

ETHICAL MONISM AND PLURALISM

The traditional ethical systems have all been monistic, in the sense that they have fostered the adoption of a single moral code for all age and occupation groups. This is quite unrealistic, because there are as many behavior patterns in each society, as age groups, cultural groups, occupational groups, etc. Moreover, as suggested by E. O. Wilson, Sociobiology p. 563: "it should be of selective advantage for young children to be self-centered and relatively disinclined to perform altruistic acts based on personal principle. Similarly, adolescents should be more tightly bound by age-peer bonds within their own sex and hence unusually sensitive to peer approval. The reason is that at this time greater advantage accrues to the formation of alliances and rise in status than later, when sexual and parental morality become the paramount determinants of fitness." P. 564: "...no single set of moral standards can be applied to all human populations, let alone all sex-age classes within each population. To impose a uniform code is

therefore to create complex, intractable moral dilemmas--these,
of course, are the cirrent condition of mankind."

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