying intensities of attachment and detachment.

No single extant social science concept captures the notion of inclusiveness—that is, broad-ranging interconnectedness—although it is sometimes implied by the word extensive. For example, Sorokin (1954) used extensity to describe one of the five dimensions of love. Love, he noted, can be confined to self or one other person, or range as far as the love of the whole universe, including all living creatures. Between these polarities, said Sorokin, "lies a vast scale of extensities: love of one's family, or a few friends, or love of all the groups one belongs to—one's clan, tribe, nationality, nation, religious, occupational, political, and other group and associations" (16). Epstein (1980) uses the term extensive to describe personal theories of reality that are broad and wide ranging. While all people construct personal theories to structure their experiences and to direct their lives, says Epstein, individuals with extensive personal theories can accommodate and integrate new and diverse experiences without threat; individuals with narrow self-theories are rigid, defensive, and intolerant of differences.

However, the term extensive is sometimes also used to imply attachment—that is, intense interpersonal connectedness—without regard to breadth. This meaning is implied by some self-concept theorists, among whom the concept of self and other are particular concerns.

Common notions of the self imply ego boundaries, so that self and others are distinct (Perloff 1987; Waterman 1981). Individualism is commonly associated with firm ego boundaries, so that
the sense of self in effect "stops at one's skin and clearly demarks self from nonself" (Spence 1985, 1288). Self-concept theorists have not been entirely persuaded by this notion of ego boundedness. Rather than bounded, some perceive the ego as mutable and fluid, expanding and contracting in the course of experience. This fluid, mutable self incorporates new external elements into it, while extruding others. *Ego extensions* is the term Rosenberg and Kaplan (1982) say is most commonly assigned to those external elements that are experienced as part of the self. As Rosenberg and Kaplan imply, extension in this sense implies an intense attachment, for as they explain it, external elements of this type are experienced as part of the self and defended with as much vigor as the self itself. Although they refrain from using the term, *love* seems an apt description of such an intense relationship.

Others, however, allow for varying intensities of ego extensions in which care for others may not be congruent with the total self proper. Reykowski (1984), for example, expresses the latter idea in the term *psychological proximity*, which includes a range of closeness to the self. The more psychologically proximate others are perceived to be, says Reykowski, the greater the likelihood that they will be treated similarly to the self. In this sense, the self appears to remain intact and bounded. Although capable of extending the self to assign varying degrees of value to others whom one recognizes as like the self, one does not quite experience the other as an actual part of the self.

As we define it, *inclusiveness* refers to the *breadth* of interpersonal connectedness feelings. Like attachment, it, too, is a dimension. As we conceptualize it, it is a dimension ranging from feelings of connection to the universe at one pole, to the exclusion of all others except the self at the other. In between is a broad continuum reflecting varying individuals and groups.

In view of the fact that no existing construct appears to characterize the propensity for both interpersonal attachments and inclusive connectedness, we propose the term *extensive* not only as a way of addressing this omission, but also because attachment and inclusiveness appear to be conceptually related.

Both attachment and inclusiveness imply ego extension: a propensity toward assuming committed responsibilities that differ only in the degree and breadth or range of persons to whom one accepts obligations. Proponents of the bounded self concept perceive such relationships emerging from autonomous and indepen-
dent selves who may rationally conclude that self-interest is best served by recognizing the mutual interests of other selves. Proponents of the fluid self concept contend that the self emerges and is defined in relationships, so that the self includes the interests of others. Implicit in both these orientations is the notion of extending oneself-reaching out, including and integrating others—although the underlying theoretical mechanisms that explain them differ.

As extensivity implies reaching out and integrating, constrictedness implies contracting and separating. As extensivity implies attachment and inclusiveness, constrictedness implies detachment and exclusiveness. Detachment implies a propensity to avoid committed and responsible interpersonal relationships, to remain apart and distant from others. This does not necessarily imply dehumanization of the other; it need not be based on ethnocentric views. Rather, detachment reflects a sense of boundedness in which the self is not only distinct from others but is also not bound to others in relationships of obligation. Avoidance of commitments is one of the hallmarks of detachment; at its extreme it becomes alienation, so that external objects generally—perhaps including even the self itself—are experienced as meaningless and without value.

