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ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation, MORAL IMAGINATION IN THEORY AND PRACTICE, by PETER LELAND SAMUELSON, was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Advisory Committee. It is accepted by the committee members as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Education, Georgia State University.

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ABSTRACT

MORAL IMAGINATION IN THEORY AND PRACTICE
by
Peter L. Samuelson

A review of the literature in several domains reveals that moral imagination plays a role in how we deliberate about moral issues and what motivates us to act in a moral way. This study begins by outlining an operational definition of moral imagination based largely on Dewey's model of dramatic rehearsal (Dewey, 1922), along with an explication of the role of image schemas, metaphor, empathy, and narrative in moral imagination (Johnson, 1993) and an examination of how moral imagination develops through the lifespan. A review of the research of the components of moral imagination is included, especially in the literature of moral development, problem solving, and creativity, as well as a proposal of an avenue of research to advance the understanding of this vital and complex human capacity. The study continues with an investigation of a curriculum designed to foster the cognitive processing of empathic emotions stimulated by viewing film clips from Hollywood-produced films. The curriculum stimulates moral imagination by offering situations in which participants can place themselves and then discuss possible moral outcomes. The curriculum is thought to aid in the development of moral expertise by exposing participants to a perspective-taking script from childhood (Hoffman, 2000) and making that script chronically accessible to the participant (Lapsley & Narvaez, in press). Three hundred sixty-six students (grades third through eighth) enrolled in after-school programs in two rural Georgia counties were randomly assigned

to either an intervention or control group. The content of the intervention was delivered in a 3-week period in one county and in a 9-week period in the other. Results indicate that the longer intervention produced more gains in moral theme recognition (MTI; Narvaez, Gleason, Mitchell, & Bentley, 1999) compared to the shorter intervention. Participants in the shorter intervention demonstrated an attraction to moral theme statements reflecting higher stages of moral reasoning after the intervention than before compared to a control group from the same county. While further study is warranted, it appears the curriculum initiated a transition to higher stage reasoning in some of the participants.

MORAL IMAGINATION IN THEORY AND PRACTICE

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Peter L. Samuelson

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ABBREVIATIONS

MTI	Moral Theme Inventory (Narvaez, Gleason, Mitchell, & Bentley,1999).
IRI	Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1983).
COS	The Concern for Others Scale (Solomon, Battistich, Watson, Schaps & Lewis, 2000).
MJI	Moral Judgment Interview (Colby & Kohlberg,1987).
DIT	Defining Issues Test (Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau & Thoma,1999a).

CHAPTER 1

CONCIEVING MORAL IMAGINATION: ITS DEFINITION AND ASSESSEMENT

Introduction

"Imagination is the chief instrument of the good" (Dewey quoting Shelley, 1934/1980).

The idea of *moral imagination* has within it an inherent definitional tension--a paradox. For where the moral has to do with the common good, imagination strives for the uncommon. Where the moral has to do with societal relations, imagination is inherently individualistic. Where the moral is based on laws and conventions, the conventional is the very antithesis of the imaginative (Runco, 1993). For example, Kohlberg's famous moral development theory defines morality in terms of conventionality, parsing moral reasoning into pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional stages (Kohlberg, 1981). Yet, in spite of these tensions, many moral and educational philosophers of the past century (Bruner,1986; Dewey; 1934/1980; Egan,1997; Fesmire,1994; Greene,1995; Haste,1993; Johnson,1993; Kekes,1995; Lakoff & Johnson,1999; Tivnan,1995; Vygostky cited in Ayman-Nolley,1992; Zaw,1996) as well as numerous psychologist (Gruber,1993; Kudriavtsev, 2001; Modell, 2003; Mouchiroud & Lubart, T., 2002; Paradales, 2002; Runco, 2003) consider imagination to be an integral part of moral deliberation and moral action. Many of them see limitations in the conventional approach to morality and ethics with its focus on rights and duties,

and look to imagination to help us solve our most pressing and vexing moral problems (for a thorough discussion see Fesmire, 1994; Johnson, 1993; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999).

This paper is an investigation of the concept of moral imagination. This search will examine not only to the literature of psychology and education, but also philosophy and linguistics, for a search to define moral imagination brings us to the very heart of cognition and volition, how we deliberate about moral issues and what motivates us to act in a moral way. This paper will offer an operational definition of moral imagination based largely on Dewey's model of dramatic rehearsal (Dewey, 1922; Fesmire, 2003) and explicate the role of image schemas, metaphor, empathy, and narrative in moral imagination, including an examination into how moral imagination develops through the lifespan. Since there is little direct investigation of moral imagination in the literature, a review of the research of the components of moral imagination is necessary, especially in the literature of moral development, problem solving, and creativity. Finally, the paper includes an avenue of research to advance our understanding of this vital and complex human capacity.

A Definition of Moral Imagination

Both *moral* and *imagination* are complex and multifaceted terms that defy neat description or definition. The approach of this paper will be to first define imagination and then apply it to the moral realm. Imagination is a capacity of human thought (Singer, 1999), which, like reason, can be applied to many domains of human experience, including the moral domain (Johnson,1993; Modell, 2003). It can be defined as simply as the connection of unlikely elements (Wheeler-Brownlee,1985), or as comprehensively

as "the ability to see the whole before the parts" (Kudriavtsev, 2001, p.19). Singer (1999) takes an approach commonly found in the literature, which focuses on the making of a mental "image." He defines imagination as the ability of the individual to reproduce, in the consciousness, "images or concepts originally derived from the senses" (p. 13). These images can then be reformed or combined in new forms or new images as the basis for future actions or works. Imagination also can be aural, involving verbal sequences or "story–like forms" (p. 14).

Imagination goes beyond mere reproduction or even re-combinations of sensory experience. Maxine Greene (1995) based her approach to the role of imagination in learning on John Dewey's understanding of imagination as "an ability to look at things as if they could be otherwise" (p. 20). But more than this, she writes,

> "as John Dewey saw it, imagination is the 'gateway through which meanings derived from past experience find their way into the present'; is the 'the conscious adjustment of the new and the old'….. Consciousness always has an imaginative phase, and imagination, more than any other capacity, breaks through the inertia of habit" (p. 20).

Theodore Sarbin (1998) thought there is much to learn from the pre-Cartisian understanding of the 16th century in which imagination denoted imitating or copying, in three-dimensional form, something from the world. An imaginer, in the pre-Renaissance sense was an *image-maker* or a *doer*. Only at the advent of the Cartisian duality of mind and body did imagination become a private, silent action. Sarbin defines *imaginings* as "actions that serve human intentions and purposes.. (that) refer to the doings of people rather than happenings in the mind" (p. 17). He prefers the term *hypothetical instantiation*. "Instantiation means to represent an abstraction by a concrete instance…

Hypothetical instantiation refers specifically to the act of instantiating absent objects and events" (p. 20). Sarbin posits a three stage development of this skill: 1) Imitation: copying out loud the actions of someone or something that can be seen and heard, 2) role-taking: copying out loud a model when that model is no longer in sight and, 3) Imagining, i.e. role-taking in muted and storied form, as an "active, constructive copying of absent models (where) the products of such constructional activity are narratives" (p. 21).

Mark Johnson (1993) would agree with Sarbin's (1998) definition that imagination involves "the active construction of absent models." He would combine it with Singer's insight that imagination involves sense derived images or concepts. For Johnson and others who draw their insights from cognitive science, imagination is based on bodily and sensorimotor experiences such as uprightness (standing), balance (equilibrium), motion, (travel, destination), momentum, possession of objects (Fesmire, 1994; Gibbs & Colston,1995; Lakoff & Johnson,1999; Modell, 2003). These bodily experiences become conceptual, foundational metaphors for thinking. "Reason is imaginative in that bodily inference forms are mapped onto abstract modes of inference by metaphor" (Lakoff & Johnson,1999, p. 77). Thus the notion of *uprightness* in moral behavior is based on sensation of standing erect. The notion of *balance* in justice is based on the sensation of equilibrium in the body. The notion of *walking a righteous path* is based on the experience of moving from point a to point b with the object of reaching a destination (source-path-goal). Metaphor is the link between conscious experience and unconscious memory (Modell, 2003). Imagination is the *metaphorical*

projection of bodily experiences (embodied concepts) unto abstract concepts such as peace, justice, morality, and social harmony (Lakoff & Johnson, 1999).

From these various ideas, we can begin to fashion a definition of imagination. Imagination is the capacity to represent absent objects, constructs, events or experiences in a hypothetical fashion using concrete experiences of bodily sensations and sensorimotor perceptions as the basis for these representations. The abstraction from concrete experience is a metaphorical process in which the concepts derived from bodily sensation and sensorimotor experience guide the formation of and reasoning about the abstraction. Kieran Egan (1999) defines imagination simply as "our capacity to think of things as possibly being so" (p. 167).

What makes imagination moral?

Imagination becomes moral when it is utilized for the well being of others. Notions of justice, peace, equity, fairness essentially involve the well being of individuals embedded in social relationships of varying complexity--from intimate dyads to families, to volunteer associations to communal arrangements to societal systems to pan-global responsibilities. Since morality has to do with interaction with an "other" in various levels of complexity and number, moral imagination will necessarily take into account the perspective of the other in as complete a manner as possible. Moral imagination would involve at least the ability to abstract the feelings, thoughts, goals, and intentions of the "other" based on a person's own concrete experiences (Falkenberg, 2003; Paradales, 2002). Mark Johnson (1993) in his book *Moral Imagination* states:

> Imagination is the means for going beyond our selves as presently formed, moving transformatively toward imagined ideals of what we might become… moral

> imagination is our capacity to see and to realize in some actual or contemplated experience possibilities for enhancing the quality of experience both for ourselves and the communities of which we are a part. (p. 209)

and also:

> Imagination is the means by which we are able to conceive of alternative perspectives and to explore their implications for action, relationships, and communal well-being. Thus, the very possibility of taking a critical stance toward a particular viewpoint depends on our imaginative ability to envision other viewpoints (p. 209).

Therefore, moral imagination involves perspective taking and empathy, but it is more than just these skills. It involves the use of the imagination for empathic perspective taking, and, in turn, taking that information to imaginatively project (hypothetically instantiate) the possible choices available and outcomes that might emerge given the various personalities and contingencies at work.

This is what Sarbin (1998) labeled the *constructional activity* of imagination. In the pre-Renaissance, imagination was the process of imitating or copying reality by making a three-dimensional representation. In the definition argued for here, moral imagination is also a making of something. It is the construction of a narrative of action which takes the perceived "realities" of the situation--the personalities and personal character of the people involved and the kinds of actions and choices they have made in the past, their current circumstances, the forces that constrain them, and the choices available to them--and fashions from this situation one or several hypothetical courses of action one of which can be enacted. In this deliberation one has all the elements of a narrative: a plot (the presenting problem), a setting (the constraining circumstances),

characters (discerned through empathic imagination), moving through time toward an end.

Dewey (1922) called this deliberative process *dramatic rehearsal*. Steven Fesmire (1994) describes this process in his book *Dramatic Rehearsal and the Moral Artist: A Deweyan Theory of Moral Understanding*. He writes that for Dewey, dramatic rehearsal was appropriate for any kind of scientific, aesthetic, or moral situation in which there exist competing desires or values or one in which there is doubt. In the process of deliberation we "try on" various possibilities for action. When the imagined outcome is "felt to cohere with our prefigured experience and with our expectations of the future" the deliberative process is culminated and resolved (p. 2). The resolution comes from a "feeling" of the "fit" of the projected action.

What makes dramatic rehearsal possible, according to Dewey, is our capacity for imagination. This imagination takes the form of a dramatic rehearsal of events in our minds. Fesmire (1994) writes:

> Imagination, like drama, is story-structured, and is spurred by conflicts and contrasts among characters and contingent events. It is vivid and emotionally moving and brings competing tendencies and instabilities to resolution." (p. 3).

From *How We Think,* Dewey (1998) writes

> [Deliberation] is a vicarious, anticipatory way of acting, a kind of dramatic rehearsal. Were there only one suggestion popping up, we should undoubtedly adopt it at once. But where there are two or more, they collide with one another, maintain a state of suspense and produce further inquiry (p. 139).

And from *Ethics* (Dewey, 1998):

> Deliberation is actually an imaginative rehearsal of various courses of conduct. We give way in our mind, to some impulse, we try in our mind some plan.

> Following its career through various steps, we find ourselves, in imagination, in the presence of the consequences that would follow. And as we then like and approve, or dislike and approve, these consequences, we find the original plan good or bad (p. 335).

And finally, from *Human Nature and Conduct,* Dewey (1922) says:

> Deliberation is a dramatic rehearsal (in imagination) of various competing possible lines of action…. Deliberation is an experiment in finding out what the various lines of possible action are really like…. thoughts run ahead and foresee outcomes, and thereby avoid having to await the instruction of actual failure and disaster (p. 190).

When deliberation such as Dewey describes occurs over moral issues--when people engage in "active construction of absent models" (Sarbin,1998) to solve moral dilemmas--they are engaging *moral imagination*. Moral Imagination in this Deweyan sense is "the capacity to concretely perceive what is before us in light of what it could be" (Fesmire, 2003, p. 65). This type of activity has a decidedly narrative structure as we attempt to plot a course of action taking into account the various elements that affect our moral decisions. We take our *previous experience* and understanding of *the way things ought to go* together with our understanding of *the characters* involved, their *circumstances and setting*, and play out various courses of action and their consequences in order to prove the best choice for moral action. This method of deliberation (Johnson, 1985), I define as *moral imagination.*

The four components of moral imagination

In order to adequately utilize our moral imagination as described above, four skills or cognitive tools must be in place: (a) the image and experiential *schemas* activated through our deliberation (previous experience); (b) The way we reason about moral issues through conceptual *metaphors* (understanding of the way things ought to

go) (c) An ability to take the perspective of others and *empathize* with them (understanding character); and (d) An ability to *frame* the circumstances of the people and the moral issues involved (setting). This model posits four components of moral Imagination: schemas, metaphors, empathy, and framing (Johnson, 1993; Modell, 2003; Zaw,1996).

These four components are similar to what Mark Johnson describes as the four elements of moral imagination (Johnson, 1993). He says moral imagination is composed of: 1) the prototype structure of concepts 2) the framing of situations 3) metaphor and 4) narrative. Where this model differs from Johnson is with the elements of empathy and narrative. Rather than viewing narrative as an element of moral imagination, it is viewed as constitutive of moral imagination. It is not a part of moral imagination it is the whole. Moral imagination, as is argued above, is a narrative enterprise--a hypothetical instantiation (Sarbin, 1998)--a dramatic rehearsal (Dewey, 1922). While Johnson views narrative as one of four elements in moral imagination, his description betrays a more comprehensive view, for he states:

> Narrative makes it possible for us not only to explore the consequences of decisions and commitments over an extended period of time, but also to reflect on the concrete particularities that make up the fine texture of our actual moral experience. It invites us to develop our perception of character, of what is important in a given situation and of the subtly interwoven threads of our moral entanglements. ….The power of fictional narrative to develop our moral sensitivity, our ability to make subtle discriminations and our empathy for others, is thus the result of the narrative structure of our lives… *Narrative explorations of this sort are, in fact, what moral reasoning is all about* (Johnson, 1993, p. 196-7, original emphasis).

Another difference between Johnson's understanding of moral imagination and the one presented here is in the conception of the role of empathy. What is usually called *empathy* in the psychological literature (Eisenberg & Strayer, 1987), he labels *empathic imagination*. For Johnson empathy is a form of moral imagination--a method of moral reasoning (see also Kekes, 1995; Tivnan, 1995). "Reflecting in this way [through empathic imagination] involves an imaginative rationality through which we can participate empathically in another's experience….Morally sensitive people are capable of living out, in and through such experiential imagination, the reality of others with whom they are interacting, or whom their actions might affect" (Johnson, 1993, p. 200). Therefore, what Johnson calls empathic imagination, is more properly labeled *moral imagination*. For example, he equates the activity of "taking up the place of the other" with the term "dramatic rehearsal" (p. 200). Johnson's concern is to give empathy an exalted place in moral reasoning to counter the traditional separation of feeling from reason in the moral philosophy of Kant and Rawls (Johnson, 1985, 1993). In this paper it is viewed, rather, as a critical element or component of moral imagination – a part of moral imagination rather than a form of moral imagination. Therefore, empathy, along with personal experience (in the form of image and prototypical schemas) and metaphor, are the constitutive elements of the narrative enterprise called *moral imagination*.

What follows is a description from the literature of the four components of moral imagination in this order: experiential schemas, framing, empathy, and metaphor. Each description will include a definition, how the concept is measured, its correlates, and how the capacity develops through the lifespan.

