THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF PROSOCIAL GAME PLAY

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SOMETIMES WE MUST CHOOSE BETWEEN WHAT IS RIGHT AND WHAT IS EASY
THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF PROSOCIAL GAME PLAY

AN EXPLORATION OF THE LITERATURE
1st FLOOR: Moral Reasoning and Development

2nd FLOOR: Impacting Moral Reasoning

3rd FLOOR: Prosocial Behavior

ROOF: Prosocial Game Play
MORAL REASONING

MORAL REASONING Defined

- applies critical analysis
- to specific events
- in order to determine what is right or wrong,
- and what people ought to do in a particular situation.

Kohlberg’s Stages of Moral Development
MORAL DEVELOPMENT
Kohlberg’s Stages of Moral Development

Category 1: Preconventional
Stage 1: Obedience vs Punishment Orientation
Stage 2: Instrumental Orientation- quid pro quo

Category 2: Conventional
Stage 3: Nice Human Orientation
Stage 4: Law-and-Order Orientation

Category 3: Postconventional
Stage 5: Social-Contract Orientation
Stage 6: Universal-Ethical-Principal Orientation
Jean Valjean **should NOT** steal the bread because he would be put in prison for his crime.

Jean **should** steal the bread because he would feel gratified and happier and he might get some bread.
MORAL REASONING
Category 2: Conventional

Stage 3:
Nice Human Orientation

Jean should steal the bread because he’s a good brother and he wants his sister to

Stage 4:
Law and Order Orientation

Jean should steal the bread but should also go to prison because he broke the law.
MORAL REASONING
Category 3: Post-Conventional

Stage 5:
Social-Contract Orientation

Jean should steal the bread because saving his family’s life is more important than breaking the law.

Stage 6:
Universal-Ethical-Principle

Jean should steal the bread but NOT go to jail because the law would be unjust if it penalized an individual for saving a life.
PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR

a voluntary action that aims at benefiting others.

It is not necessarily altruistic.
MORAL DEVELOPMENT
Prosocial Behavior

Prosocial behavior
Action intended to benefit another
Can be done to gain either external or internal reward

Pure altruism
Action intended to solely benefit another
No external reward to the helper
No internal reward to the helper
MORAL REASONING VS. MORAL BEHAVIORS

Moral reasoning increases the likelihood of prosocial behavior


MORAL DEVELOPMENT

PROSOCIAL BEHAVIOR

A voluntary action that aims at benefiting others. It is not necessarily altruistic.
PROSOCIAL BEHAVIORS

• Adaptability
• Compassion
• Cooperation
• Dependability
• Fairness
• Helping
• Integrity
• Listening
• Perspective Taking
• Sharing
IMPACTING MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Does Prosocial Behavior Training Work?

- Interventions appear to work.
- Immersive pseudo-situations or simulations engage the learner.
- Game play is one such intervention.

Impacting Moral Reasoning Competency Through Prosocial Behavior
IMPACTING MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Impacting moral reasoning competency through prosocial behavior

Moral reasoning taught through gameplay

GAME PLAY AS A WAY TO MAKE BETTER HUMANS?

Increasing moral reasoning competency can be addressed by engagement with educational initiatives and activities appropriate to the context in which real life simulations or pseudo situations may also exist.
Non zero-sum games as defined in the context of game theory, provide situations where one decision maker's gain does not necessarily result in the other decision makers' loss.

The goal is to beat the game and to not beat the other players within the game.
Developed by scholars from Harvard and Tufts and refined by the Learning Game Network at MIT, ethical decision-making for human colonists on the planet Braxos, analyze the facts, opinions, and solutions offered by the colonists to resolve issues.
IMPACTING MORAL DEVELOPMENT

PORTAL 2

Lesson Plans!

IMPACTING MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Non zero-sum game play

**Polypoly** is a Creative Commons board game that mimics Monopoly but with non zero-sum game rules. Rather than a goal of bankrupting gameplayer peers as in Monopoly, this game aims to create a closed loop economic system that strives for the highest quality of life for all.
Players work cooperatively, moving between cities around the world to treat and contain disease, preventing disease outbreaks at all costs; especially helpful for examining the strengths of each player’s role and utilizing them well – giving them the support they need to help the team.
IMPACTING MORAL DEVELOPMENT
Prosocial Game Play

IMPACTING MORAL DEVELOPMENT

Impacting moral reasoning competency through prosocial behavior

Moral reasoning taught through gameplay

Examples of Games

Meeting the Standards
When individuals of high ability (broadly defined here as any combination of giftedness, talent, creativity, and intelligence) follow their aspirations and exercise their talents in the world their actions can have considerable moral impact.

Understanding this impact requires an interdisciplinary search for insights because the nuances of high ability are too complex to be captured within the confines of one or a few

It is logical to deduce that developmental deviations from the norm identified in the gifted child also suggest that it is not unlikely that the gifted adult will continue to develop along an atypical trajectory across the lifespan.

This atypical journey would be inclusive of moral development.
When individuals of high ability (broadly defined here as any combination of giftedness, talent, creativity, and intelligence) follow their aspirations and exercise their talents in the world their actions can have considerable moral impact.

Understanding this impact requires an interdisciplinary search for insights because the nuances of high ability are too complex to be captured within the confines of one or a few

Once society recognizes that life is a non zero-sum game, in which all members must cooperate to succeed, it will force both society and individuals to see that moral progress and development is critical to the survival of humankind.

This is the third day the well water has tasted like slime!

I hope the water’s not dangerous.

Eurgh!

Gronik's well water is still clean.

This water is mine, but I'm happy to sell it to you for a fair price.

How selfish! I helped dig that well!

I'll buy it. I can't drink this anymore.

I can't afford it.

Is there anything we can do?

Mae can clean it, but it'll take time.

But what do we do until then?
It would be nice if Granik would let everyone use his well, but we can't force him. The colony can afford to buy water for everyone.

It's possible that in the time it would take to dig a new well, the water might make everyone sick.

The water could be toxic. It's vital that we get everyone fresh water. Buying it is the way to do it.
Reflections

Related to prosocial behaviors...

- What thoughts did you have while playing the game?
- What feelings did you experience?
- What did you do with these thoughts and feelings during the game?
- Did you notice the feelings of others in your group?
- How did you respond to your team members’ feelings?
- In what ways did your team experience growth? What about the individuals on your team?
- What influenced your growth?
- How did your team make decisions?
- Did everyone on your team feel heard in the decision-making process? If not, what could you do to ensure everyone feels heard?
- What barriers to team unity did you experience?
- Are there any strategies you could apply to help your team?
Positive Growth

1. Going from proving your own point to listening to others
2. Moving from trying to move the colonists to what we thought to listening to them
3. Opened minds
4. Learned to wait and not talk over each other

Purpose of the Group

1. Working together and grow
2. Understanding Perspectives
3. Purposeful Communication
# Prosocial Games

**Prosocial Behavior Content**

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<th>Adaptability</th>
<th>Compassion</th>
<th>Cooperation</th>
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## Prosocial Games

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Related to academic content...

- What elements of the game are accurate vs. inaccurate? Why?
- What societies, events, and/or time periods showcase this scenario?
- How could you adapt this game to strengthen its connection to academic content?
- How would you adjust this game to create a new version or expansion related to a given subject matter?
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