Whereas detachment implies a general tendency to remain apart and separate from others, exclusiveness implies the deliberate expulsion of particular individuals or groups from consideration. Exclusive people may, however, feel strong attachments to particular people or groups. Exclusion may result from centration on self or selected others (such as one's family, religious or national group) so that outsiders are remote objects at best. Exclusion may also be the consequence of ethnocentrism and pseudospeciation, in which outsiders are viewed as inherently inferior. At its extreme, outsiders can be dehumanized.

Extensivity thus implies two dimensions: the attachment dimension, which ranges from alienation or extreme detachment at one pole to love at the other; and the inclusiveness dimension, which ranges from exclusion of all others except the self at one pole to the inclusion of the universe at the other. In between each pole is a broad continuum reflecting varying intensities of detachment and attachment, and varying degrees of inclusiveness. Yet another way to conceptualize extensivity is to say that it is a personality orientation that is rooted both in the particular and the general.
Conceptualizing extensivity as a two-dimensional continuum allows us to better understand the responses of nonrescuers as well as rescuers. Several nonrescuers were highly attached people, who were quite capable of altruistic behaviors on behalf of their families, church groups, or nation, but who nonetheless shut their doors in the face of supplicant Jews. Other nonrescuers were more detached generally; they felt little in the way of obligations to people of any kind and were unlikely to perform altruistic acts on behalf of any others. In the latter case, it was not so much a matter of excluding Jews as it was a general sense of remoteness from others.

Highlighting this distinction also helps explain why inclusive people, such as those who are intent on saving humankind, may nonetheless inflict great cruelties on individuals. Because of their disconnection from real people, who may cloud their vision or limit their options, they may become inured to the suffering of those around them. Billig's (1985) compelling account of terrorist Horst Mahler, cofounder of the Red Army Faction, suggests the evolution of an individual who, initially motivated to save the world, progressed to distinguishing between them (those outside the revolutionary circle) and us, finally becoming indifferent to the "us" as well. What this suggests is that unless tempered by the other, either propensity alone carries the seeds of its own social pathology: one denying obligations to others besides one's own, the other denying obligations to particular individuals or groups in the name of a transcendent ideal.

THE EMPIRICAL BASIS OF THE CONCEPT "EXTENSIVITY"

The empirical basis for the concept extensivity was derived from a summary factor analysis of approximately 150 single variables or items we measured in our study of rescuers and nonrescuers.

Survey questions were grouped into topics and twenty-seven summary variables were constructed through selection, summation, and factor analysis of the items within the topic groupings. (See Oliner and Oliner 1988, 313–18, for the definition of each variable and how it was derived.) These twenty-seven summarizing variables were the basis for yet another factor analysis, which upon completion arranged the variables into four major orthogonal factors. Based upon the themes common to the var-
iables that loaded highly on each factor, the factors were labeled Family Attachments, Jewish Friends, Broad Social Commitments, and Egalitarianism.

What do these factors signify? As we interpreted it, the first two major factors—Family Attachments and Jewish Friends—indicate strong attachments to people in the immediate environment: in one case to families of origin, in the other to friends. The third and fourth major factors—Broad Social Commitments and Egalitarianism—are more abstract and depersonalized. They suggest a linkage to a more generalized other: in one case, a sense of responsibility toward society at large, in the other a perception of a shared common humanity.

With respect to these four major factors, rescuers scored significantly higher on each than did the comparison sample of nonrescuers. Thus, rescuers scored significantly higher than nonrescuers on degree of family attachment, Jewish friendships, broad social commitments, and egalitarianism. More importantly, more rescuers scored highly on at least two factors: one that indicated a strong attachment to the people in their immediate environment, as well as one that indicated a linkage to the broader world. In short, these data appear to support the idea that rescuers, as compared with nonrescuers, were more likely to be extensive people.

**PROMOTING EXTENSIVE ALTRUISTIC BONDS IN SOCIETY**

If an extensive orientation promotes altruistic behavior, what types of specific experiences might promote it? In the following, we propose a conceptual scheme that we believe synthesizes many of the experiences proposed by others as conducive to altruistic behavior specifically, as well as several others not yet so identified but that we believe are also likely to encourage it. The value of this schematic framework, we believe, lies in its potential applicability as a conceptual lens through which social institutions can be analyzed for the purpose of modifying or reinforcing current practices, or adding new ones.