Experiential Schemas. There are two types of schemas that need to be defined and distinguished. The first is *image schemas* which are defined as "organizing structures of experience at the level of bodily perception and movement (Gibbs & Colston, 1995, p. 349) and the second I call *experiential schemas* which can be made up of image schema but represent more complex behavioral patterns in memory and cognition. (May, Friedman, & Clark, 1996; Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, & Thoma, 1999).

Of the two types, image schemas are more particular and less well known. Defined as "dynamic analog representations [derived from perceptual and motor processes] of spatial relations and movements in space," (Gibbs, 1997), they are most widely talked about in cognitive linguistics where scientists have noticed how language across domains has similar concepts grounded in our bodily experiences and actions, our perceptual interactions, and the way we manipulate objects (Gibbs & Colston, 1995). As we grow and learn about the world through manipulating objects, by orienting ourselves in space and time and directing the focus of our perception, we form *image schemas* which become foundational concepts for thinking and reasoning (Gibbs & Colston, 1995). For example, Gibbs (1997) reported the results of his analysis of the various uses of the word "stand" across domains (interpersonal relations, law, science, politics). He was able to reduce the meanings to 5 perceptual bodily experiences (balance, verticality, center-periphery, resistance and linkage). The meaning of the word depends on which bodily/spatial experience dominates. These image schemas then become the basis for the conceptual metaphors we use to think about our experience (for instance, "love is a journey," Gibbs, 1997). Image schemas are not tied to any one

perceptual modality. They are more abstract than mere images and rely more on spatial patterns and dynamic interaction in movement and spatial relations. Gibbs (1995) has identified over two dozen image schemas that appear in our thinking, reasoning, and imagining on a regular basis.

Experiential schemas, on the other hand can include but are not limited to image schemas. Rest et al. (1999) define a schema as "a general knowledge structure, residing in long-term memory that is invoked (or *activated*) by current stimulus configurations that resemble previous stimuli" (p. 136). Schemas come to play when we encounter new information and apply our organized generic prior knowledge to the understanding of it. They operate like hypotheses or presuppositions about the way the world works and help focus attention and give structure to experience through expectations and preconceptions. Sometimes called *prototypes* they are a kind of average (the statistical central tendency) of all similar experiences (May et al., 1996).

Schemas work by a process similar to Piaget's notion of assimilation. A schema has *slots* that can be filled in by particular experiences. If the slots are not filled in by the experience at hand, then a schema supplies the information. What schemas do is to enable us to identify the parameters of experience quickly; *chunk* the experience into an appropriate unit; fill in missing information and provide guidance for obtaining further information, solving a problem, or reaching a goal (Rest et al., 1999). Cognitive schemas theorists (CST) have identified a hierarchy of schemas from the most simplistic, like *memory objects* (things related by characteristics) to *cognitive fields* (a set of memory objects activated by an experience) to *mental models* (the overall meaning structure of a

given experience) (Narvaez & Bock, 2002). The central idea is that knowledge is stored in a related and connected way, which enables us to adapt to our environment more quickly by guiding our perceptions and learning.

In the moral realm, image schemas have their greatest impact in how they guide thinking about moral issues through metaphor. For example, the bodily experience of balance and equilibrium guides our thinking about equity and fair distribution of wealth (Johnson, 1985). The more general, cognitive schemas (CST) also affect our moral reasoning. By helping us anticipate the issues of any given moral situation, we are able to process our thoughts more quickly. By the same token they can work against moral imagination by constraining our thought patterns to the schema.

Rest et al. (1999) use cognitive schema theory (CST) to explain the development of moral reasoning originally posited by Kohlberg and measured by Rest's Defining Issues Test (DIT). They claim that those who exhibit the complex moral judgments of Kohlberg's post-conventional moral reasoning stage "have a larger, better organized set of memory objects that can be activated within multiple cognitive fields and form part of complex mental models" (Narvaez & Bock, 2002). Narveaz (1998) tested this hypothesis with a group of eighth graders and college students. After reading four texts in succession in which moral stage schemas (1-5) were embedded, the students were asked to recall the general content of the story. Results show that those with higher moral judgment scores (DIT), reconstructed significantly more stage 5 reasoning than did those with lower scores. Moreover, college students recalled significantly more stage 5 than stage 1-4 moral arguments than the eighth graders. Narveaz (1998) also reports that

students inferred reasoning not present in the stories, suggesting that the prior knowledge of moral schemas influenced the recall of stories.

The research in image schema and cognitive schema theory establish that humans bring highly structured prior knowledge to the process of moral deliberation and our use of moral imagination. These structures are a part of the raw material that goes into the narrative instantiation process as we imagine possible courses of action in our imagination. Image schemas give us metaphors and ways to think about moral situations. Cognitive schemas give us "packaged" experiences that guide the construction of possible outcomes in our imagination. Both image and cognitive schemas grow over time in two significant way: (a) as we gain more life experience we have more schemas available (more image schemas, more memory objects which build more cognitive fields and mental models) and (b) as we use these schemas in moral deliberation we become more proficient with them and make more connections among schemas. Thus we would expect that the capacity for moral imagination would likewise have a developmental trajectory and grow over time.

Framing moral situations. Johnson (1993) states: "the situations in which we find ourselves and in which we must decide how to act do not come with their one and only proper descriptions attached, we must conceptualize them in a certain way" (p. 192). The way we conceptualize them is called *framing*. The way we frame experience will determine if we consider a situation a moral dilemma or not. For example, it takes a particular view of gender roles, for a woman to see as unfair the need to constantly pick up after her husband , even if that view is widely shared (Colby, 2000). As far back as

1948, Solomon Asch proved that the very meaning of a message changes as a function of the source to which it is attributed (Ross, 1990). The source attribution *frames* the interpretation of the message. For example, an identical arms reduction proposal was less well received by American students when attributed to M. Gorbachev, the Russian President at the time of the study than when attributed to R. Regan, the American President. The framing of a situation will determine, in part, our reaction to it. It appears that if an issue is framed as an ethical issue, highlighting the ethical implications, it engenders a different response than if that same issue is framed as a material issue. In making a decision about a political candidate, students who received information on that candidate in an ethical textual frame were significantly more likely to refuse to make compensations for issues that conflicted with their view on that issue than those who were presented the information in a material frame (Shah, Domke, & Wackman, 1996).

The same effect on subsequent decisions holds when individuals frame the situation for themselves. Rothman and Salovey (1997), expanding on the famous framing effect of the 1981 experiment by Tversky and Kahneman (in which people chose different options depending on whether the identical information was framed as a gain or a loss), found that people will act on health information only if the recommended behavior matches their adopted framing of the issue (gain-framed or loss-framed). Moreover, it appears that the influence of the framing of a situation holds for both hypothetical and real decisions (Kuhberger, Schulte-Mecklenbeck, & Perner, 2002). This and other research indicates that framing has a strong influence on decisions. One way to overcome the constraints of framing is to encourage multiple construals of a situation.

Griffin, Dunning, and Ross (1990) found that participants in their study stuck to the confident predictions they inferred from their initial assessment of a situation even when they were told their inference may be wrong. Only those who were specifically asked to make multiple construals of the situation after their initial assessment, showed a lower confidence in their initial assessment. This study shows both the power of the initial framing of a situation and the potential remedy of imagination (multiple construals) to find creative solutions to entrenched moral problems.

Framing depends on experience. If we grant that experience is available to us through schemas then schemas will influence the way situations are framed (Johnson, 1993). The need to frame situations is constant in our development. Therefore, the ability to frame of situation does not seem to change much over time. Individual differences in framing ability come from the variety of experience that each person has. However, the ability to imagine multiple construals of a situation would, at least, hypothetically change over time. The more experiences one has allows for greater possibilities for framing situations in multiple ways.

Empathy. Empathy is, by its very definition, an imaginative construct. Maxine Greene (1995) put it this way: "imagination is what makes empathy possible" (p. 3). Indeed, empirical studies show a positive relationship between imagination and empathy (Rabinowitz & Heinhorn, 1984-85). This is because empathy involves sharing another's cognitive and emotional state (Davis, 1994; Eisenberg & Miller, 1987; Hoffman, 1998; Roberts & Strayer, 1996). Since one can only directly experience one's thoughts and emotions, one must use imagination to experience the thoughts and emotions of others.

Even as far back as Hume, what we call empathy (and he called "sympathy' or "sharing the concern of others") was viewed as central to moral deliberation (Johnson, 1993). Coined in the early 1900's by Titchner, the term is a translation of *einfuhlung*, used by German aesthetic philosophers to denote feeling "into" another's experience (from the Greek *em* = in; *pathos* = feeling or suffering) as opposed to sympathy, which is feeling with someone (*sym* = with; *pathos* = feeling or suffering) (Wispe, 1987). Eisenberg and Miller (1987) offer this classic definition:

> Empathy is an affective state stemming from apprehensions of another's emotional state or condition and which is congruent with it (p. 292).

The *apprehension* of another's state is a complex phenomenon but certainly it involves imagination (Strayer, 1987).

From a summary reading of the literature, empathy involves three salient features: emotional response, emotional insight, and perspective/role taking. Janet Strayer (1987) calls emotional response the "sine qua non of empathy" (p. 226). Some researchers make a distinction in the emotional responses related to empathy between sympathy and personal distress, depending on whether the response is other focused (sympathy) or self-focused (personal distress) (Eisenberg, Wentzel, & Harris, 1998; Hoffman, 1998). Emotional insight involves insight into one's own as well as another's emotions. Roberts and Strayer (1996) have shown that a child's insight into his or her own emotion is positively related to empathy. Also, training in the recognition of both verbal and non-verbal emotional cues along with labeling those emotions will increase empathy (Eisenberg, Wentzel & Harris, 1998; Feshbach, 1989). Finally, all the most prevalent models and definitions of empathy include perspective/role taking, commonly defined as

the cognitive (Roberts & Strayer,1996). Role taking is recognized by many moral theorists as a critical skill in moral reasoning (Colby, 2000; Johnson, 1996; Kekes, 1995; Modell, 2003; Tivnan, 1995).

Empathy has a distinct developmental path. Longitudinal and cross sectional studies show a growth in empathy over time (Eisenberg, Miller, Shell, McNalley, & Shea, 1991; Hoffman, 1998; Roberts & Strayer, 1996). The main growth is in the cognitive side of empathy, that is, the perspective and role taking skills. Children also gain more awareness and mastery over their emotions, contributing to increased empathy (Roberts & Strayer, 1996). The cognitive function of perspective taking is often labeled as a work of the imagination (Upright, 2002). Recent work involving PET scans of subjects who were asked to take a third-person perspective shows that similar regions of the brain that are activated while in first person perspective are also activated while taking a third-person perspective. The differences seem to be in the areas associated with self-consciousness. (Ruby & Decety, 2001). These findings are consistent with developmental theories that posit the acquisition of a self-other distinction as critical to the growth of empathy in children (Hoffman, 1998; Strayer, 1993).

Metaphor. Arnold Modell (2003) would take this last point in our discussion of empathy as concrete evidence of the metaphorical nature of empathy. In his book *Imagination and the Meaningful Brain,* he states:

> Empathic imagination… relies on metaphor, for within an empathic connection there is a play of similarity and different based on metaphor. Empathy requires this play of similarity and difference: one recognizes a sense of identity with the other while at the same time retaining one's sense of self " (p. 118).

Samuel Johnson said in metaphor there are "two ideas in one" (Kittay, 1997). In the case of empathy, personal experience becomes the vehicle for the experience of the other.

When Lakoff and Johnson (1999) and other cognitive linguists speak of metaphor, they mean more than just a creative use of language. They mean that certain bodily experiences of space, time, and objects become the basis for understanding other experiences. These metaphors are called conceptual metaphors. "Metaphors allow conventional mental imagery from sensorimotor domains to be used for domains of subjective experience" (p. 45). These conceptual metaphors are pervasive and operate largely unconsciously. These metaphors are acquired automatically over time, from merely experiencing the world in ordinary ways. Lakoff and Johnson's claim is this: "we all naturally think using hundreds of primary metaphors" (p. 47). Here is a list of some of these metaphors: Affection is Warmth; Important is Big; Intimacy is Closeness; More is Up; Similarity is Closeness; Help is Support; Time is Motion; States are Locations; Causes are Physical Forces; Knowing is Seeing; Understanding is Grasping (pp. 50-54). From these examples we see that the sensorimotor experience becomes the vehicle to understand the subjective experience.

The way linguistic metaphors operate can helps us to grasp how conceptual metaphors work. Gentner and Wolff (2000) suggest that metaphors work because of the matching of structured relations as opposed to a mere list of shared independent features. In previous studies, they demonstrated that people prefer to match predicates belonging to interconnected systems of knowledge and not just independent components. In a meta-analysis of the persuasive effects of metaphors, Sopory and Dillard (2002) found that the

one view that explained most of the supported hypothesis of the studies involved was the *superior organization view*, which states that metaphors facilitate selection and integration of information from the message and prior knowledge. When metaphors were placed at the beginning of a message and were extended, they were most persuasive. This supports the notion that metaphors facilitate the connection of concepts. Those concepts that are closely matched in our experience make metaphor comprehension easier. Subjects had more difficulty with metaphors in which the vehicle and target were semantically disparate than when they were semantically related. (Kintsch & Bowles, 2002).

The key to the operation of metaphors is that they help us understand something in terms of something else. In the case of empathy, we understand another's feelings in terms of our own. In the case of conceptual metaphors, we understand things in terms of basic sensorimotor experience. Cognition is characterized by connectivity--making operations between a known object (the vehicle) and an unknown one (the topic). Image schemas (as well as complex cognitive schemas) also operate through this metaphorical, connective process. We connect new experiences with old experiences, organized in schemas and scripts, to help us understand and make our way through the new experience. Metaphors, like schemas and framing, can both expand our categories of thought and restrict them (Fitzgerald, 1993). They can reinforce old connections and categories or make new ones.

The comprehension of metaphors also follows a developmental trajectory. Winner, Rosentiel and Gardner (1976) discover that metaphorical production follows this

path: a child can spontaneously produce metaphors before he or she can comprehend them. This is followed by an ability to explain the rational of metaphor. Like adults, children also have an easier time of understanding metaphors whose components are semantically related then when the relationship is less clear (Cacciari, Levorato, & Cicogna, 1997). Sietz (1997) found that younger children have a preference for more natural, concrete metaphors, whereas older children exhibit a preference for more abstract, socially constructed metaphors. Sietz was testing for the "ability to detect unity in variety" (p. 348), a skill related to both metaphor comprehension and creativity. When presented with a list of words grouped in triads, with two of the words metaphorically related and two related by surface similarities, younger children violated category boundaries based on an innate sense of similarity whereas older children violated category boundaries that relied on learning. Seitz concludes metaphor is important in creative thought because metaphor does not merely highlight existing similarity but creates similarity. Similarity, which is at the heart of metaphor, is, of course, a product of thought, and does not merely exist in the world.

Assessing Moral Imagination

To discuss whether moral imagination can be assessed, we must come to some definition of its outcome. For this we turn to some of the definitions of imagination mentioned above.

"Imagining is.. instantiating absent objects and events" (Sarbin, 1998).

"Imagination is our capacity to think of things as possibly being so" (Egan, 1997).

> "Imaginative capacity is … the ability to look at things as if they could be otherwise …It is to see beyond what the imaginer has called normal or "common-sensible" and to carve out new orders in experience" (Greene, 1995).
>
> "Imagination is an act of creation, a making of something new, the reformation or combination of experience into new forms" (Singer, 1999).
>
> "Imagination… breaks through the inertia of habit" (Dewey cited in Greene, 1995).

Among these definitions (and, in fact, most definitions) there is a consensus that imagination is an act--a thinking, a doing, a making of something new. As an act, we ought to be able to empirically verify its existence. It could be measured as the capacity of making up new things.

Vygotsky defined creativity in a way similar to these definitions of imagination. He defined creative activity as one that constructs something new. He distinguishes between *reproductive construction* (the rebuilding of existing reality) and *combinatory construction*, (the combination and changing of existing reality to new entities). It is the latter that requires imagination and is seen as the basis for creativity (Ayman-Nolley, 1992).

Creativity and imagination are linked in our common-sense definitions as well. In a study in which parents and teachers from America and India were asked to find descriptive terms for *creativity* among a list of 15 terms (Runco & Johnson, 2002), the raw scores for Imaginative as a descriptor for Creative had the highest Likert scale average among the American parents and teachers as well as the Indian parents (4.80, 4.83 and 4.31 respectively). Indian parents rated Curious as equally descriptive of Creative as Imaginative (4.31) while American and Indian teachers rated it second most

descriptive (4.63 and 4.24 respectively). Indian teachers viewed Inventive as the most descriptive term for Creativity (4.27) a trait the American parents placed second most descriptive (4.53). All averages were from a scale of 1 (not at all descriptive) to 5 (extremely descriptive). These results show Imaginative, Curious, and Inventive as the most descriptive of creativity among parents and teachers in both counties.

