

Study Guide for Carol Gilligan's "Meeting at the Crossroads": Unraveling Gender and Moral Development

Carol Gilligan's groundbreaking work, "Meeting at the Crossroads: Moral Voices Across the Life Cycle," has revolutionized our understanding of gender and moral development. This study guide provides an in-depth analysis of Gilligan's transformative theory, offering discussion questions and key concepts to enhance your comprehension and engagement with the text.



Study Guide for Carol Gilligan's Meeting at the Crossroads by Angela Rigley

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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Chapter 1: The Journey of Moral Development

In this chapter, Gilligan challenges the prevailing model of moral development proposed by Lawrence Kohlberg. Kohlberg's theory suggested that individuals progress through a series of universal stages,

from pre-conventional to conventional to post-conventional morality. Gilligan argues that this model fails to fully account for the diversity of moral perspectives, particularly those of women.

Discussion Questions:

- Explain Gilligan's critique of Kohlberg's stages of moral development.
- How does Gilligan's work challenge traditional notions of morality?

Chapter 2: Listening to Women's Voices

Gilligan conducted extensive interviews with women of diverse backgrounds to explore their moral reasoning. She discovered that women often prioritize relationships, care, and responsibility in their ethical decisions. This perspective differs from the justice-oriented perspective typically emphasized in Kohlberg's theory.

Discussion Questions:

- Summarize Gilligan's research findings on women's moral voices.
- How does Gilligan's work highlight the importance of empathy and connection in moral decision-making?

Chapter 3: The Ethics of Care

Gilligan proposes an alternative moral framework known as the ethics of care. This framework emphasizes the importance of nurturing relationships, maintaining connectedness, and responding to the specific needs of others. Gilligan argues that the ethics of care is a legitimate and valuable moral perspective that should be recognized alongside the justice perspective.

Discussion Questions:

- Explain the key tenets of Gilligan's ethics of care.
- Discuss the implications of the ethics of care for ethical decision-making in various contexts.

Chapter 4: Moral Maturity

Gilligan proposes that moral maturity involves an integration of the ethics of care and the justice perspective. This integration allows individuals to balance the needs of self and others, consider multiple perspectives, and make ethical decisions that are both responsible and compassionate.

Discussion Questions:

- Describe the characteristics of moral maturity according to Gilligan.
- How can we foster moral development and encourage the integration of care and justice in our personal and social lives?

Chapter 5: The Journey Continues

Gilligan concludes her book by reflecting on the ongoing nature of moral development. She emphasizes the importance of listening to diverse voices, challenging dominant narratives, and continuously striving towards a more just and compassionate world.

Discussion Questions:

- How does Gilligan's work inspire you to think differently about moral development?
- What are the implications of Gilligan's theory for feminist ethics and social change?

Key Concepts:

- Gender and Moral Development
- Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development
- Relational Ethics
- Care-Based Morality
- Justice Perspective
- Empathy
- Voice
- Responsibility
- Connection
- Moral Maturity

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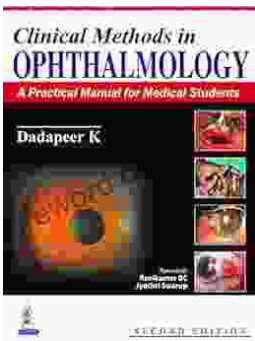
Carol Gilligan's "Meeting at the Crossroads" is a seminal work that has transformed our understanding of gender and moral development. By recognizing the diversity of moral voices and the importance of care, empathy, and connection, Gilligan has challenged traditional ethical frameworks and inspired a more compassionate and inclusive approach to ethical decision-making.

This study guide provides a comprehensive overview of Gilligan's groundbreaking theory. By engaging with the discussion questions and reflecting on the key concepts presented, you will deepen your understanding of Gilligan's work and its profound implications for ethical thought and practice.



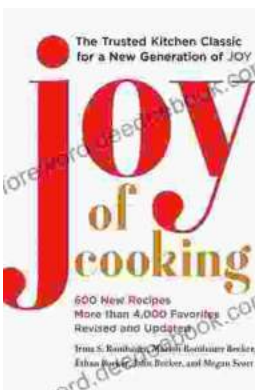
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