Basing our framework on the concept of extensivity, we propose eight social processes that we believe can promote inclusive altruistic propensities. Four of these processes—bonding, empathizing, learning caring norms, and participating in caring behaviors—relate to forming attachments and a sense of obligation
to others in the immediate environment. The remaining four—
diversifying, networking, developing problem-solving strategies,
and forming global connections—relate to making inclusive link-
ages to diverse groups in the broader society. Before we proceed
to a description of these processes, and their potential applicability
in varied social institutions, some underlying assumptions need to
be addressed.

We presume that more consistent and stable expressions of
extensive altruism depend on cumulative experiences interacting
with evolving internal structures. Rather than being dependent
on one type of social experience alone—such as bonding, empathy,
or learning caring norms—we presume that extensive altruistic
propensities are enhanced through various means and are rein-
forced to the extent that they are incrementally supported. While
it is likely that some such experiences may be more important
than others with respect to particular individuals or groups, our
schematic framework is nonetheless an additive one.

While it is also probable that each process influences the other—
bonding, for example, may encourage empathic feelings as well as
receptivity to learning caring norms—their linkages are not cer-
tain. Since several of these processes have been directly and spe-
cifically associated with altruistic propensities, they warrant
special attention. Since bonding, empathy, and caring norms can
be restricted to particular groups only, we presume that they are
more likely to be associated with an inclusive orientation if ex-
periences directly address inclusiveness rather than rely on as-
sumed extensions.

We further presume that an extensive altruistic orientation is
primarily the product of nonrational processes, in which ration-
ality plays but a secondary role. Whereas rationality implies logical
reasoning and empirical justifications, nonrational behaviors are
acquired in the context of cultural expectations interacting with
personal proclivities, neither of which have necessarily been sub-
jected to reasoning processes (Etzioni 1988). While rationality has
a role to play in promoting an extensive altruistic orientation, it
is most likely to resonate among people predisposed to use reason
either because of personal preference or because of the nature of
the culture with which they identify. Hence, the processes we em-
phasize do not exclude rationality, but include it as only one pro-
cess among many others.

Our focus on multiple social institutions, rather than the family
alone, stems from considerations regarding the age during which an extensive altruistic orientation is most likely to be acquired and the social contexts in which people spend most of their lives. While not denying the influence of later experiences, social psychologists have tended to emphasize early childhood as the shaping crucible for adult attitudes and behaviors. While early childhood experience strongly influences basic orientations toward life, its primacy is no longer universally accepted. Life-span researchers, such as Baltes and Reese (1984) suggest that each stage of life is accompanied by important developmental changes, and that no single period in the life cycle is more critical than another. Changes are associated with internal processes as well as external social role, task, and age expectations. We assume that the capacity for altruism is no exception. As Krebs and Van Hesteren propose (this volume), higher-stage altruism is dependent on the evolution of internal developmental capacities, themselves associated with age interacting with experiences. While some predisposition toward altruism is likely to be acquired in early childhood, we assume that experiences at all stages of the life cycle can either facilitate or inhibit it.

Related to the above is our assumption regarding the contexts in which encouraging experiences need to occur. Families—whether families of origin or acquired—continue to be one critical social institution for such encouragement. Families, however, are neither uniformly equipped nor uniformly inclined to promote an altruistic orientation toward others. Moreover, people spend large percentages of their time in social institutions other than families, and unmarried working people in particular frequently live alone and without access to families (Yankelovich 1982; Lude-man 1989). If peer groups, schools, religious or ethnic groups, and the workplace fail to provide experiences conducive to an extensive altruistic orientation, then even already-predisposed individuals may be threatened with losing it. When family beginnings are less than benevolent, the need for other institutions to provide such encouraging experiences increases. We thus assume that people are most likely to develop an extensive orientation toward others if the institutions in which they live most of their lives support it.