One of the salient features of creativity and imaginative thought is *divergent thinking*. While not necessarily synonymous with creativity, it is often part of many creativity measures (Wakefield, 1991). Divergent thinking is characterized by flexible cognitive functioning--a capacity to represent problems in a variety of ways (Gallo, 1989; Milgram,1983; Runco, Plucker & Lim, 2000). In the literature on creativity, it is often measured as the capacity to think of new things to do with familiar objects (Milgram, 1983; Runco, Plucker & Lim, 2000).

Milgram (1983) tested the validity of a procedure that measured *ideational fluency*. From a sample of 7- to13-year old lower- to middle-class children with a variety of intelligence levels, she found that the ability to generate many solutions to a problem is strongly associated with the ability to produce a few original, high quality solutions. She concluded that ideational fluency is a critical cognitive component of the creative process in children. Runco et al. (2000) claimed that ideation is a valid empirical measure because ideas can be quantified in much the same way as other products. He developed a 23-item scale that measures three facets of divergent thinking: *originality* (unique ideas), *fluency* (the quantity of ideas) and *flexibility* (the number if different ideas). These three aspects of divergent thinking have been traditionally measured by asking subjects to

produce as many uses for a common item (e.g. a brick) as possible. Fluency is determined by the number of ideas, flexibility by the difference between the ideas (not just variations on a theme) and originality by comparing the ideas within others in the sample (original means used by less than 5% of the sample) (Milgram, 1983). There is an order effect for original thinking as well with the most original ideas coming after the common (or popular) ideas (Hong & Milgram, 1995). Researchers in divergent thinking and evaluation have asked children to rate an idea produced by another child as creative (i.e., original) or popular. Children were able to identify the popular ideas the best. In adults of all contexts, the ability to evaluate ideas and the fluency of ideas are related and are significantly correlated, while in children, the correlation depends on the context of test format and group makeup (Runco, 2003). In the moral realm, the question of the best solution is often in play. Therefore, any test of imagination would, like creativity, involve divergent thinking and evaluative (convergent thinking) skills.

There are a number of theories and empirical studies to support them that link creativity and morality (Gruber, 1993; Runco & Nemiro, 2003). Grisanti and Gruber (1999) define moral creativity as "creativity for moral purpose.. when a moral imperative is present but the problem is so overwhelming as to challenge a person's ability to address it--creativity becomes necessary" (p. 427, see also Gruber, 1993). Some who research creativity by means of problem finding and problem solving skills use "real world" problems to assess these abilities. The skills assessed in these and other studies (such as problem finding skill and evaluation) could be used to study how people solve moral dilemmas (Runco, 1993, 2003).

On the empirical side, Kyzer (2001) reported on a study of undergraduates that found a relationship between creativity and personal problems solving (self-reported). He cites another study of 9-12 year old children demonstrating that highly creative children have better coping skills in stressful situations of life and relationships. The authors conclude that because they are able to think more fluently, flexibly, originally, and open-mindedly, more solutions are available to them in stressful situations and thus better coping skills.

Mouchiroud and Lubart (2002) created three scenarios of conflict involving a friend (dyad), a group of peers and parents and presented these to a group of 6 – 11 year old children. The children were encouraged to come up with as many solutions to the conflicts as possible. The purpose of the research was to establish the existence of *social creativity*. The result showed a moderately strong to strong correlation between the scenarios which gave rise to the claim by the researchers that the construct was valid. They also found a significant developmental trend with older children providing more solutions than younger. Based on findings in the literature, fluency is the main dependent measure that correlates originality with the number of ideas formed.

In an exploratory study for his Ph. D. dissertation, (Rolison, 1986) developed an instrument to assess a person's ability to generate alternatives in social, decision-making situations (the Rolison Real Issues Alternatives Test, RRIAT). He found a positive relationship between moral development (measured by Rest's DIT) and the RRIAT (r -.23 p< .03). There is also a positive correlation between the ability to produce alternative uses for an object (Guiliford's AUT) and the RRIAT (r = .33 p. < .01). Age and general

knowledge were also positively related to generating alternatives in social, decision-making situations ($r = .21$, $p. < .05$; $r = .32$; $p. < .01$, respectively).

Assessment tools

The results of these studies point to a possible method for studying moral imagination that would involve employing tests typically used in the study of creativity such as ideational fluency, originality, and flexibility and applying them to moral situations. One could envision a task in which subjects were presented with moral dilemmas (perhaps drawn from Kohlberg's original research or perhaps newly created dilemmas) and asked to come up with as many solutions as possible to the dilemmas. The results could be scored for fluency (number of ideas), flexibility (number of categories of ideas) and originality (less than 5% occurrence of the idea in the sample). To test evaluative skills, the participants could be asked to pick the one idea they think is the most practical and the one they think the most creative. These ideas also could be analyzed for originality. While there are certainly issues of reliability in coding responses and other complications, using the methods of assessment in the creativity domain for the purpose of measuring moral imagination seems a promising avenue of pursuit.

Conclusion

Moral Imagination is a difficult subject to review, not only because of its complexity, but also because there is not a great deal of consensus in the literature over its definition, much less any established empirical investigation of it. Thus we are left to our own imagination, to create new combinations of ideas, new categories, and new

methods with which to investigate them. This has been the purpose of this paper. By defining moral imagination as a narrative projection of action into the future through a process of *dramatic rehearsal*, the best methods for investigating would be to design a study in which participants are presented with short narratives (in the forms of dilemmas) and told to create as many endings to the dilemmas as come to mind. By coding these responses in terms of fluency, flexibility, and originality, we could have a basis for assessing the moral imagination of an individual. By further coding these responses for flexibility and originality in their use of metaphors, we would have a more complete understanding of the ability of the individual to use imagination in moral situations, since metaphors are a critical tool in moral reasoning (Johnson, 1993). By adding a final task to the assessment and asking the participant to choose the best and most creative solution to the dilemma, we would get an even broader idea of the level of capacity for moral imagination in the individual since evaluation along with divergent thinking are critical skills in creativity and imagination (Runco, 2003). No investigation into moral imagination would be complete without some assessment of the individual's capacity for empathy. A separate assessment would perhaps be necessary as an adjunct to the ideational fluency test to round out the picture of an individual's potential for moral imagination. The relationship of this assessment of moral imagination to the traditional measures of moral reasoning, such as the DIT, would be interesting to explore.

The goal of developing a measure for moral imagination would be to have a tool to assess programming and curriculum that would teach the skills needed for the development of moral imagination. In a world in which the old solutions do not seem to

be working, it seems imperative that we develop this skill in our children, so that in the face of moral problems they have the fluency, flexibility, and originality of thought to "break through the inertia of habit" and create new orders of experience (Greene, 1995) that are more just and caring than exist at the present

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CHAPTER 2

USING HOLLYWOOD FILMS TO TEACH MORAL REASONING AND GOOD CHARACTER: EVALUATING A FILM CLIPS CHARACTER EDUCATION CURRICULUM

Introduction

In the later third of the 20th century two approaches to moral education have prevailed (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005; Narvaez, Gleason, Mitchell, & Bentley, 2006; Walker, Henning, & Krettenauer, 2000) which have their roots in two "historic" visions of a child's moral nature. One approach, often called *traditional character education* (Bennett, 1993; Narvaez et al., 2006), has its roots in the assumption that children cannot on their own, without direct adult guidance, form a moral disposition. The emphasis of the traditional character education approach places the driving force of moral formation of children in the hands of adults (parents, teachers, and others). Concern with the content of moral education more than the process, the proponents of this approach see exposure to good moral role models, teaching values and traits that promote moral action, and reinforcing prosocial behavior as the most effective means of developing a moral disposition in a child.

The *rational moral education* approach (Gibbs, 2003; Kohlberg, 1981; Narvaez et al., 2006) views children as having an innate capacity for positive moral growth. Proponents assume children bring capacities and experiences that shape their own moral

dispositions and are *co-constructors* of their moral formation. This approach is based, in large part, on the work of Jean Piaget, who observed that children progressed in moral formation (from heteronomous to autonomous) when they took their moral life into their own hands (Hoffman, 2000; Piaget, 1962). Rational moral education focuses on the process of moral development by emphasizing student participation through such methods as collaborative peer interaction (Moran & John-Stiener, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978), moral dilemma discussion (Kohlberg, 1981; Walker et al., 2000), a democratic classroom culture (Dewey, 1938), and role play (Gibbs, 2003).

Entering the 21st century a consensus is developing that neither assumption tells the whole story of the moral child, but that moral formation is a complex phenomenon requiring both collaborative learning and content instruction, role play and good role models, a democratic school culture and morally authoritative adults (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005; Walker et al., 2000). A recognition that a moral disposition is multi-faceted and, like other psychological constructs such as intelligence (Gardner, 2004), involves complex sets of skills, traits, and abilities that can be acquired and expressed in multiple ways (Narvaez et al., 2006), has resulted in the design of programs in moral formation that feature a blending of content and process. This study investigates a particular character education curriculum using film clips from Hollywood films to demonstrate both positive and negative examples of character traits listed in many character education curricula. The curriculum takes a blended approach utilizing the film clip as the occasion for teaching the content of the character traits and reinforces good behavior by using the characters in the film clips as either positive or negative models, in line with the

traditional character education approach. The methods of rational moral education are employed through subsequent discussion of the film clips and classroom activities that engage the student in forming a moral position vis-à-vis the character trait in question. The viewing of the film clips also becomes an occasion for role play, group discussion, and other collaborative learning events.

The question of this study is: does this particular blended approach using film clips for character education work to enhance skills critical to moral development and moral action and, if so, why? I will focus on three mechanisms present in the curriculum that the literature suggests play a role in moral development: training in cognitive perspective taking, training in affective perspective taking (empathy), and moral dilemma discussions.

Perspective Taking and Moral Development

Researchers and theorists of moral development have found it useful to delineate between different types of perspective taking (Carlo, Allen & Buhman, 2006; Eisenberg et al.,1998; Hoffman, 2000). Social or cognitive perspective taking apprehends the thoughts, intentions, and situation of another. Affective perspective taking involves an understanding of the emotional states of others. Perceptual or spatial perspective taking concerns imagining the visual perspective of another (Eisenberg et al., 1998). Knowing oneself as distinct from the other is a critical skill for perspective taking (Selman, 1971) and empathy (Batson, 1991).

Cognitive Perspective Taking. Cognitive perspective taking has long been recognized as an essential capacity for moral development (Lapsley, 2006). Piaget recognized that a child can only advance in knowledge of the world in general and knowledge of the moral and social realm in particular with the ability to separate one's own perspective from another in a social situation and to attend to it. Piaget's two stages of moral development depend, in part, on this capacity. The heteronomous stage requires at least the capacity to take the adult's perspective and to conform to it, while the autonomous stage requires the more sophisticated ability to separate one's own perspective from that of the adult (or other authority) and coordinate those perspectives along with the perspective of one's peers in moral decision making and action (Gibbs, 2003).

Kohlberg (1981) placed *role taking* (a synonym for perspective taking) at the center of his moral stage theory. "The centrality of role taking is recognized in the notion that moral judgment is based on sympathy for others" (p. 141). While role taking includes both cognitive and affective perspective taking, the emphasis for Kohlberg was on the cognitive since he understood such concepts of justice, reciprocity, and equality as "part of the primary experience of role taking in social interactions" (p. 143).

Affective Perspective Taking (Empathy). Empathy is a complex response to others that includes both cognitive and affective perspective taking (Batson,1991; Eisenberg, Miller, Shell, McNalley, & Shea,1991; Feshbach,1989; Hoffman, 1987; Roberts & Strayer,1996). However, without an insight into the emotional state of others, empathy is not possible. Hoffman (2000) views perspective taking as a primary form of

empathic arousal. Eisenberg, Spinrad, and Sadovsky (2006) believe that the developmental increase in empathy supported by empirical data is due to the advances children make in perspective taking and an understanding of another's feelings. Strayer (1987) called affective perspective taking the *sine qua non* of empathy. She states empathy involves a "leap of the imagination entailed in feeling as if we were the other person in his or her situation" (p. 223). However, cognitive perspective taking still plays an important role. In a test of their model of empathy, Roberts and Strayer (1996) demonstrated a significant correlation between cognitive perspective taking and empathy.

Having a perspective on one's own emotions as well as the emotions of others contributes to moral development. Research indicates that a child's insight into his or her own emotion is positively related to empathy (Roberts & Strayer 1996), while training children to recognize verbal and nonverbal emotional cues and labeling those emotions also increase empathy (Eisenberg et al.,1998; Feshbach,1989; Frey, Hirschstein, & Guzzo, 2000). Bengtsson and Johnson (1992) found that those who focused on the inner experience of a person when confronted by their plight had higher empathy scores. Eisenberg, Murphy, and Shepherd (1997) linked age-related advances in empathy to both affective and cognitive perspective taking in their study of empathic accuracy. For Hoffman (2000), however, another's emotional state can affect someone before the ability to distinguish between self and other has developed.

Perspective Taking and Prosocial Behavior. It is the proper balance of a focus on one's own emotions conjoined with the apprehension of the emotions of others that leads to prosocial responding (Batson, 1991; Carlo, Allen & Bulman, 1999; Eisenberg,

Wentzel, & Harris, 1998; Hoffman, 1987; Strayer, 1993). Research demonstrates that high levels of personal distress in affective perspective taking inhibits prosocial responding (Eisenberg et al., 1998; Strayer, 1993). Carlo et al. (1999) found that high levels of personal distress and low levels of perspective taking inhibited prosocial responding in a sample of college students, while the opposite (high perspective taking and low personal distress) promoted prosocial action. They propose that personal distress causes one to focus on oneself more than the other, leading to a desire to alleviate one's own distress rather than another's. Strayer (1993) found similar reactions in children. When observing the emotions of others in video taped vignettes, children whose emotional intensity levels were higher than the stimulus person's showed lower empathy with others.

Training in Perspective Taking: Induction. Martin Hoffmann (2000) has developed a theory of how children form a moral disposition through the parent's use of perspective taking in disciplining their children. The technique he calls *induction* occurs when a parent takes the perspective of the victim when a child is about to harm or has harmed someone and demonstrates to the child how the child's behavior harms the victim. Building on his concept of *empathic distress*, (not the same as *personal distress*, above) that develops from an innate proclivity to feel the feelings of another coupled with the cognitive ability to separate one's own perception from others, Hoffman (2000) states that inductions:

> a) … call attention to the victim's distress and make it salient to the child, thus tapping into the child's empathic proclivity (using it as an ally) by activating any or all of his or her empathy-arousing mechanisms and producing empathic distress, and b) inductions point up the role of the child's action in causing that

> distress. This creates the condition for feeling empathy-based guilt, which is a feeling of intense disesteem for oneself for wrongfully harming another (p. 151).

These inductions form a kind of moral script for the child, called the *Transgression–Induction–Guilt* script. These scripts are reinforced time and again, adding a moral dimension to the parent/child induction through the focus on the impact of the child's behavior on others. Eventually, the script can be activated in the absence of the parent (or other authority) and is reduced to a *Transgression-Guilt* script, becoming "less kinesthetic-imagistic and more semantic-propositional" (p. 161). These scripts are activated in conflict situations with peers, and, insofar as the child is able to *de-center* (i.e., the child can take on the perspective of the victim on his or her own), the child can provide the parent's induction of the victim's perspective by himself or herself.

Krevans and Gibbs (1996) tested Hoffman's theory that inductive discipline would lead to greater empathy and prosocial responding in children. They found that children who exhibited high scores on prosocial behavior measures had parents who used inductive discipline. Moreover, the researchers found that empathy mediated the influence of the use of inductive discipline by parents on the prosocial behavior of their children. When the score of inductive discipline was included with the child's empathy score as the independent variable with the child's prosocial behavior score as the dependent variable, the resulting regression differed significantly from zero but the beta weight of the inductive discipline score was reduced and no longer significant.

Moral Expertise. Induction and schema theory has not only impacted theories on the development of empathy (Hoffmann, 2000), but has provided a framework for researchers in the development of moral reasoning as well (Narvaez & Lapsley, in press;

Rest, Narvaez, Bebeau, & Thoma, 1999a). One direction that scholars have taken is to investigate the concept of *moral expertise*. Partly rising out of Colby and Damon's (1992) work on moral exemplars, researchers have begun to ask the question "What makes one a moral expert?". Narvaez and Lapsley (in press) look to schema theory and aver that it is "the chronic accessibility of moral schemas and other knowledge structures" that distinguish the novice from the expert in moral functioning (p. 10). Experts are adept at picking up salient clues in the environment and responding with the most appropriate action from a vast store of schemas to meet the need of the situation. Expertise is developed through learning behaviors that work, upon which they reflect to understand why they work and then practice those behaviors in an intentional way until they become automatic. According to this view "moral character may depend upon a kind of socialization that inculcates highly routinized action sequences, scripted interpersonal procedures, and patterns of discrimination and judgment" (Narvaez & Lapsley, in press, p. 12).

Rest et al. (1999a) use Cognitive Schema Theory to explain the development of moral reasoning originally posited by Kohlberg and measured by Rest's Defining Issues Test (DIT). They and others who follow their lead claim that those who exhibit the complex moral judgments of Kohlberg's post-conventional moral reasoning stage "have a larger, better organized set of memory objects that can be activated within multiple cognitive fields and form part of complex mental models" (Narvaez & Bock, 2002, p. 301). Narvaez, Gleason, Mitchell, and Bentley (1999) tested this hypothesis with a group of eighth graders and college students. After reading four texts in succession in which

moral stage schemas (1-5) were embedded, the students were asked to recall the general content of the story. Results show that those with higher moral judgment scores (DIT) reconstructed significantly more stage 5 reasoning than did those with lower scores. Moreover, college students recalled significantly more stage 5 than stages 1-4 moral arguments than the eighth graders. Narveaz et al. (1999) also report that students inferred reasoning not present in the stories, indicating that the prior knowledge of moral schemas influenced the recall of the stories.

It is clear that both cognitive and affective perspective taking play a central role in moral formation and prosocial behavior. Hoffmann's theory of induction provides an adequate mechanism for how perspective taking works in the process of moral formation, building a foundational script or schema upon which subsequent moral action is built. Using the Narvaez and Lapsley (in press) framework, it is reasonable to expect that training in perspective taking will make the *Transgression–Guilt* script that Hoffman postulates *chronically accessible* to the moral actor.

A key component in the film curriculum under study here is the use of an inductive technique following the viewing of the film. After each film clip is shown, the teacher asks a series of questions concerning the cognitive and affective perspectives of the characters in the film clip. By such questions as "How do the characters feel in the situation they are in?" and "What was that character thinking when she said that to him?" the student is invited to take on the roles of the characters in the film clip, thereby promoting perspective taking in the students. The curriculum also offers role play as an additional classroom activity after the film clip discussion if the teacher so chooses.

Studies of Training in Perspective Taking. There have been numerous studies into techniques and programs that enhance prosocial behavior (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005). Some of them use perspective taking as a dependent outcome. Many train perspective taking through role play but measure other outcomes. One important early study by Feshbach (1983) evaluated a program intended to reduce aggression and promote prosocial behavior in the students in a Los Angeles city school district. The children in the training group showed reduced aggression and a significant increase in incidences of cooperation, helping, and generosity through training in affect identification and understanding, role play, and emotional expressiveness. Feshbach (1983) attributed the gains to the training and reinforcement of a child's "ability to perceive situations from the perspective of other people, to discriminate and identify feelings and to express feelings that he or she may be experiencing" (p. 269).

Another study particularly salient to the present study utilized video-taped skits instead of role play to train perspective taking (Silvern, Waterman, Sobesky, & Ryan, 1979). The training group viewed seven video-taped skits in which one of the two characters commits an error in perspective taking. The skits were shown in an order that demanded increasingly advanced understanding of the motives and affects of the characters. A discussion lead by a trained leader followed each skit and focused on identifying the perspective taking error. The children then discussed alternative solutions to the problem presented in the skit and made their own video-taped skit. This group was compared to an activity group that performed a number of semi-structured activities including drawing pictures of what it means to be a good friend, making a group plan and

rehearsing and video taping a skit. In a t-test of group comparisons, the training group showed significant improvement in the sophistication of their perspective taking compared to the activity group and the no-treatment group. Tests showed a similar result in affective perspective taking for the training group compared to the activity group and to the no-treatment group. Improvement in the sophistication of perspective taking was positively correlated with affective perspective taking.

Iannotti (1978) used role taking and role switching in a series of skits to train perspective taking in a group of 30 kindergarten-aged boys and a group of 30 third-grade boys drawn from two different schools. In the role-taking condition, the subjects physically acted out parts or explained what they would do in a situation presented in a story plus explain the effect of their actions on others. In addition, a trainer asked questions to elicit role taking. In the role-switching condition, the subjects changed roles every 5 minutes and experienced at least 5 different roles per session. The trainer then asked questions about the experience of role switching. The experimental groups at both schools showed significant growth in perspective taking compared to the control group in two different perspective-taking measures (Iannotti, 1978). In a study that trained social perspective taking through role-playing experiences designed to help the subjects articulate and coordinate relevant perspectives in social situations along with relevant internal states of the individuals in the situations, Marsh, Serafica, and Barenboim (1980) found that, while the multivariate analysis showed only an overall trend for group differences (training vs. control) on the social perspective-taking measure, the training

may have stabilized preexisting levels of social perspective taking. The test-retest reliability was significantly higher for the training group (r=.76) than the control (r=.38).

In evaluating a school-based conflict resolution program, Lane-Garon (1998) discovered that role plays using scripts from naturally occurring conflict on the playground helped to train perspective taking. Eighty students (41 treatment, 39 control; 32 males, 48 females) in grades 4 to 6 were selected as subjects for this study and randomly assigned to a treatment group or control group. The treatment group's gain in perspective taking scores was statistically significant compared to the control. The author cites the ecologically valid content of the role play (scenarios from real conflicts from the playground) as a significant factor in the training.

In one of the rare quantitative studies examining the impact of a dramatic-arts exercise on empathy in children, Kruger, Samuelson, Kapsch, Flanigan, and Harris (2002) showed that middle school participants in a playwriting program made highly significant gains in empathy compared to a control group. In that program, the children spent a large portion of their time learning about character development in playwriting, including exercises in paying attention to their own emotional experiences and taking the perspectives of others. The plays that the students wrote were not acted out, and role play was not part of the program. However, the study's authors suggest the exercise of writing from another person's perspective contributed to the gains in empathy.

Perspective taking, when induced, not only encourages empathy, but also promotes prosocial behavior. In one study (Oswald, 1996), a group of subjects watched a video tape of a person talking about the difficulties of adjusting to campus life under

three conditions: (a) focusing on the feelings of a person (affective perspective taking), (b) focusing on the thoughts of the person (cognitive perspective taking), and (c) focusing on the technical aspects of the taped presentation. The subjects were then asked to volunteer time to help students adjust to campus life. Those in the affective-perspective-taking condition volunteered over 280% more time to the project than those in the technically-focused condition, while those in the cognitive-perspective-taking condition volunteered 60% more time that the technically focused group. However, perspective taking alone does not promote prosocial action. In a study testing the roles of trait personal distress and perspective taking in volunteering, Carlo et al. (1999) found that as trait perspective taking increased, volunteering increased when low levels of personal distress where present. The presence of high levels of personal distress weakened the connection. Training in perspective taking is more efficacious when levels of personal distress are kept low.

The conclusion drawn from the literature, therefore, is that perspective taking can be trained. Two techniques that seem to work particularly well are role play and induction. Role play is used as a strategy to teach values and concepts in character education (Farrell, Meyer, Sullivan, & Kung, 2003; Flay & Allred, 2003) as well as a technique for practicing prosocial skills and putting values into action (Caplan et al., 1992; Gottfredson, Jones, & Gore, 2002; Taylor, Liang, Tracy, Williams, & Seigle, 2002; Twemlow et al., 2001). Role play puts the subject into the situation of the other and gives the subject a direct experience of the thoughts and emotions one experiences in that situation. Discussion about the experience of the role play is also an integral part of

the successful use of role play (Iannotti, 1978; Frey et al., 2000; Marsh et al., 1980). The discussion portion employs the techniques of Hoffmann's inductive-discipline approach. Induction focuses the subject on the feelings of the observed other–whether in a film or in a role play. Moreover, the research literature shows that when perspective taking is induced, prosocial behavior increases and anti-social behavior (aggression) decreases (Gibbs, Arnold, Ahlborn, & Cheesman, 1984).

What is required for an induction to be efficacious is a stimulus that provides an appropriate emotionally salient experience for the subject. Hoffmann would call this experience *empathic distress* (Hoffman, 2000). It must be appropriate because too much empathic distress can overwhelm the subject and become personal distress (Carlo et al., 1999; Eisenberg & Fabes, 1995). Some character education programs use stories and literature for this purpose, helping students to have imaginative experiences of another's action and its consequence in order to inform their own moral choices (Flay et al. 2003; Solomon, Battistich, Watson, Schaps, & Lewis, 2000). Role play can provide an emotionally salient experience as the actors take on roles in the play situation. Because it is a "play," there is enough cognitive distance to make the emotions of the situation appropriate for the induction of perspective taking. Too much distance is also a possibility, as any teacher watching a role play devolve into giggles can attest. Many studies used video tape as a stimulus for empathic distress (e.g., Sagotsky, Wood-Schneider, & Konop, 1981). This allows also for an appropriate amount of cognitive distance and reduces personal distress (a focus on one's own emotions) and facilitates

empathic distress (a focus on the other's emotion) and the possibility for the induction of perspective taking. A poor quality video-tape, or less than convincing actors can again provide too much cognitive distance to produce empathic distress. In addition, these video-taped role plays do not have the same perceptual impact as professional Hollywood films because they do not employ the techniques of camera position and editing that mimic our perception of reality (Anderson, 1996). As the Oswald (1996) study shows, a focus on the technical aspects of the video did not produce the perspective taking required to motivate prosocial action.

Film as an occasion for perspective taking. Film has an advantage over role play in providing an emotional stimulus to arouse empathic emotions. When in a role play or when observing one, the participants are usually acutely aware that they are "playing" a scene, and not involved in or witnessing what might be called "reality." Often children, and especially adolescents, are painfully conscious of themselves in front of others and the emotions connected with self-consciousness tend to overshadow the emotions of the characters in the role play. The observers also are aware that their mates are "acting" a role and that their emotions are contrived. We may *disbelieve* that the scene we are witnessing is real or that the emotions are real when viewing a role play or being involved in one. When viewing film, however, especially films made by professionals, we *suspend disbelie*f (Messaris, 1994) and perceive the film as real. The techniques of Hollywood films are designed to lull our perceptual systems into believing that we are witnessing a real event (Anderson, 1996). In fact, cognitive film theory purports that our perceptual systems do not distinguish between the light emanating from a screen and the

light bouncing off the surfaces of objects or between the sound waves coming from a speaker and the sound waves coming from a voice box or a musical instrument. To our eyes and ears and the parts of the brain that process the information, it is all just light and sound waves. Joseph Anderson (1996) states in his book *The Reality of an Illusion* that "it is the fact that the perceptual systems go through the same computational procedures whether confronted with the real world or with synthesized shadows and sounds that allows for the existence of cinema" (p. 23).

Psychologists have long used film as a stimulus to induce emotion. In doing so, they have inadvertently demonstrated the contention of cognitive film theorists that the brain makes little distinction between film and reality. For example, in a study of the location of different emotions in the brain, the researchers showed subjects a number of film clips to elicit different emotions (happiness, sadness, disgust). They analyzed both the facial expressions of the subjects and their EEG's. The facial expressions were used to verify the presence of the emotion they were targeting. When the EEG was correlated in time with the facial criteria it was a reliable indicator of the presence of the experience of emotion in the subject. The presence of both the facial expression and the electronic activity in the brain also verify an unspoken assumption of this and many similar studies: that the emotions stimulated by the viewing of films are the same as those experienced in "real life" (Tomarken, Davidson, & Hentiques, 1990). In another study designed to locate emotion in the brain, subjects viewed a series of emotionally charged or neutral films and rated their emotional reaction to each clip while their brains were scanned using positron-emmission tomography (PET). Viewing emotive films was associated with

increased activity in the amygdala, which correlated with better recollection of the film clips three weeks later (Lopez, 2001). The amygdala is where emotion is thought to be processed in the brain. Film, then, affords similar engagement of emotion and cognition that would come from witnessing a real scene involving choice and consequences. Moreover, perspective taking and empathy are the very mechanisms that give film dramatic impact (Zillman, in press).

Film, in contrast to other techniques to teach perspective taking, has the advantage of allowing for emotional arousal to augment cognitive perspective taking. The students can examine the emotions involved in the scene because they have more likely felt emotion from viewing the film. Studies have shown that compared to viewing still images, viewing moving images has a dramatic impact on the physiological factors (heart rate, skin conductance) that indicate emotional arousal. Motion also captures and sustains the attention of the subject to the image (Simons, Detenber, & Roedema, 1999). The emotional response to film engages students on two levels: (a) promoting emotional perspective taking and (b) capturing their interest. The emotional response to the film affords an occasion for the induction of perspective taking similar to the process parents' use in Hoffmann's (2000) inductive-discipline technique. Film viewing also allows for some distance from the direct experience of emotions so that the emotional response can lead to empathy instead of personal distress. While emotions are stimulated as if witnessing the scene as reality, there is still an awareness that what is being viewed is an artifact–a representation of reality. This cognitive distance is illustrated in a line often stated while watching a thriller: "It's only a movie." Such cognitive distance provides a

better opportunity for the processing of the emotions required for the induction of perspective taking.

While teachers have certainly used films in classrooms to discuss actions and their consequences, no systematic study of the use of Hollywood films (i.e., professionally produced films with superior artistic and technical merit) for character and moral development has been conducted to date. Hollywood films have been used to help gifted children cope in school (Hébert & Neumeister, 2002). Films from Hollywood are used in college-level psychology classes to illustrate such concepts as structural analysis of social behavior and personality theories with the students successfully understanding the theoretical concepts and responding favorably to the method of presentation (Paddock, Terranova, & Giles, 2001). However, no studies of using Hollywood films as a positive teaching method for character education exist. This is perhaps because it is difficult to get permission for a systematic use of Hollywood films in published curricula. While it is not illegal to show portions of films in the classroom, it is against copyright law to extract clips and reproduce them for distribution. Permission for this type of reproduction was obtained for the curriculum created for the present study.

Moral Development and Moral Reasoning

Dilemma discussion. There are two critical experiences in the induction technique: (a) an experience of another's emotional state and (b) a discussion about what caused the emotional state of the other. When a parent is training perspective taking and empathy, the cause of the emotional state of the other is usually the child whom the parent is training. The Film Clips curriculum simulates the induction technique by: (a)

giving the student an experience of another's emotional state through viewing a film clip and (b) providing an opportunity for the student to consider the cause of the emotional state of the other in the discussion of the film clip. Where this differs from the childhood induction experience is that the student has done nothing to cause the emotional state of the other on the film. Nevertheless, it is instructive to discuss the cause of the emotion of the character on the screen, especially if the discussion helps the student consider whether he or she has ever been in a situation similar to the person in the film. While the student does not experience personal guilt as in Hoffman's "*transgression-guilt*" script, the script may none-the-less be enacted through the analysis of the empathic emotions felt students in response to the characters on the screen and the consideration by the student of an experience that was similar to the one depicted on the screen. Moreover, in the curriculum training, the teachers were instructed to ask what the students might have done if they found themselves in a similar situation, with the hope of provoking an imaginative weighing of possible alternatives and potential courses of action similar to the classic dilemma discussions in the Kohlbergian tradition.

Blatt and Kohlberg (1975) hypothesized that the ideal situation for advancement in moral reasoning was to be involved in a discussion with another person who reasoned at a +1 level from one's own. Blatt and Kohlberg (1975) engaged a group whose participants expressed reasoning at various levels in a dilemma discussion. The experimenter then chose the argument that was one stage above the majority of the participants and supported it, emphasizing its strengths and encouraging participants to engage it thinking along these lines. This method led to significant increases in Moral

Maturity scores. In a review of the effectiveness of moral-development interventions using the plus one strategy using moral dilemma discussions, Enright, Lapsley, Harris, and Shawver, (2001) found that the vast majority (10 of 13) produced significant gains in moral reasoning. Those studies that did not attain significance tended to be shorter in duration. While the plus-one strategy has good support in the literature, other strategies also have been effective. Walker (1982) found a significant effect on moral reasoning with exposure to persons who reasoned 2 stages above the subjects, while Berkowitz, Gibbs, and Broughton, (1980) found the ideal stage differential was at a +1/3. These studies support the Vygotskian notion of the "zone of proximal development" that posits children learn best from a person who performs at a level just above the level of the child (Walker & Taylor, 1991). Walker and Taylor (1991) also found that hypothetical dilemmas were not predictive of children's subsequent moral development, but that "real-life" moral dilemmas from the experience of the child had the greatest impact.