Finally, we assume that all social institutions—including the workplace—have the potential for encouraging the above processes without forfeiting other primary goals. In fact, examples
of these social processes already exist in embryonic form in all types of social institutions, and many theorists argue that implementation of these processes may be essential not only for our mutual survival, but also to promote other primary institutional goals. Families are frequently presumed to contain the optimal opportunities for promoting experiences conducive to altruism, because such experiences do not necessarily conflict with other primary functions families are required to perform, such as maintenance and support of family members and the socialization of children into the larger society. Conversely, the economic sector in a capitalist society is presumed to be among those social institutions least conducive to altruism, because altruistic activity conflicts with its primary function, which is to maximize profits. Neither position, however, is necessarily the case. Impoverished and overburdened families, for example, may find maintenance and support functions overriding. Conversely, not all businesses, even in a capitalist society, are oriented exclusively toward maximum profits—some forego maximization in favor of social responsibility norms, for example. What this suggests is that social institutions, including the family, vary greatly with respect to their perceived constraints and opportunities for promoting experiences conducive to an extensive altruistic orientation.

Whether the processes we identify are sufficient to promote altruistic behavior under extreme circumstances—when the lives of self and others are jeopardized—is a matter not yet resolved. Evidence from our study of rescuers suggests that they increase the probability of altruistic behavior even under conditions of extreme terror. Whether they are sufficient to promote the development of the "ideal altruistic personality" type proposed by Krebs and Van Hesteren (this volume) is a matter of conjecture. As Smolenska and Reykowski propose (this volume), the motivation for rescue was essentially of three types, of which only one—the axiological—appears to approximate the highest level of altruistic development. According to that framework, most rescuers appeared to be motivated normocentrically or empathically, rather than axiologically (Oliner and Oliner 1988). While it may be the case that the highest level of altruistic development is more conducive to stable and more qualitative forms of altruism, such evidence suggests that the voluntary readiness to jeopardize life and limb for others does not depend on it.
THE SOCIAL PROCESSES

With the above assumptions in mind, we now proceed to a brief description of each of the above processes and its potential applicability in diverse social institutions, with particular emphasis on the family, education, and the workplace. (A more elaborate description of these processes and their application to varied settings in book length is in preparation.)

*Bonding* means forming enduring emotional attachments to people and places: those objects, human and nonhuman, with which individuals feel so intensely interconnected, related, affiliated, and identified that should they become transformed or even disappear, they remain ever real and present in their internal world. While the impact of bonding to place in relation to interpersonal relationships has not been studied, interpersonal bonding is often associated with a number of psychological characteristics presumably more conducive to altruism, including trust, optimism, and competence (Lieberman 1977; Ainsworth 1979; Sroufe 1979; Main and Weston 1981). Infancy is generally regarded as the critical period for bonding to occur. Egocentrism and excessive feelings of neediness are associated with those who fail to form satisfactory bonds during this period (Bowlby 1969; Rutter 1979; Shengold 1989).

But bonding can also occur in other contexts. Teachers, parents, and students can develop deep and sustaining relationships with their schools and colleagues, for example (Lightfoot 1983). The same is true for the workplace. Before divestiture, AT & T, for example, was almost uniformly described as a strongly bonded cultural institution (Tunstall 1985). The attitudes and behaviors of people in such environments are distinctly different from those in which bonding has not occurred.

Bonding environments, we propose, share some generic qualities. They stimulate, provide comfort and play opportunities, and, while also providing a net of safety and security, affirm individuality and autonomy as well. Without the latter, such environments risk engulfment and smothering—and as argued by many (see Osiatynski; Krebs and Van Hesteren, this volume), autonomy is essential for altruism. Bonding environments thus provide a sense of a "connected identity," a concept proposed by Staub (this volume), implying an independent self that is nonetheless connected with others.
The second process, empathizing, means understanding others' thoughts and feelings and feeling with them. (For varied definitions of empathy, see Eisenberg and Mussen 1989; Feshbach 1982; Batson 1987; Wispé 1986.) Empathy has been highlighted by several researchers as significantly associated with altruism (Eisenberg and Mussen 1989; Kohn 1990). Batson in particular regards empathy as the critical component for promoting altruistic behavior (Batson 1987). Empathic feelings, particularly for others' pain, were significantly associated with rescuers as compared with nonrescuers.

While several philosophers as well as contemporary psychologists believe that people may be born with some inherent potential for empathy, most of the latter agree that empathy is a product of development and experience. A number of studies suggest some generic experiences that encourage empathy. Among these, clarifying one's own values and feelings and having opportunities for taking the perspective of others (including interpreting others' feelings and thoughts as well as role playing) are frequently highlighted. The importance of the first process is emphasized in particular by Jarymowicz (this volume), who found that individuals who were more aware of their self-distinctiveness were more likely to respond to others on others' own terms (exocentric responsiveness). Although perspective taking is generally perceived as a cognitive endeavor that can be used for self-serving purposes as well as prosocial ones, studies suggest that its enhancement is frequently associated with the enhancement of prosocial behaviors (Feshbach 1979; Chandler 1973).

Environments that promote empathy encourage both clarification of one's own feelings and perspective taking. The initial motivation to engage in such processes may be self-enhancement, effectiveness, or mutual survival. In families as well as other social institutions, participants can be encouraged to develop empathic skills for the purpose of more effective communication and collegiality. As E. Wight Bakke (1946) observed more than forty years ago, until both labor and management recognized their mutual survival needs and understood each others' tasks and responsibilities, conflict was inevitable. But once a cognitive perspective-taking mode is adopted, the opportunity for affective arousal increases. Teachers, clerics, or managers, for example, who first are persuaded to develop perspective-taking skills for instrumental purposes—to achieve better ratings from supervisors or to be better
liked—may eventually become concerned with their clients as ends unto themselves.

**Caring norms**—including rules, values, and principles—express expectations regarding appropriate helping behaviors. (Although scholars frequently distinguish among these terms, for our purposes, it is sufficient to note that values and principles are generally considered to be more abstract and less prescriptive than norms, with rules being the most concrete and specific of all.) Some theorists propose that norms serve as self-monitoring devices with regard to selected behaviors (Von Cranach et al. 1982), particularly when such norms are internalized (Schwartz and Howard 1984). Several psychologists view norms as values that people internalize sometime during the process of socialization and development (Staub 1978; Eisenberg 1986; Hoffman 1977).

Norms are communicated implicitly and explicitly through oral and written language, goals, myths, stories, codes of conduct, and models. Words like *love* and *care*, sometimes used in the educational context, and *social responsibility*, increasingly used in the business sector, suggest altruistic normative expectations. Myths and stories—about individuals or groups—as well as codes of conduct communicate cultural ideals. In the religious context, norms are commonly communicated through “sacred” texts: the sacred texts of the Bahá’ís, for example, encompass many extensive altruistic norms (see Heller and Mahmoudi, this volume.) In some schools and businesses, written codes of conduct prescribe caring norms (D. Solomon et al. 1990; Johnson and Johnson’s Credo in Smith and Tedlow 1989; Norton Company in Weber 1990). In some schools as well as businesses, principals and chief executives are heralded as exemplars of caring models. They not only advocate policies with due consideration for their positive impact on others, and not only behave concordantly themselves, but also reward others for similar behaviors.

While some evidence suggests that learned values and norms—particularly when internalized—influence behavior, other evidence suggests that values and norms may follow rather than precede behavior. Regardless of its origin, the importance of actually participating in altruistic behaviors has been demonstrated by “foot in the door” research. People who do a small favor first are more likely to do a larger one subsequently and are more likely to continue doing them in varied circumstances (Freeman and Fraser 1966; Beaman et al. 1983; Staub, this volume).
Participation can range from reasonably low-cost behaviors, such as listening and supportive interchanges (Goffman 1971), to more costly behaviors, such as advocacy, protest, whistle blowing, and resistance. Low-cost prosocial behaviors are perceived as beneficial in many social institutions—teachers as well as business employees are frequently exhorted to become good listeners as well as engage in supportive social interactions. Some schools and businesses provide internal mechanisms to deal with conditions leading to protest and whistle blowing (Ewing 1981).

Participation encourages the assumption of personal responsibility for the welfare of others. While external expectations—of superordinates as well as peers—encourage the assumption of personal responsibility, the latter appears more likely to occur when individuals help contribute to the shaping of expectations and are encouraged to reflect on them. Such practices are evident in some schools—where students and teachers, as well as parents, are invited to create rules—as well as in a few businesses where employees have been charged with making policy with respect to such matters as product quality, confidentiality, and responsibility toward the homeless and the environment (e.g., Norwest Banking under CEO John W. Morrison and Vice President for Social and Policy Program Doug Wallace, interviewed by Freudberg 1986).