From these studies we can draw two conclusions: (a) real-life dilemmas that are drawn from personal experience are more efficacious for moral development than are hypothetical dilemmas and (b) there is a "zone of proximal development" in which dilemma discussions must take place in order for advancement in moral reasoning to occur. From this we might infer about moral dilemma discussions what Piaget observed in his early studies of the moral life of children: that peers are the best teachers because peers provide the best content and context for moral dilemma discussions. In an investigation of strategies for interpersonal negotiation, Selman, Beardslee, Schultz, Krupa, and Podorefsky (1986), discovered that the adolescents who participated in the

study showed significantly higher reasoning levels in dilemmas in which peers were the protagonist vs. an adult protagonist and in dilemmas involving personal rather than work situations. Along similar lines, Kruger (1992) discovered, in her investigation of moral-dilemma discussions of young girls (*M* age =8.6 years) both with their peers and with their mothers, that peer discussions of moral dilemmas resulted in greater improvement in moral reasoning than did discussions between children and adults. Kruger (1993) reasons that the greater symmetry of knowledge and power in the peer dyads compared to the adult/child dyads produced the freedom to entertain multiple perspectives resulting in measurable development in moral reasoning.

It is this last point of the effect of symmetry, power, and freedom in moral discussions that is most salient to the Film Clips curriculum. The moral message is delivered in a medium that is democratic, that is, it does not come from an authority (such as the teacher) but from a common experience of viewing a film clip providing symmetry in power and knowledge not only with peers, but with the teacher as well. One could argue that because films and other visual media are preferred forms of communication for young people they feel superior in knowledge to the teacher at times. Discussing the conflict or dilemma inherent in each scene with each other allows for the opportunity for effective growth in moral reasoning through two proven techniques: peer to peer discussion and conflicts and dilemmas that are true to life.

Gibbs et al.(1984) used dilemma discussion to affect growth in moral reasoning with juvenile delinquents. In their study they groups participants in their modal stage of reasoning. 87.5% of those pretested at modal stage 2 shifted to modal stage 3 after

participating in moral dilemma discussions, whereas only 14.3% of the control group at modal stage 2 made the shift to stage 3 at posttest. They view a moral stage as essentially a cognitive schema "that influences an individual's selection, anticipation, interpretation and evaluation of a situational event" (p. 38). Thus growth in moral reasoning involves a shift in the cognitive schema that governs moral deliberation and action.

The Film Clips curriculum promotes perspective taking through the cognitive processing of empathic-emotional stimulation induced by viewing film clips containing examples of moral conflict and character traits. The processing occurs through teacher-led group discussion with a focus on the emotional impact of the actions of the characters in the film clips. Moreover, the discussion of the moral conflict in the film promotes advancement in moral reasoning through exposure to higher-staged reasoning in the peer-to-peer exchange of ideas. In addition, the curriculum supplements the film clips with activities such as games and role plays that reinforce the themes in the clips and further develop the skills needed for prosocial development. In the present study, subjects in two after-school programs in the state of Georgia were randomly assigned to participate either in a program using the Film Clips Curriculum (treatment) or a standard after-school program (control). Both groups were tested prior to the experimental group beginning the curriculum. Both groups were tested again when the experimental group finished the curriculum (9 sessions). The averred effect of the curriculum leads to three hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1. Given the theoretical considerations for how empathy and perspective taking are trained through the cognitive processing of emotionally salient social situations outlined above (Hoffman, 2000) and how the viewing of film clips

affords an occasion for an emotionally stimulating experience along with the processing of that experience through classroom discussion, and with the demonstration in the literature that similar techniques (role play, video training) have been successful in training cognitive and affective perspective taking, I expected to see an increase in total empathy, cognitive perspective taking, and empathic concern in the treatment group versus the control group as measured by the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI) (Davis, 1983).

Hypothesis 2. Given the theoretical and research-supported connection between the influence of training and improving skills in perspective taking, empathy, and moral reasoning on prosocial attitudes and behavior outlined above, and the increase in perspective taking expected from the Film Clips curriculum, I further expected that the experimental group would demonstrate greater gains in concern for others compared to the control group as measured by the Concern for Others Scale (Solomon et al. 2000).

Hypothesis 3. Finally, given the role that schemas and scripts play in guiding moral thought and behavior outlined above (Lapsley & Narvaez, in press; Rest et al.,1999a) and how the experience of viewing and discussing film clips mimics the schema for perspective taking trained in early childhood through inductive discipline (Hoffman, 2000), I expected the experimental group to demonstrate an improved ability to recognize moral themes in stories more efficiently as measured by the Moral Theme Inventory (MTI, Narvaez et al., 1999). Furthermore, given the theoretical and research-supported connection between dilemma discussions and gains in moral reasoning outlined above, I expected the experimental group to demonstrate greater gains in moral

reasoning (reasoning at higher moral stages) than the control group as measured by the Moral Theme Inventory (Narvaez et al., 1999).

Method

*Participant*s

The study began with 345 participants enrolled in 21st Century Community Learning Centers Programs in two rural, county-wide school districts, one in north Georgia, another in west Georgia. Congress established the 21st Century Community Learning Centers Program as part of the No Child Left Behind Act (2002) awarding grants to rural and inner-city public schools to provide academic support as well as various enrichment activities, including drug and violence prevention and character education. The state of Georgia made the Film Clips curriculum a regular part of the enrichment activities in the state's 21st Century Community Learning Centers.

The participants in both counties were randomly assigned a number and then placed into one of two groups: even-numbered participants received the program as part of their after-school enrichment activities (treatment), while odd-numbered participants engaged in activities typical of their after school program such as homework help, arts and crafts, board and card games, and outside activities during the same period (control). The teachers sent permission slips home with all the students. Only those who assented and those whose parents consented to their children's participation in the research project were pretested (Northern County, $n = 52$; Western County, $n = 293$).

Due to factors beyond the researcher's control, each county implemented the program differently. The Northern County treatment group ($n = 19$) had two mixed-grade

classes (grades 3 through 6) with one teacher in each class. The treatment group received the Film Clips program 1 hour per week for 9 weeks (hereafter called the *9-week condition*). The Western County treatment group (n = 150) had five separate classes, one for each grade (grades 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8), with two teachers per class. The treatment participants received the program 3 separate hours per week for 3 weeks (hereafter called the *3-week condition*). Each treatment group received all 9 sessions of the program.

The counties differed in the attrition of participants from pretest to posttest. In the 9-week condition, 6 treatment and 17 control participants did not take the posttest due to leaving the program or being absent on the day the test was administered. This resulted in collected data from 29 participants (13 treatment and 16 control). There were no significant differences in the pretest reading comprehension scores collected as part of the Moral Theme Inventory (Narvaez et al. 1999) between the attrition group (n = 23) and the remaining sample (n = 29). Because I collected the participant age data at posttest, no means testing for age differences between the attrition sample and remaining sample could be performed.

The 3-week condition treatment program period fell near the end of the school year. This did not leave the teachers time to give the posttest to the original pretested sample. However, a subset of the original sample attended a special summer school session to help them pass the Criterion Reference Tests (CRT) necessary to enter the next grade (n = 77 or 26% of the original sample; treatment = 46, control = 31). This group took the posttest at the beginning of the summer school session. It must be noted, however, that because this group required further schooling for promotion to the next

grade, it no longer represents the general population of the students in the 3-week condition county, but consists of students with particular academic challenges. Compared to their counterparts who did not take the posttest (n= 216), the summer school group who took both pretest and posttest (n= 77) had significantly lower reading comprehension scores at pretest (t (291) = 2.23, p = .026). As in the 9-week condition, I collected the participant age data at posttest; therefore, no means testing for age differences could be performed.

The participants completed the pretest measures in one sitting in both conditions in the following order: The Moral Theme Inventory (MTI), the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI), and the Concern for Others Scale (COS). The posttesting procedure was identical to the pretesting procedure. In the two counties combined, 106 participants (59 treatment, 47 control) were tested at both time points. All 106 were able to complete the MTI each time. However, 14 participants (8 treatment, 6 control) did not complete the entire battery at some point (either pretest, posttest, or both). Therefore, the MTI data reported below are based on a sample of 106; The IRI and COS data are based on a sample of 92 (51 treatment, 41 control). Table 1 in the Results section shows the breakdown of the sample into relevant groups.

Design and Procedure

Description of program treatment. The Film Clips for Character Education program consists of 9 discrete sessions, each based on a character trait chosen from a list of 27 character traits mandated by the Core Curriculum of the State of Georgia (www.glc.k12.ga.us/qcc). The session themes are as follows (presented in this order):

Honesty, Cooperation, Respect, Good Sportsmanship, Kindness, Self-control, Courage, Loyalty, and Perseverance. For each session, four film clips from popular films produced by major Hollywood studios are available for viewing on a DVD. For example, on the theme of Honesty, the choices are film clips from *Liar, Liar* (Grazer & Shadyac, 1997), *Cool Runnings* (Steel & Turteltaub,1997), *Shrek* (Katzenberg et al., 2001), and *Pinocchio* (Disney, Sharpsteen, & Luske, 1940). No film has more than a PG13 rating, and no clip has any content that would garner more than a PG rating.

Three criteria guided the choice of the film clips: (a) how well the clips illustrated the session's theme character trait, (b) the appropriateness for a young audience, and (c) a presentation of a moral conflict, where possible. The choices for the theme of honesty demonstrate these principles. *Pinocchio* (Disney, Sharpsteen, & Luske, 1940) is a classic story on the virtue of honesty and the consequences of dishonesty that has long delighted children. In the clip, Pinocchio lies to the good fairy about why he did not go to school. As the lie "grows and grows" so does his nose. The fairy gives an explicit lesson on how a lie can grow until "it is as plain as the nose on your face." The dilemma for Pinocchio is to continue to lie to avoid punishment, or to "come clean," as Jiminy Cricket says, and face the consequences. In the clip from *Cool Runnings* (Steel & Turteltaub,1997), a popular comedy starting the late John Candy, the coach (Candy) explains to one of the players on his Jamaican Bobsled team how he felt he had to cheat and lie to preserve his status as a winner. His dilemma was to lie and save face or to tell the truth and to loose the regard of those around him. In the animated film *Shrek* (Katzenberg, Warner, Williams, Adamson, Jenson, & Marshall, 2001) a film popular with children of all ages,

the princess implores her friend the donkey not to tell Shrek the truth that she turns into an ogre at sunset, and that only the kiss from her true love will break the spell. The dilemma is to tell the truth and risk Shrek's friendship, or to lie and preserve it. The film *Liar, Liar* (Grazer & Shadyac, 1997) has a global R-rating but the clip from the film was appropriate for children and fit our criteria exactly. In the scene, a father is telling his young son to undo a wish the son made for his birthday that his father would tell the truth for 24 hours. The father explains how he needs to lie to preserve his job. He presented a dilemma to his son that is especially challenging to young people of late grade school and junior high age: should the boy obey an authority (his father) and undo the wish (even though he knows lying is wrong), or should he disobey his father and do what he feels is right? Film clips such as the one from *Liar, Liar* (Grazer & Shadyac, 1997) that present the students with a choice between two "goods" (obeying an authority vs. insisting in the truth) are ideal for the type of dilemma discussion the curriculum endeavors to promote.

In the same manner, the activities suggested in the curriculum are designed to give the student an experience either a direct experience of practicing the character trait in question or an experience of making a choice between two conflicting goods. The activity choices for Honesty include telling three things about oneself to the group, one true and two false. The group tries to guess the false statements. A discussion on the experience of the game concludes the activity. Another suggested activity is a game sometimes known as "Dictionary," which actually rewards the player who can make up the most convincing false definition of an little known word. The activities always

included the options of journal writing on the theme in question and a role play that reinforce the theme.

The curriculum does not prescribe a set order of events for each session but gives the teachers a number of options to design the session as they see fit. The two components that are fixed are the viewing of the film clip and the discussion which follows the viewing. In a typical session (as presented in the program training) a teacher introduces the theme of the day and perhaps asks some preliminary questions of definition (e.g., What is honesty? How do you show honesty?). The teacher would have chosen one or two of the four possible clips to show the class as illustrations of the theme character trait. A discussion follows the showing of each clip with a particular focus on the feelings of the characters involved (e.g., How did the boy feel when his father lied to him all the time?) and the feelings of the students (e.g., How do you feel when you are lied to?).

Training in the curriculum consisted of 2 sessions: one with all of the teachers in the 3-week program and the supervisor from the 9-week program and another with 3 of the 5 teachers in the 9-week program. The remaining teachers in the 9-week program were trained by their supervisor, who was included in the original training. In each training session I emphasized the two foci of the curriculum: (a) the use of the film clip as an example of a character trait (direct teaching) and (b) the importance of the discussion of the situation of the character in the film clip (dilemma discussion). After showing a sample film clip, I demonstrated how the film clip can be used to help the children understand the meaning of the character trait in question. Then I led the teachers

in a mock discussion, emphasizing the importance of identifying the feelings of the characters in the film as well as the feelings of the students as they watched the film. I turned the discussion to the situation in the film and the choices the characters made and asked the teachers to help their students discuss if the characters had made good choices. I also encouraged the teachers to lead the students to discuss experiences in their lives similar to those demonstrated in the film. I then demonstrated how, after the showing of one or two clips and the subsequent discussion, the teacher could then choose from a number of suggested follow-up activities including games, role-play, art projects, video taping, research, and cooperative projects by working through some examples.

An informal telephone survey with five of the seven teachers (two from the 9-week condition, three from the 3-week condition) revealed these commonalities in implementation:

1) The sessions lasted typically between 45 minutes and 1 hour.
2) The focus of the sessions was the film clips. The teachers used a minimum of two clips per session, often using all four clips, stopping for discussion after each clip.
3) The discussions were teacher-led. The students responded to direct questioning of the teachers. The teachers noted that it was easy to get the children to talk.
4) The teachers focused their questions on the feelings of the characters and asked how the children might feel under similar conditions. The children often responded with examples of their own experience as it related to the scene.
5) The teachers reported that they did not have time for many follow-up activities, if any at all.

6) All nine sessions of the program were completed in both conditions.

Instruments

Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI; Davis, 1983). The IRI is designed to assess four distinct aspects of empathy: Perspective Taking, Empathic Concern, Fantasy, and Personal Distress. The measure is a 28- item self-report questionnaire consisting of four 7-item subscales, each corresponding to these specific aspects of empathy. The Perspective Taking scale measures the capacity to take another's point of view in everyday life. A sample from the Perspective Taking scale is "I sometimes try to understand my friends better by imagining how things look from their perspective." The Fantasy scale measures the tendency to get into the feelings and actions of fictitious characters when reading books, or viewing movies and plays. A sample item from this scale is "I really get involved with the feelings of the characters in a novel." The Empathic Concern scale measures the tendency when interacting with others to experience feelings of warmth, compassion, and concern. A typical item from this scale is "I often have tender, concerned feelings for people less fortunate than me." The Personal Distress scale measures the tendency when confronted with the emotions of others to focus on one's own feelings of personal unease and discomfort. An item from this scale is "Being in a tense emotional situation scares me." The scores from the Perspective Taking, Empathic Concern, and Fantasy Scales are combined to give a total empathy score (Davis, 1983). I will use the total empathy score in this study because it focuses on the self-reported empathic response of the subjects to another person (whether actual or fictional), leaving out the self-focused empathic response (personal distress).

The total empathy score is the score usually reported in the literature when measuring empathy.

Davis (1983) reports that all four scales have satisfactory internal reliability (from .71 - .77) and test-retest reliability (.62 - .71). Females score higher on all four subscales. The subscales show the following significant inter-correlations: Empathic Concern positively correlates with Perspective Taking (r = .33) and Fantasy Scale (r = .33). Perspective Taking and Personal Distress have a negative correlation (r = -.23). Davis compared his scale to other extant empathy measures. He reported that the Perspective Taking scale significantly correlates with the more cognitively oriented Hogan Empathy Scale (r = .40) while the Fantasy and Empathic Concern scales significantly correlate with the more affectively oriented Mehrabian and Epstein Emotional Empathy Scale (r = .52 and .62, respectively). In contrast, Perspective Taking showed lower correlations with the Mehrabian and Epstein Scale (r = .20) and the Fantasy and Empathic Concern scales had much lower correlations with the Hogan Empathy scale. This indicates that while the IRI presents multiple dimensions of empathy, the Perspective Taking scale seems to measure cognitive perspective taking while the Fantasy and Empathic Concern scales measure affective perspective taking. Davis (1983) confirmed the cognitive focus of the Perspective Taking scale and the affective focus of the Empathic Concern scale through further experiments. Eisenberg et al (1991) demonstrated that Perspective Taking scores increase with age.

The Concern for Others Scale (COS). The Concern for Others scale (Solomon et al., 2000) is a prosocial attitudes, self-report instrument. It was originally developed in

the early 1990's by the Developmental Studies Center of Oakland, California to assess the impact of the Child Development Project program on the prosocial attitudes of the California public school children. The program utilized student collaboration, a literature-based approach to reading, and a student-centered approach to classroom management, along with role play, games, and other interactive learning techniques. This program has proven successful on many outcomes, including intrinsic and extrinsic prosocial motivation, altruistic attitudes, and concern for others. Solomon et al. (2000) developed many instruments geared toward late grade school aged children (grades 3-6) to assess the outcomes of this program including the Concern for Others Scale. The scale has internal consistencies measured by Chronbach's alpha ranging from .74 to .81.