However much the above processes help integrate groups, they are not sufficient. While they help create caring communities among individuals who interact on face-to-face levels, they do not necessarily link such groups to the larger society. The larger society is no longer merely the local, state, or even the national community, but rather the globe and the ecosphere. Hence we propose the following as a means toward forming inclusive attachments.

Diversifying, as we define it, means enlarging the groups of people and objects with whom people normally interact for the primary purpose of promoting positive social relationships. Evidence suggests that people are more likely to engage in altruistic behaviors on behalf of known rather than unknown others, particularly if such known others are perceived as more similar to than different from the self. They are more likely to perceive others as similar under conditions that support the reduction of negative stereotypes and the promotion of positive interactions.

Learning about other groups is one means of diversifying one’s orientation. Such learning is likely to be most beneficial if it encompasses both those characteristics that indicate a shared hu-
manity as well as those conditions or characteristics that render the group distinct. As Blum and Seidler propose (this volume), it is not sufficient that people view others as part of a universal humankind; they must learn to prize others in their distinctiveness. Learning about other groups also implies viewing them not only from the perspective of one's own group, but from that group's perspective as well. Hence, learning about other ethnic groups provides opportunities to see commonalities and distinctions viewed from the perspective of one's own ethnicity as well as others'. The same principle can be applied in relation to businesses and consumer groups, for example, as well as to teachers and parents.

Diversifying also means having actual experiences with others different from the self, under conditions suggested by Allport's contact hypothesis—intensive equal status interactions (Allport 1954). While such contacts do not necessarily lead to diminution of group stereotyping (Brewer and Miller 1988), evidence suggests that it can succeed in promoting respect among individuals, even when the latter may have been highly prejudiced at the outset (Cook 1984, 1985). In the context of families, schools, the neighborhood, or the workplace, contacts may include such activities as sharing holidays and festivities with diverse others, as well as equal opportunities for listening to them and learning from them.

Equally important for diversifying are opportunities to learn about and have experiences with the nonhuman world—animals and plants, as well as rocks, streams, and lakes. As with diverse other humans, such learning and experiences need to emphasize relationships with rather than exploitation of our natural environment, living and nonliving.

Like diversifying, networking is another way for making linkages to the broader society. However, whereas the purpose of diversifying is merely to promote positive social relationships, the purpose of networking is to cooperate with diverse others in pursuit of some shared goal. Rather than maintaining boundaries, networking widens points of cooperation and builds coalitions among diverse groups.

Pursuit of a shared goal is an essential feature of Allport's contact hypothesis, and several experimental studies demonstrate that when it occurs, respect and empathy across groups increases. The jigsaw method, for example, devised by Aronson et al. (1978), as a teaching technique, has been demonstrated to cause such
effects in diverse classrooms, including those marked by high racial tension (Aronson and Yates 1983; Blaney et al. 1977; Geffner 1978).

Networkers address a shared goal or problem in which all have a stake. Self-help groups, such as Alcoholics Anonymous (Dan Boland, this volume), are one type of networking group created to focus on a shared problem and provide mutual support. Rather than confront each other as adversaries, businesses can cooperate with consumers and environmental groups, for example, for the purpose of creating beneficial and nonpolluting products. Businesses, parents, teachers, and students sometimes cooperate for the purpose of improving teaching and learning relating to work skills. The opportunities for coalition building are as diverse as the visions of varied groups.

Cooperating requires perceiving others as part of the solution rather than the problem; hence the need for developing shared problem-solving strategies. Among other things, this requires concentrating on common positive goals and outcomes, and using skills relating to negotiation and conflict resolution.

One such skill is reasoning: finding rational solutions to problems on the basis of logic and empirical evidence. Prosocial reasoning uses such processes in the service of prosocial goals. As Van Hesteren (this volume) observes, an individual with an altruistic personality is a knower: one who is able to compare and organize information and construct concepts. Such abilities are particularly helpful in public arenas when diverse groups plan together and consider their mutual obligations to remedy some shared problem. Facts, inductive and deductive reasoning, and probability calculations can help resolve diverse points of view and conflicts. Planned procedures and policies can be evaluated with respect to such matters as justice and care.