The Moral Theme Inventory (MTI; Narvaez et al. 1999). The MTI uses moral stories to assess the ability of the subject to recognize moral themes in real-life situations and to reason about these stories by recognizing similar stories and choosing a correct summary statement of the stories. The measure consists of 4 stories about moral dilemmas. Each story has a complex moral message and contains a dilemma that the protagonist in the story resolves. The protagonist solves the dilemma in the story by making a choice guided by the values affirmed in the theme of the story. The four stories are titled after their protagonists: "Kim," "California," "Jed" and "Malcolm." In "Kim" the theme is honesty and the values affirmed are being honest with everyone, even strangers, and using self-control to be honest (Kim receives too much change from a cashier). The story of "California" is a modern version of the Hans Christian Andersen story, "The Boy and the Dike." Its theme is caring, and it asserts the values of self-

sacrifice and perseverance to help others. The theme of "Jed" is being true to your word, and it demonstrates the values of trustworthiness and doing one's duty. "Malcolm" presents the theme of a conflict of loyalty. It asserts the value of telling the truth to strangers even at great costs.

The sequencing of the tasks is as follows, repeated for each story. The students read along with an audio-taped version of the story and then answer10 true/false statements to test reading comprehension. They then complete four tasks measuring moral theme comprehension related to the story:

1) Vignette rating: The first of four vignettes (paragraph-long stories with the same or different theme) is read out loud on audio-tape, and the participant makes a rating before the reading of the next vignette. Participants rate the vignette according to how closely it matches the original story's theme using a 5-point Likert-type scale. This process is repeated for all four vignettes. One of the four vignettes is the target vignette (correct response). It has different actions and different actors but the same moral theme as the story. The three *distractor** (incorrect) vignettes vary systematically on so called "superficial characteristics," (i.e., character, action and setting). One uses the same action but different actors, another uses the same actors but different actions, a third uses the same setting only.

* *Distractor* is a technical term used by Narvaez et al. in their 1999 study that reflects the intentional design of the statement to "distract" the subject from the correct response.

2) Vignette choice: Participants select the one vignette of the four presented that best matches the theme of the original story.

3) Message rating: In this section, seven (or eight) short statements relating to the moral theme of the story are read aloud. After each is read, participants rate each of seven or eight messages according to how well each matches the theme of the original story using a 5 point Likert-type scale. There are two correct messages that reflect the moral theme of the story.

   The five remaining messages are labeled *distractor* messages. They are intended to distract the subject from giving the two correct messages the highest rating, and also from later choosing them as reflective of the story's moral theme. The theory is that those who are more practiced at moral reasoning will ignore the distractors and make the correct choice. The five distractor types are:

   A) Stage1 theme distortion (a focus on reprisal). The theme of this message statement is that the protagonist did the right thing out of fear of punishment. This and the next two distractor types are based on Rest's version of Kohlberg's moral judgment stages 1-3 (Rest et al. 1999a).

   B) Stage 2 theme distortion (a focus on personal gain or loss). The theme of this message statement is that the protagonist acted out of self-interest.

   C) Stage 3 theme distortion (a focus on gaining or loosing approval of others). The theme of this message statement is that protagonist receives from others praise for doing the right thing or scorn for doing the wrong thing.

D) An item that focused on the priority of the "in-group" (collectivism). The theme of this message is that the protagonist chooses the action that will benefit those to whom he or she is closest; and

E) An item using multi-syllabic, "grown-up" words.

4) Message choices. Participants select two choices that best match the theme of the original story.

The scores for each task are derived in the following way. This procedure is repeated for the four moral stories.

A) Vignette Rating [VR]: The difference between the participant's Likert-type rating on each incorrect vignette and his/her rating of the correct vignette is calculated, and then these differences are added together. For example, if a subject rated the correct vignette a 4, and rated the incorrect vignettes a 3, a 1, and a 5 respectively, the [VR] score would be $(4 - 3) + (4 - 1) + (4 - 5) = 3$.

B) Vignette Choice [VC]: The credit for the correct vignette choice is 1 point; an incorrect choice is 0.

C) Message Rating [MR]: First, the ratings of the two correct messages are averaged. Then the difference between each of the ratings for the distractor (incorrect) items and the average of the two correct theme choices is calculated, and these differences are summed. For example, if the subject rated the correct theme messages a 3 and a 5, respectively, the average of 3 and 5 is 4. The rating of each distractor (incorrect) message is subtracted from 4. If those ratings were 2, 1, 4, 3 and 1, the subsequent [MR] score would be $(4 - 2) + (4 - 1) + (4 - 4) + (4 - 3) + (4 - 1) = 9$.

D) Message Choice [MC]: Since there are two correct theme choices from seven possible messages, the score for this section can be 2 (both correct messages chosen), 1 (one correct choice) or 0 (no choices correct).

The four scores are then added together for a comprehensive score ([VR] + [VC] + [MR] +. [MC] = [CS]) for each moral story. In the original study (Narvaez et al., 1999), the scores for each of these four combination variables for each of the four stories were added together for a composite moral comprehension theme score and the reliability of the composite score (across four stories and four tasks) using Cronbach's alpha is .89. In the present study, I used two stories at pretest ("Kim" and "California"), and I combined the scores generated from the responses to the two stories to form the pretest comprehensive score. I used the two remaining stories at posttest ("Jed" and "Malcolm") and combined the scores generated to form the posttest comprehensive score. This is the first time this measure has been used in a pretest/posttest format to evaluate a program. Since the stories were read via audiotape to the subjects at one sitting, they were not counterbalanced.

In the statistical analysis, I summed the ten true/false questions from each of the four stories that measured reading comprehension to create a total reading comprehension score. This score, derived from a total of 40 questions, is used as a covariate in many of the statistical analyses of this study. I used this same score to compare the samples for compatibility. These questions contained both true and false facts and true and false inferences. The expectation is that a good reader would make the true inferences given the causal supporting evidence in the story. Over all 4 stories in the true/false section

there are 12 true facts, 11 false facts, 7 true inferences and 10 false inferences randomly ordered for each story. Cronbach's alpha for these 40 questions is .81. (Narvaez et al. 1999).

Narvaez et al. (1999) found significant differences in the performance on the MTI by age, even after controlling for reading comprehension. That is, with increasing age, (3rd grade, 5th grade, and adult) correct performance improved. Moreover, younger participants are more attracted to distractors at lower stage moral reasoning than their older counterparts, leading the researchers to conclude that moral judgment development impacts moral theme comprehension.

Moral Stage Attraction. The total comprehensive score of the MTI includes the totals of four separate sections (VR, VC, MR, MC) as outlined above. The third section (the Message Rating section) requires the participant to choose two statements from a series of seven (or eight) statements that *best* describe the point of the story. Among those seven statements are the two correct choices and five distractor choices:

1-3) Three statements that echo the theme of the story in terms of Rest's version of Kohlberg's moral judgment stages (stages 1-3);

4) A statement that reflects the priority of the "in-group" (collectivism), and

5) A nonsense statement using multi-syllabic words.

The three statements based on Rest's version of Kohlberg's first three moral judgment stages recast the moral of the stimulus story with the following distortions: Stage 1: a focus on punishment as a motive for doing the right thing (avoiding the wrong); Stage 2: a focus on how right action results in personal gain; and, Stage 3: a

focus on how right action will gain or loose the approval of others. The participant attained the maximum score for this section if he or she rated the two correct theme choices at a five (on a 1 to 5 Lickert-type scale) and all other statements (the "distractors") a one. However, this scoring is not sensitive to any change in moral reasoning levels. For example, the participant attracted to Stage 3 distractors (indicated by giving them the highest rating [5]) is penalized the same amount as the participant who rated the Stage 1 distractors at the highest level. Moreover, it is possible that the relative attraction to the various stage distractor statements could change due to the intervention. Thus, a treatment subject who was attracted to Stage 1 distractor statements at pretest, could be more attracted to Stage 2 or 3 distractor statements following the intervention, reflecting the beginning of growth in moral reasoning. Yet that participant would not necessarily post an increase in the overall MTI comprehensive score.

For the purposes of looking at micro changes in moral reasoning, an alternative scoring procedure was used. In the Message Rating section of the MTI, the ratings of the three distractor statements based on Rest's version of Kohlberg's moral judgment stages (Stages 1-3, Rest et al., 1999a) were separated from the rest of the data. The ratings of these three statements are chosen because they were based explicitly on Kohlberg's moral judgment stages, and the moral reasoning stage of the participants is most likely to fallwithin the parameters of the first three stages due to their age (Narvaez et al., 1999; Rest et al., 1999a). In order to differentiate the attraction of the participant to each statement and each moral judgment stage, I weighted the value from the Likert-type scale assigned by the participant to the various moral stage distractors to reflect the stage of

reasoning of the distractor statement. Thus, I multiplied the value assigned by the participant to the Stage 1 distractor by 1, the value of the Stage 2 distractor by 2 and the value of the Stage 3 distractor by 3. I then added these three weighted values together to obtain a total weighted stage score for both pre-test and post-test. For example, if a participant gave the Stage 1 distractor statement a rating of 4, the Stage 2 distractor a rating of 2 and the stage 3 distractor a rating of 1 at pretest, the pretest Moral Stage Attraction for that story would be 11 ((4x1) + (2x2) + (1x3) = 4 + 4 + 3 =11). The two weighted scores for each pretest story were added to obtain a total pretest Moral Stage Attraction score. The posttest Moral Stage Attraction score is the total weighted ratings from the two posttest stories. The resulting continuous variables allow for a comparison of participants relative to the level of moral reasoning to which they are attracted. A high score means the participants were attracted to statements that reflected higher levels of moral reasoning (a rating of 2 on the statement reflecting Stage 3 reasoning scores higher (2x3=6) than the highest rating on the Stage 1 statement (5x1=5)), whereas a low score means participants were more attracted to lower stages and less attracted to higher stages of moral reasoning reflected in various distractor statements. A comparative analysis of the total Moral Stage Attraction will comprise part of the overall data analysis.

The ratings of the Stage 1, 2, and 3 distractor messages also can be of use to assess whether subjects are in a consolidation or transition phase in their moral reasoning (Thoma & Rest, 1999, Walker et al., 2001). While the ratings of the distractor messages do not give a researcher the precise modal stage at which the participant is reasoning, they do give an indication of the stage of moral reasoning that the participant thinks is the

most sensible to explain the actions of the protagonists in the story. So, while a participant may not be able to generate reasoning at Stage 3 in a Moral Judgment Interview (MJI, Colby & Kohlberg, 1987) for example, that participant shows an attraction to the reasoning of stage 3 by giving a high rating to the Stage 3 distractor. From the discussion of the consolidation/transition model in moral reasoning development above, Walker et al., 2001 showed that the direction of bias is a powerful predictor of one's moral stage transition. A person showing a *positive bias* (i.e., attracted to reasoning more above his or her current modal stage of moral reasoning than below), is thought to be in the *transition* phase, while a person in a *consolidation* phase has a propensity to be attracted to reasoning more at or below his or her modal stage of moral reasoning than above.

The Moral Theme Inventory (MTI), like the DIT, uses tacit recognition of representative statements of various stages of moral reasoning rather than asking test subjects to articulate their own justifications for moral positions and scoring those responses according to their moral stage as in the MJI (Colby & Kohlberg, 1987). Rest, et al, (1999a, 1999b) defend the use of recognition of moral stage reasoning in the DIT versus the production moral reasoning in the MJI as an equally valid form of measuring stage of moral reasoning with the additional advantage of measuring the implicit moral understanding of an individual perhaps beyond the individual's capacity to consciously produce in an interview. However, in contrast to the DIT and the MJI, the MTI does not ask test subjects to solve a moral dilemma, but only to recognize a moral theme in a story. The moral theme of the story that the student must recognize is restated

in the universal terms implied in the story (the correct response) and also in terms that reflect stages 1-3 of Kohlberg's moral stages (as well as in "in-group" language and in a nonsensical, large word sentence). The premise of the test is that those who operate out of a higher stage moral schema would recognize the universal application of the moral of the story whereas those who operate out of lower stage moral schemas would be "distracted" by the restatements of the story theme reflecting Kohlberg's stages 1-3.

Results

Due to the significant attrition rate, I had interest in combining the participant groups from the two counties to increase sample size for hypothesis testing. To explore that possibility, testing for between-county differences was necessary, especially given county-specific variation in student characteristics and form of implementation. To be conservative, I conducted these analyses on the smaller sample (n=91) with complete data records. (See Table 1 for means.) There is a significant difference in age between the 9-week condition and the 3-week condition treatment groups ($t(48) = 2.19$, $p < .05$). There is a significant difference between the 9-week condition and the 3-week condition control groups in age ($t(39) = 2.65$ $p < .05$) and in reading comprehension ($t(39) = -4.29$ $p < .01$). These differences in student characteristics and the implementation differences preclude combining either the treatment or the control groups from the two counties. I also conducted an investigation between the treatment and control groups within each county. There are no significant differences in age or reading comprehension between the 3-week condition treatment and control groups. In the 9-week condition there are

significant differences in both age (t (23) = -2.58, $p < .05$) and reading comprehension (t (23) = 2.37, $p < .05$) between the control and treatment groups.

Table 1

Between-Condition Comparisons of the Population Characteristics of Treatment and Control Groups

3-week condition (low achievers)

	Completed All Measures		Completed MTI	
Characteristic	Treatment	Control	Treatment	Control
Total *N*	38	29	46	31
n males	24	13	27	15
M age	12.6*	11.7**	12.3	11.6**
Age Range	9 – 16	8 – 15	8 – 16	8 – 15
M reading comprehension	15.22	13.94**	15.19	14.16*

9-week condition (average achievers)

	Completed All Measures		Completed MTI	
Characteristic	Treatment	Control	Treatment	Control
Total *N*	12	13	13	16
n males	9	8	9	9
M age	11.3*	10.2**	11.5	10.2**
Age Range	10 – 12	9 – 12	10 – 12	9 – 12
M reading comprehension	16.29	17.96**	16.5	17.81*

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$; Indicates significant differences by group between conditions.

Therefore, the analysis will proceed in three sections:, First, I will test the effect of the intervention by comparing the treatment and control groups in the 3-week condition. Second, I will conduct another test of the effect of the intervention by comparing the treatment and control groups of the 9-week condition, controlling for their differences in age and reading comprehension. Third, since the unplanned difference in implementation allows a chance to compare the efficacy of delivering the treatment in either a 3-week period or a 9-week period, I will conduct a post-hoc comparison of the treatment groups from each condition to test the effect of the difference in implementation, controlling for their differences in age. Within each of the three sections seven outcomes will be reported.

1) Total score from the Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI)

2) Empathic Concern subscale of the IRI

3) Perspective Taking subscale of the IRI

4) Fantasy subscale of the IRI

5) Total Concern for Others (COS) score

6) Comprehensive score of the Moral Theme Inventory (MTI) and

7) Total Moral Stage Attraction score

Of the many statistical methods used to evaluate treatment effects on two groups in a pretest – treatment – posttest design, the ANCOVA provides the greatest power and likelihood of finding a significant difference between groups (Stevens, 2001), by using the posttest as the dependant variable and the pretest as (one of) the covariate(s). The assumptions of the ANCOVA require the covariate(s) to have a linear relationship with

the dependent variable and the regression slopes be equal within each group (no group x covariate interaction). When the pretest regression slopes for each group prove to be unequal, I use a two-way, repeated-measure ANOVA (or ANCOVA) with one between factor and one within factor. The between group factor was either group membership in the treatment group between the counties or group membership within each county. The within factor was always the pretest and posttest of the measure under analysis. In the cases where the repeated-measure analysis required a covariate, (a repeated-measure ANCOVA), the covariate used always conformed to ANCOVA assumptions. The stricter Greenhouse-Geisser statistic was used to control for sphericity in all ANCOVAs or ANOVAs that have within-subjects factors.

Within-3-week Condition Comparison of Control and Treatment Groups

IRI total empathy score. For the subjects from the 3-week condition who completed all the measures (treatment $n = 39$, control n=28), an independent t-test comparing the mean age and reading comprehension scores of the treatment and control groups shows no significant differences. The test of ANCOVA assumptions showed a significant group (treatment, control) x pretest interaction (F (2,63) = 10.40, $p < .001$). A two-way ANOVA with one between factor (treatment, control) and one within factor (Total Empathy score at pretest and posttest) was therefore conducted. No significant main effect for time of measure or group x time of measure interaction is found.

IRI Empathic Concern (EC) score. The test of ANCOVA assumptions showed a significant group (treatment, control) x pretest interaction (F (2,63) = 3.70, $p < .05$), meaning the assumptions were not met. Therefore, a two-way ANOVA with one

between factor (treatment, control) and one within factor (EC score at pretest and posttest) was conducted. The results indicate no significant main effect for time of measure or group x time of measure interaction.

IRI Perspective Taking (PT) score. The test of ANCOVA assumptions showed a significant group (treatment, control) x pretest interaction (F (2,63) = 4.69, $p < .05$), and the necessary assumptions were not met. Therefore, a two-way ANOVA with one between factor (treatment and control groups) and one within factor (PT score at pretest and posttest) was conducted. The results indicate no significant main effect for time of measure or group x time of measure interaction.

IRI Fantasy Scale (FS) score. The test of ANCOVA assumptions showed a significant group (treatment, control) x pretest interaction (F (2,63) = 3.78, $p < .05$). A two-way ANOVA with one between factor (treatment, control) and one within factor (FS score at pretest and posttest) was therefore conducted. The results indicate no significant main effect for time of measure or group x time of measure interaction.

Concern for Others Scale (COS). The test of ANCOVA assumptions showed a significant group (treatment, control) x pretest interaction (F (2,62) = 9.31, $p < .001$), meaning the assumptions were not met. Therefore, a two-way ANOVA with one between factor (treatment, control) and one within factor (COS score at pretest and posttest) was conducted. The results indicate no significant main effect for time of measure or group x time of measure interaction.

MTI Comprehensive Score. The 31 control subjects and 46 treatment subjects from the 3-week condition who completed both pre- and posttest of the MTI (N = 77)

showed no significant differences in reading comprehension score or age allowing the consideration of an ANCOVA analysis with pretest as the covariate. However, as stated above, it is suggested that the reading comprehension score also be used as a covariate in the analysis. The test of ANCOVA assumptions results a significant group (treatment, control) x reading comprehension score interaction precluding the use of that variable as a covariate (F (2,54) = 3.60, $p < .05$). Again, as in the previous comparison of the treatment groups, since the assumptions with the pre-MTI comprehensive score were met (no significant group x pre-MTI comprehensive score interaction) and the reading comprehension score and the pre-MTI comprehensive score significantly correlate (r = .420, $p < .001$), we can get a meaningful analysis by using just the pre-MTI comprehensive score as a covariate. Thus, a two-way ANCOVA was conducted with theMTI comprehensive score at posttest as the dependent variable, the pre-MTI comprehensive score as covariate and the two within-county groups (treatment, control) as fixed factors. Results indicate no significant difference in the means of the two groups.

The Moral Stage Attraction Score. The Message Rating section of the MTI asks the participant to rate a series of message statements according to how well the statement reflects the "best meaning" of the story. Of the seven messages statements, two are correct choices and five are distractor (incorrect) choices. Three of these distractors are based on Rest's version of Kohlberg's moral judgment stages (Stages 1-3). To assess the change in attraction to higher stage reasoning from pre- to posttest between groups, the value each participant had assigned to the various moral stage distractors was weighted to

reflect the stage of reasoning related to the distractor statement. Thus, the Likert-type scale value assigned to the Stage 1 distractor was multiplied by 1, the value of the Stage 2 distractor multiplied by 2, and the value of the Stage 3 distractor multiplied by three. These three weighted values were then added together to obtain a Moral Stage Attraction score for each story. The scores associated with the four stories were summed to yield a Total Moral Stage Attraction score, one for pretest and one for posttest. (See Instruments section above.)

An analysis that includes between subject and within subject comparisons is preferable to one that focuses on means testing between groups such as an ANCOVA in testing for differences between groups on the Moral Stage Attraction Score. Therefore, a two-way ANOVA with one between factor (treatment, control) and one within factor (the Moral Stage Attraction score at pretest and posttest) was conducted. There is no significant main effect for time of measure but there is a significant group x time of measure interaction (F (1,75) = 5.45, $p < .05$; partial eta^2 = .068, observed power = .635). The group means show an increase in the treatment group in Moral Stage Attraction over time, while the control group showed a slight decline (see Table 2 for means). This shows that although there appears to be no effect of the treatment on the comprehensive scores of the MTI, subtle changes in moral reasoning may be affected by the treatment as measured by Moral Stage Attraction.

Table 2

Group Means of the Between-condition and Within-condition Comparison of Groups for Moral Stage Attraction.

Group	time	*M*	*SD*
3-week treatment	pre	11.65	4.02
post 14.02	3.41		
3-week control	pre	13.08	4.02
	post	12.66	3.96
9-week treatment	pre	12.53	3.60
	post	10.62	4.57
9-week control	pre	13.09	5.08
	post	11.28	5.10

In summary, when comparing the control and treatment groups within the 3-week condition, statistically significant gains in either group are revealed in only one analysis.. The participants in the 3-week condition treatment group gave significantly greater ratings to statements that reflect higher stages of moral reasoning at posttest than they did at pretest, compared to the control group.

Within-9-week condition Comparison of Control and Treatment Groups

Although the subjects were randomly assigned to control and treatment conditions, the 9-week condition sub-sample shows an unequal distribution of age and reading comprehension between the groups. Among those in the 9-week condition who completed all the measures (n = 29) a significant difference in both age (t (23) = -2.58, p

< .05) and reading comprehension (t (23) = 2.37, p < .05) exist between the control and treatment groups. Among those that completed at least the MTI (N = 29), there is no significant difference between the control and treatment groups in the 9-week condition on reading comprehension, but there is a significant difference in age (t (27) = -2.37, p < .05). However, since the suggested analysis of the MTI includes using reading comprehension as a covariate, age and reading comprehension will be used as covariates on all the tests.

The Total Empathy Score, the EC, PT and FS subscales of the IRI and the COS. These measures were all tested with the same procedure: a two-way ANCOVA with one between factor (treatment, control) and one within factor (score at pretest and posttest) with reading comprehension score and age as covariates. In each case, assumptions for the ANCOVA were met (no significant group x covariate interactions). With all 5 measures, no main effect for time of measure or significant group x time of measure interaction was found.

MTI Comprehensive Score. To test for differences between the groups on the outcome of the MTI comprehensive score, a two-way ANCOVA with one between factor (treatment, control) and one within factor (MTI comprehensive score at pretest and posttest) was conducted with age and reading comprehension as covariates. The assumptions for the ANCOVA were met (no significant group x covariate interactions). A significant main effect for time of measure was demonstrated (F (1,25) = 7.59, p < .05) with all subjects scoring better on average over time. This was clarified by a significant age x time of measure interaction effect (F (1,25) = 6.16, p < .05) with older subjects

doing better over time than younger. However, there was no group x time of measure interaction.

The Moral Stage Attraction Score. A two-way ANCOVA with one between factor (treatment, control) and one within factor (the Moral Stage Attraction score at pretest and posttest) was conducted. There is no significant main effect for time of measure and there are no significant interactions. See Table 2.

In summary, no treatment effects were demonstrated in the 9-week condition on any of the measures including the Moral Stage Attraction analysis when comparing the treatment group to the control.

Post-Hoc Between-Condition Comparisons of Treatment Groups

Since the treatment was implemented differently in the two counties, I had the opportunity to compare the efficacy of delivering the treatment in a shorter, more intense manner (over a period of three weeks, three times a week) versus over a longer period with less frequency per week (a period of nine weeks, once a week). Therefore, the analysis will proceed with a comparison of the treatment groups between conditions.

IRI total empathy score. The students in the two treatment groups who completed the full battery differ significantly in age. Therefore, every analysis involving the IRI, its subscales, and the COS will use age as a covariate. The test of ANCOVA assumptions showed a significant group (treatment, 3-week condition; treatment, 9-week condition) x pretest interaction (F (2,45) = 10.99, $p < .001$); however, no group x age interaction was observed, meaning the pretest cannot be used as a covariate but age can. The change in score from pretest to posttest by group was therefore tested with a two-

way repeated-measures ANCOVA with one between factor (treatment, 3-week condition; treatment, 9-week condition) and one within factor (total empathy score at pretest and posttest) with age as covariate. The test revealed no significant main effect for time of measure or group x time of measure interaction.

IRI Empathic Concern (EC) score. The test of ANCOVA assumptions showed a significant group (treatment, 3-week condition; treatment, 9-week condition) x pretest interaction (F (2,45) = 10.99, $p < .001$), but no group x age interaction. A two-way, repeated-measure ANCOVA with one between factor (treatment, 3-week condition; treatment, 9-week condition) and one within factor (EC score at pretest and posttest) was therefore conducted with age as covariate. The results indicate no significant main effect for time of measure or group x time of measure interaction when controlling for age.

IRI Perspective Taking (PT) score. The test of ANCOVA assumptions indicated that all had been met. However, in this case a two-way, repeated-measures ANCOVA with one between factor (treatment, 3-week condition; treatment, 9-week condition) and one within factor (PT score at pretest and posttest) and age as a covariate was preferred because using just the one covariate in a mixed design provides more statistical power than a design with two covariates. Results indicate no main effect for time of measure but demonstrate a trend toward a significant group x time of measure interaction (F (1,47) = 3.04, $p < .10$). The trend is toward a greater gain in PT scores in the 9-week condition treatment group pretest to posttest compared to the 3-week condition treatment group (see Table 3 for means).

Table 3

Mean Pretest and Mean and Adjusted Mean Posttest Scores on Perspective Taking .

		Pretest		Posttest Obtained		Posttest Adjusted
Condition	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*
3-week treatment	38	13.50	2.89	11.86	3.58	12.57
3-week control	28	13.93	4.77	13.46	3.45	13.81
9-week treatment	12	12.50	4.33	13.58	4.52	12.76
9-week control	13	13.38	4.07	13.61	5.81	13.25

IRI Fantasy Scale (FS) score. The test of ANCOVA assumptions showed a significant group (treatment 3-week condition; treatment 9-week condition) x pretest interaction (F (2,45) = 3.50, $p < .05$), but no group x age interaction. A two-way, repeated-measures ANCOVA with one between factor (treatment, 3-week; treatment, 9-week) and one within factor (FS score at pretest and posttest) was therefore conducted with age as a covariate. The results indicate no significant main effect for time of measure or group x time of measure interaction when controlling for age.

Concern for Others Scale (COS). The test of ANCOVA assumptions showed a significant group (treatment, 3-week condition; treatment, 9-week condition) x pretest interaction (F (2,44) = 11.08, $p < .001$), but no group x age interaction. A two-way, repeated-measures ANCOVA with one between factor (treatment, 3-week condition;

treatment, 9-week condition) and one within factor (score at pretest and posttest) was therefore conducted with age as covariate. The results indicate no significant main effect for time of measure or group x time of measure interaction when controlling for age.

MTI Comprehensive Score. Not all students completed the entire battery, but, as indicated above, all106 study subjects completed the MTI. The treatment groups from the two counties that completed both the pre- and posttest of the MTI showed no significant differences in reading comprehension score or age, allowing the consideration of an ANCOVA analysis without age as a covariate. Given the dependence of the MTI on reading, Narvaez et al., (1999) suggest that the reading comprehension score as well as the pretest MTI comprehensive score be used as covariates in the analysis. The test of ANCOVA assumptions results in a significant group x reading comprehension score interaction precluding the use of that variable as a covariate (F (2,54) = 3.56, $p < .05$). However, there is no group x pre-MTI comprehensive score interaction and the pre-MTI comprehensive score and the reading comprehension score significantly correlate (r = .271, $p < .05$). Therefore, we can get a meaningful analysis by using just the pre-MTI comprehensive score as a covariate. Thus, a two-way ANCOVA was conducted with the MTI comprehensive score at posttest as the dependent variable, the pre-MTI comprehensive score as covariate and the two treatment groups (3-week condition, 9-week condition) as fixed factors. Results indicate a significant difference in the group means in the treatment conditions of the two counties (F(1, 56) = 5.75, $p < .05$; partial eta^2 = .093; power = .654; R^2 = .155). This means that the longer treatment condition (9-week) had a greater impact than the shorter, more intense treatment (3-week) on the

posttest comprehensive score of the MTI when controlled for the pretest MTI comprehensive score. (See Table 4 for means).

Table 4

Mean Pretest and Mean and Adjusted Mean Posttest Scores on the MTI Comprehensive.

		Pretest		Posttest		
				Obtained		Adjusted
Condition	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*
3-week treatment	46	6.72	9.99	4.93	9.82	5.14
3-week control	46	2.82	9.95	3.84	10.91	4.93
9-week treatment	13	11.08	15.45	14.00	14.02	13.27
9-week control	13	9.31	15.34	19.72	14.66	17.60

The Moral Stage Attraction Score. Because the focus of the analysis for Moral Stage Attraction is the change in the rating each individual subject gives to the Stage 1-3 distractor statements from pretest to posttest and the effect that group membership has on that change, a repeated-measures, two-way ANOVA with one between factor (treatment, 3-week condition; treatment, 9-week condition) and one within factor (the Total Moral Stage Attraction score at pretest and posttest) was conducted. There is no significant main effect for time of measure but there is a significant group x time of measure interaction (F (1,57) = 9.79, $p \leq .01$; partial eta^2 = .147, observed power = .868). The group means show an increase in the 3-week condition treatment group in Moral Stage

Attraction over time, while the 9-week condition treatment group showed a decrease (see Table 2). This is consistent with expectations, and consistent with the above finding in which the 9-week condition treatment group made greater gains than the 3-week condition treatment group on the comprehensive MTI score from pretest to posttest. Since the Moral Stage Attraction score represents errors in the standard MTI scoring scheme, the Moral Stage Attraction Score may be inversely related to the MTI score.

In summary, when comparing the 3-week, intense treatment condition with the 9-week, extended treatment condition, the longer treatment proved more effective, especially as measured by the Moral Theme Inventory (MTI) task. Although the test did not reach significance, there is a trend in the Perspective Taking subscale of the IRI that favors the longer 9-week condition treatment group as well. When examining the attraction of the participants to higher stage reasoning from pre- to posttest, by taking a closer look at the ratings participants gave to Stage 1-3 distractor statements in the MTI, the opposite trend is found. The 3-week condition treatment group participants gave significantly higher ratings to Stage 1, 2, and 3 distractor statements at posttest than at pretest compared to their 9-week condition counterparts.

Summarizing all the results, the within-condition comparisons between treatment and control groups show no significant effect of the treatment on Moral Theme Comprehension, Total Empathy, Empathic Concern, Perspective Taking or Fantasy, or on the measure of Concern for Others in either county. However, the shorter, 3-week treatment condition initiated an attraction to higher stage moral reasoning statements in

the treatment group, since the Moral Stage Attraction scores were significantly higher in that group compared to the control.

The post-hoc between-county comparison of the treatment groups yielded significant differences in the Moral Theme Inventory (MTI) Comprehensive Score, with the 9-week condition proving more effective than the shorter 3-week condition. No significant differences were found in the other measures between treatment groups but there was a trend in Perspective Taking that favored the 9-week condition treatment group. An analysis of Moral Stage Attraction score differences revealed that the shorter 3-week treatment condition produced a greater attraction to statements of higher staged reasoning at posttest than was evident at pretest, compared to the 9-week condition. Since the Moral Stage Attraction score represents errors in the standard MTI scoring scheme, we see in both treatment groups an inverse relationship between the Moral Stage Attraction Score and the MTI score.

Discussion

This study evaluating the effectiveness of the Film Clips for Character Education curriculum demonstrates that the program has potential for affecting moral reasoning and perspective taking, but that potential was not realized in this study. Summarizing the results, the within-condition comparisons of treatment and control groups show no significant effect of the treatment on Moral Theme Comprehension (MTI), Total Empathy, Empathic Concern, Perspective Taking, Fantasy (IRI), or on the measure of Concern for Others (COS) in either county. The only statistically significant difference in the between group comparisons (treatment vs. control) in either condition was found in

the Moral Stage Attraction scores in the 3-week condition. The treatment group showed significantly more attraction to higher stage moral reasoning distractors at posttest than did the control.

Primary Question for Discussion

The primary question for discussion is: given the theoretical potential of the curriculum and the support for the techniques found in the literature, why were there no significant gains in the measures from pre- to posttest in either treatment group compared to their controls? The discussion will focus on three possible answers: (a) the implementation of the curriculum was not adequate, (b) the measures did not pick up the changes the curriculum afforded, and (c) the attrition of the original sample adversely affected the ability to record significant gains in the treatment group.