Through modeling, listening, and reflecting, parents and teachers can help children to develop their reasoning skills and to apply them to social issues. Schools can invite students to examine public issues with respect to considerations of justice and care. Many colleges and universities now include courses in ethics in fields as diverse as marketing, forestry, and biology. Among some religious groups, ecumenical dialogue has resulted in reconceptions of prevailing religious caring and justice norms (Rubenstein and Roth 1987).

Other skills relate to resolutions of conflict through negotiation
Promoting Extensive Altruistic Bonds

and arbitration in which peace and harmony, rather than justice or care, are the prevailing objectives. In such cases, both parties need to be persuaded that they have something palpable to gain from the resolution.

Making global connections implies learning to link the "here-and-now" with the global-ecospheric nature of life. It is the most encompassing process of the inclusive dimension, for it implies extending altruistic considerations to all elements of the cosmos—human and nonhuman, living and nonliving. While reasoning can help promote universal principles of fairness and care, making the global connection depends on many nonrational processes. The immediate objective in this process is to promote the recognition that the cosmos is an interrelated whole, and that small routine behaviors—whether acts of aggression or care, whether environmentally destructive or enhancing—have wide-ranging effects and are inextricably and mutually linked.

The affective dimension—the willingness to attend to global matters—is frequently born of pragmatic self-interest based on the recognition of global interdependence. Two issues appear to dominate in such mutual recognition: the avoidance of war and the avoidance of environmental disaster; of them, the latter may be more compelling as a collective interest.

While the relationship between interest in global affairs and altruism is not clear, it appears likely that those who are altruistically predisposed on the local level will incline to extend this orientation globally to the extent that their experiences are global in nature. In the family, children can be introduced early to cultures around the world through stories, songs, and personal acquaintances. The concentration on Western European cultures, common to many world history courses, needs to be modified so as to include a balanced perspective of other cultural regions. More emphasis needs to be given to understanding such cultures on their own terms. Student exchange programs, as well as letter and telecommunication exchanges, need to be vigorously encouraged. The multinational and transnational context of many businesses is forcing some to reconsider old assumptions about efficacy and long-term survival and to expand the notion of social responsibility. Discussion of the international context needs to increase in business training textbooks and seminars.

Globalization, however, cannot remain the province of specialized individuals with enlightened views. The linkages between
small local behaviors in the contexts of habitual living in families, schools, the workplace, and the world need to be made routinely relevant, whether in respect to energy consumption or in respect to the promotion of peace.

It is in the global context that Americans, as well as affluent other nations, will be called upon to act altruistically—giving up and sharing some of their resources and consumption patterns in favor of the less privileged and in consideration of future generations. However, this view of altruism is a limited one. As Osiatynski argues (this volume), caring for others in the sense of sharing resources alone perpetuates dependency and resentment, often accompanied by higher expectations. As we conceive it, altruism also implies empowerment—helping others to care for themselves as well as for others. It is only through empowering others that they can be helped to overcome their sense of helplessness and preserve their sense of dignity. It is also the means toward overcoming hierarchical relationships based on dominance in favor of partnerships and collegiality.

While the above is meant to be but a sketch of the social processes we propose as conducive toward development of an extensive altruistic orientation, it nonetheless suggests an analytic framework for examining a variety of social institutions. As a pragmatic tool, it can serve as a means for proposing modifications as necessary. Thus, for example, while many schools require students to learn about diverse cultures and world history, they do far less with respect to forming intragroup attachments at the school site, particularly at the high school and university level. Conversely, some businesses manage to create coherent communities in which participants become strongly attached, but fail to address constituencies outside it.

As Durkheim proposed years ago, altruism is no mere ornament to social life, but its fundamental basis (Durkheim in Bellah 1973). If Durkheim was correct, then global social life will need to be predicated on altruistic values. If the concept of a global community is to have meaning for people at large, then it behooves all our social institutions to provide the experiential base upon which altruism rests. We believe the above processes can help move us in that direction and that all social institutions have the potential to include more of them in their routine activities.
REFERENCES


Reykowski, J. (1984). Spatial organization of a cognitive system and intrinsic pro-
Promoting Extensive Altruistic Bonds