Implementation. Of the eight strategies commonly employed in successful character education programs, four involve teacher training or teaching strategies (professional development, interactive teaching strategies, direct teaching strategies, classroom/behavior management; the remaining are: family/community participation, modeling/mentoring ,school-wide strategies, and community service/service learning, Berkowitz & Bier, 2005). This finding points to the importance of consistent and sustained teacher training in the form of professional development and implementation strategies. The teacher training for the Film Clips curriculum was brief (2 hours) and not all the teachers received the same training. I trained 5 of the 7 teachers (and one supervisor) in two separate training sessions. In those sessions the emphasis was acquainting the teachers with the logistics of the curriculum. Little time was spent on

training how to lead dilemma discussions or how to get participants to talk to one another. It was clear from the informal reports of the teachers that the discussion portion was a form of a teacher-led question and answer session (the students responding to teacher-initiated questions). Training teachers in more effective discussion techniques that are proven to develop moral reasoning such as promoting greater student to student dialogue (Kruger, 1992) and/or a plus-one strategy (Blatt & Kohlberg, 1975) would increase the chances of the curriculum positively affecting the outcome measures.

The difference in the length of treatment between the two counties (3-week vs. 9-week) allowed me to test which length of treatment yielded better results. The between-county comparison of the treatment groups yielded significant differences in the Moral Theme Inventory (MTI) comprehensive posttest score, with the 9-week condition proving more effective than the shorter 3-week condition after controlling for the pretest score (and, by extension, controlling for reading comprehension, since the pretest MTI score significantly correlated with reading comprehension). No significant differences were found in the other measures between treatment groups but there was a trend toward a difference in the IRI Perspective Taking score that favored the longer 9-week condition treatment group. A Moral Stage Attraction (MSA) analysis revealed that the shorter 3-week treatment condition produced a greater attraction to distractors of higher stages of reasoning at posttest than was evident at pretest, compared to the 9-week treatment condition. Since distractors represent wrong answers on the MTI, there is an inverse relationship between the MSA and the MTI.

The 9-week condition teachers may have benefited from better training. In the 9-week condition, both teachers were trained by the experimenter while only 5 of 7 teachers in the 3-week condition received direct training. The 9-week teachers received direct instructions from the experimenter on how to conduct the testing as well. The 3-week teachers were trained in testing procedures by their supervisor. The testing procedures were not monitored in either county, so there is no way to know if the tapes that contained the stories and questions of the MTI were used properly or consistently. There was also no provision for monitoring the implementation of the curriculum as it proceeded. Although I obtained some knowledge of the implementation of the curriculum through a post-hoc interview with some of the teachers, the study would have benefited from more consistent monitoring of the presentation of the curriculum, the conduct of the discussion portion and the testing of the participants.

On the positive side, it is sensible to speculate that the gains by the participants in the longer treatment condition were the result of more time to practice making moral inferences in their regular school experience, having learned from the Film Clips curriculum to look for the moral lesson in life situations and to practice good character traits. However, the practical significance of the finding that the 9-week condition is more effective than the 3-week condition as measured by the MTI is tempered by the fact that the effect size of the comparison is minimal ($eta^2 = .093$). It must also be kept in mind that the 3-week group was from a sample of low-achievers who were required to attend summer school because they did not pass the test promoting them to the next grade. In that sense a comparison of the length of program (9-week/3-week) is also a

comparison of average achievers and low achievers. Again, stressing the positive, the gains in Moral Stage Attraction by the participants in the 3-week condition compared to the 3-week control could be the result of intense exposure to higher stage reasoning in the discussion of the film clips and the dilemmas they present.

Measures. The Interpersonal Reactivity Index (Davis, 1983) has been used before in program evaluation with late grade school-aged children (Lane-Garon,1998) as well as the Concern for Others Scale (Solomon et al., 2000). The dearth of results with these measures are best explained by deficits in the curriculum or in its implementation. However, this is the first time that the Moral Theme Inventory (Narvaez et al., 1998) has been used in a pretest-intervention-posttest design. The measure was designed to show that learning morals and good character from a story was highly dependent on the reader's ability to discern moral themes in a story and that this ability was age dependant (increasing with age, Narvaez et al., 1998). The measure is also highly dependent not only on reading comprehension skills, but the more sophisticated skill of making correct inferences from stories. In addition, the ability to catch the moral theme of a story is tested twice, first by recognizing a similar story with the same moral but different characters and setting and then by recognizing two correct summary statements of the story in the midst of five distractor statements. While the curriculum trained the participants to recognize moral themes in the life situations depicted in the films, those skills may or may not have translated into better recognition of correct moral themes in moral stories.

The testing of gains in moral reasoning are best measured by the ratings and choices of the restatements of the moral theme of the story. Moreover, as the Moral Stage Attraction analysis demonstrates, those participants who were attracted to higher stage reasoning at posttest compared to pretest, yet did not discern the correct restatement of the moral theme, were actually penalized for a growing attraction to higher stage statements of the moral of the story (the only restatements of the moral of the story explicitly based on Kohlberg's moral reasoning stages are statements that contain reasoning at stages one through three). Therefore, it can be averred that the MTI comprehensive score was not sensitive enough to catch these subtle changes in attraction to higher stages of moral reasoning. In future studies, the use of a measure explicitly designed to measure changes and growth in moral reasoning may be a better tool in evaluating the effectiveness of this curriculum than was the MTI.

Attrition. There is little doubt that the findings would have been more conclusive with a larger sample. The loss of over 75 percent of the original sample at posttest made the study more complicated and less definitive. The random nature of the sample was lost which necessitated controlling for age and reading ability and weakening the power of the statistical testing. Besides the significant differences in age and reading ability between the two counties, the different lengths of treatment meant that the treatment groups could not be combined which would have also aided in the statistical analysis. The gains in a brief intervention would be expected to be small and the numbers of participants in the 9-week condition are simply too small to detect any small gains in the measures. The participants in the 3-week condition did show some movement in

attraction to statements based on higher stages of moral reasoning at posttest, but the effect size is small ($eta^2 = .068$). The setting of an after-school program is notoriously difficult for researchers due to these very problems. The after-school population may not adequately represent the larger population and the after-school programs suffer from attrition. Testing this curriculum in a more stable classroom setting will certainly benefit its evaluation.

The one positive and significant result was that the 3-week treatment group showed attraction to restatements of the moral of the story based on higher stages of moral reasoning in the MTI at posttest than they had demonstrated at pretest compared to their control counterparts. This study represents the first time the Moral Stage Attraction analysis has been conducted with the MTI. It is based on the idea that the participants might recognizing higher stage statements as a more adequate restatement of the moral theme of the story at posttest than they had at pretest (as is the case with the 3-week treatment group compared to their control counterparts). Rest et al. (1999a, 1999b) argue the validity of recognition as a way of measuring moral stage reasoning. We can speculate that the attraction to the various distractor statements in the MTI would also reflect the stage or schema that predominates the subject's moral reasoning. Tracking the ratings of the distractors from pre- to posttest gives an indication whether or not the moral schema out of which the test subject is in the habit of operating has advanced. Rest et al. (1999b) indicate that transition in moral reasoning in children is not like moving up the step of a staircase, but more like waves lapping up on the shore as the tide comes in. Each wave makes more and more progress forward until a higher level is reached. The 3-

week condition treatment group, by their attraction to higher staged distractor sentences at posttest compared to pretest, showed progress into higher stages of moral reasoning (the first "wave," if you will) without having achieved a consolidation into those higher stages. Thus one result we might claim from the effect of the curriculum might be that it initiated an attraction to statements reflecting higher stages of moral reasoning, which could be the beginning of a change in preference to think about moral decisions at higher levels of moral reasoning. The 9-week treatment group did not show similar signs as the 3-week treatment group perhaps because the small numbers of participants in that condition precluded any significant statistical discoveries.

Despite the limitations outlined above, this study contributes to the existing research on moral development and effective character education on several fronts. It is the first scientific test of the effectiveness of a new technique for training the critical skill of perspective taking for moral reasoning and prosocial action using film clips from Hollywood-produced films. Hollywood films are structured to engage our perceptual systems as if we were viewing reality (Anderson, 1996) and viewing the film clips allows for a veridical experience of moral conflict situations. The Film Clips curriculum affords a chance to teach participants how to reason in moral conflict situations as well as provides occasion for the discussion of proper moral conduct. Results from a post-hoc analysis suggest that those exposed to the curriculum over a longer period of time were more practiced and therefore better able to recognize moral themes and less distracted by lower level moral reasoning than those who had less exposure to the curriculum (Lapsley & Narvaez, in press). This study uses the Moral Theme Inventory (Narvaez et al. 1999)

for the first time to evaluate a program in a pretest – treatment – posttest design. Moreover, the study employs a new type of analysis of the MTI, the Moral Stage Attraction, which affords a closer look at the subtle changes in attraction to statements that reflect higher stages of moral reasoning that is age-appropriate to grade school children. The participants in the shorter, 3-week condition evidenced an attraction to higher stage moral reasoning at posttest then they had at pretest.

Because the theoretical potential of the Film Clips curriculum was not realized in this study does not mean it cannot work well as a vehicle for delivering character education content and for affecting growth in moral development. The salience of the emotional experience of viewing a film, coupled with the cognitive processing of those empathic emotions in group discussion, which mimics the induction technique of parents when raising moral children, affords a critical opportunity for both the inculcation of proper character traits and for acquiring the critical skills for a moral disposition. In this way the goals of traditional character education and rational moral education can be met.

This study shows the potential for such a blended approach to "work" in our schools and other learning centers. To realize this potential, the implementation of the curriculum should be more closely monitored. Better training of the teachers, especially in techniques proven to enhance the development of moral reasoning would enhance the effectiveness of the curriculum. Conducting the curriculum in a regular classroom setting where attrition is not as large an issue as in after-school programs along with closely gauging the ongoing implementation of the curriculum by regular classroom visits and repeated teacher interviews would allow for a more controlled dose of the treatment and

afford a stricter analysis of its effectiveness. Finally, testing the curriculum with measures that can record significant changes in perspective taking, moral reasoning and prosocial behavior would secure the validity of potential findings.

In conclusion, the theoretical basis of this curriculum is sound. The response of the teachers who conducted the curriculum and their assessment of the student's reaction is wholly positive. Never-the-less, enthusiasm and theoretical potential do not a successful curriculum make. The most salient conclusion of this study is: implementation of even the finest curriculum matters. Further research on this curriculum with proper implementation and controls will contribute to the ongoing attempts to create effective moral development and character education curricula.

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FIGURES

Figure 1. Differences Between Groups

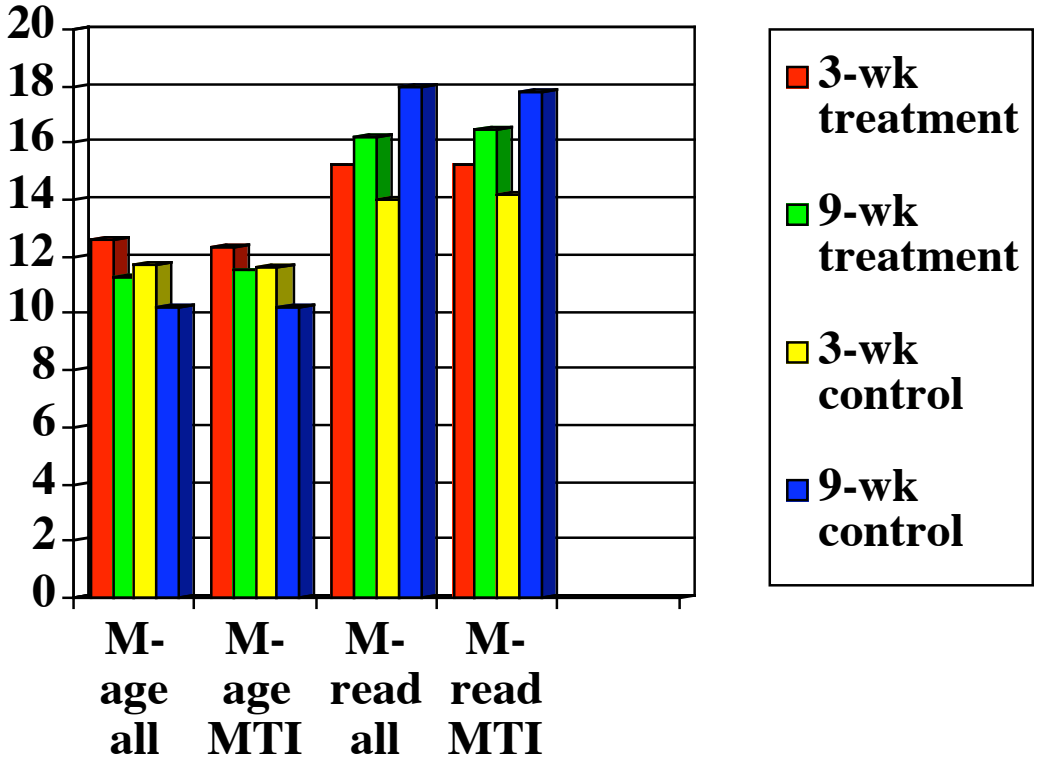

Figure 2. Changes in MTI scores

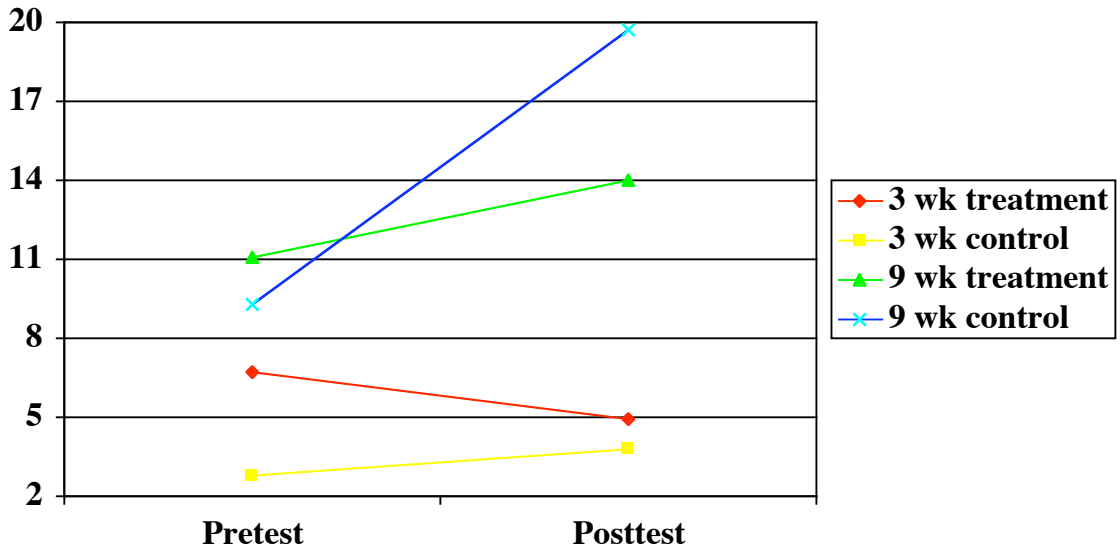
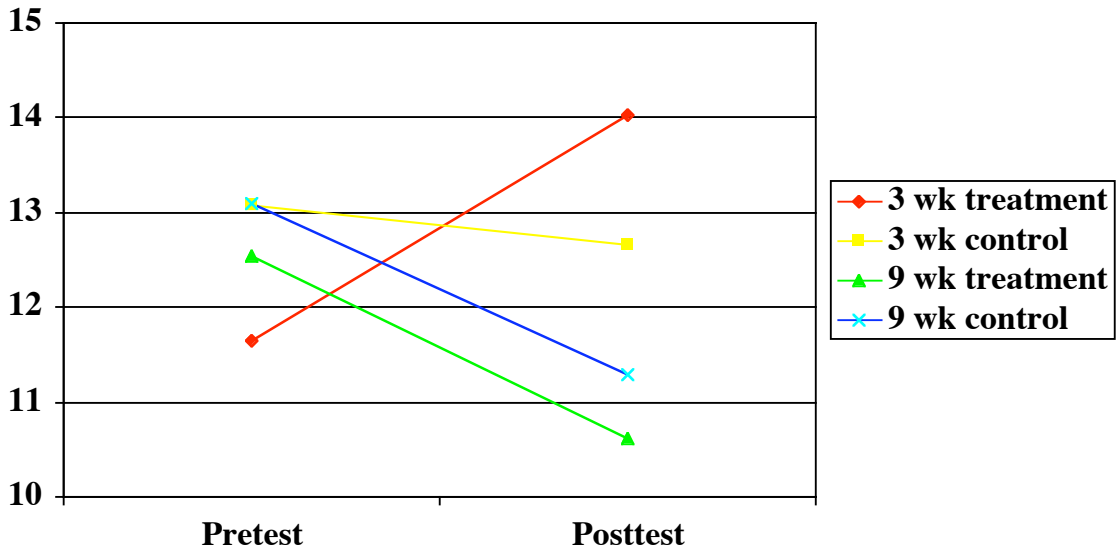
Figure 3. Changes in Moral Stage Attraction scores