

5-24-2019

Work in Progress: A meta-literature review of Moral Foundations Theory as applied in game studies

Sarah E. Hodge

Bournemouth University, shodge@bournemouth.ac.uk

Nicholas D. Bowman

Texas Tech University, nick.bowman@ttu.edu

Sven Jockel

University of Erfurt, sven.joeckel@uni-erfurt.de

Alyssa Wright

West Virginia University, Alyssa.Wright@mail.wvu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/faculty_publications



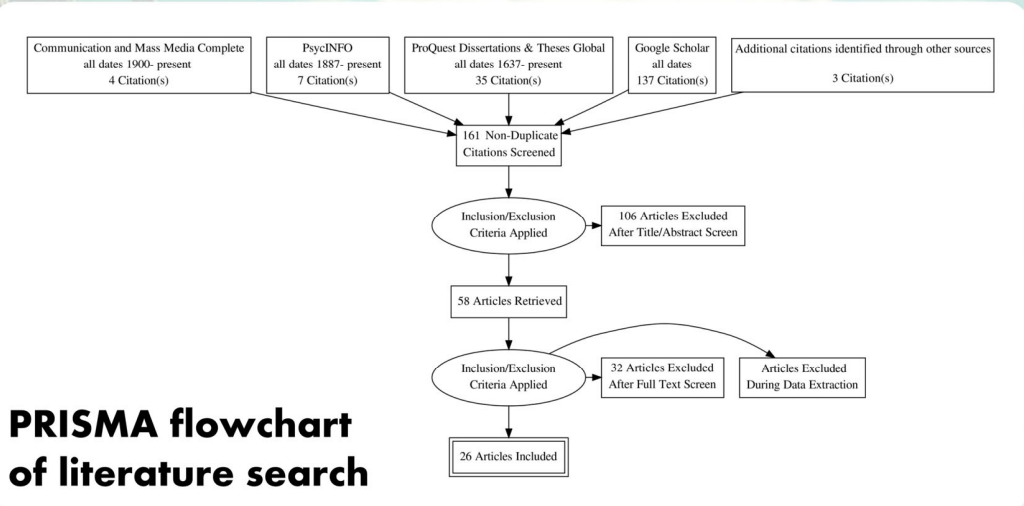
Part of the [Communication Technology and New Media Commons](#), and the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Digital Commons Citation

Hodge, Sarah E.; Bowman, Nicholas D.; Jockel, Sven; and Wright, Alyssa, "Work in Progress: A meta-literature review of Moral Foundations Theory as applied in game studies" (2019). *Faculty Scholarship*. 1115.

https://researchrepository.wvu.edu/faculty_publications/1115

Work in Progress: A meta-literature review of Moral Foundations Theory as applied in game studies



PRISMA flowchart of literature search

Increasingly, research has started to exploring the role of morality in video games¹⁻². Many of these studies measured morality applying the Moral Foundation Theory (MFT)^{3,4} to measure perceptions of in-game and post-game morality⁵⁻⁸. **The aim of this work in progress is to understand the role of morality in video game in the context of MFT theory through a meta-literature review.**

• Poor reliability with MFQ scale
• Mostly experimental designs

• ~35% of studies? Theses or dissertations
• Mix of custom & modified games

• Very few (only 1?) replications
• Studies tend to share materials, but not data.

References

1. Ellithorpe, M. E., Cruz, C., Velez, J. A., Ewoldsen, D. R., & Bogert, A. K. (2015). Moral license in video games: when being right can mean doing wrong. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior and Social Networking*, 18(4), 203–207.
2. Hartmann, T., Krakowiak, K. M., & Tsay-Vogel, M. (2014). How violent video games communicate violence: A literature review and content analysis of moral disengagement factors. *Communication Monographs*, 81(3), 310–332.
3. Haidt, J., & Joseph, C. (2004). Intuitive ethics: How innately prepared intuitions generate culturally variable virtues. *Daedalus*, 133(4), 55-66.
4. Haidt, J. (2012). The righteous mind: Why good people are divided by politics and religion. Vintage.
5. Hodge, S.E., McAlaney, J., Gatzidis, C., Anderson, E. F., Melacca, D. and Taylor, J. (2018). Applying psychological theory to in-game moral behaviors through the development of a purpose-made game. In N. D. Bowman (Ed.), *Video games: A medium that demands our attention*. (pp. 108-125). New York and London: Routledge.
6. Joeckel, S., Bowman, N. D., & Dogruel, L. (2012). Gut or Game? The Influence of Moral Intuitions on Decisions in Video Games. *Media Psychology*, 15(4), 460-485.
7. Joeckel, S., Bowman, N. D., & Dogruel, L. (2013). The Influence of Adolescents' Moral Salience on Actions and Entertainment Experience in Interactive Media. *Journal of Children and Media*, 7(4), 480-506
8. Weaver, A. J., & Lewis, N. (2012). Mirrored morality: An exploration of moral choice in video games. *Cyberpsychology, Behavior, and Social Networking*, 15(11), 610-614.

Sample study coding

Study	Type	Game	N, type	IV(s)	DV(s)	MFT/MIME	Materials available	Analysis and results	Effect size(s)
Allen (2018)	Experimental Design	<i>The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim</i> ; time not reported	N = 96 students (US Midwest) who completed MFQ; 61 male; average age 19.34 (SD = 1.51)	2 (identification: high or low) x 2 (justified violence: yes or no) between-subjects design	Guilt; short-term shift in moral foundations	IV: MFQ30; reliabilitie s ranging from .57 to .72 DV: MFSS; reliabilitie s ranging from .53 to .75	No	Explicit guilt: Binary logistic regression; no sig. effect of care/harm and fairness/cheating (the only two explored) Implicit guilt: ANCOVA; no sig. effects MFSS: No sig. effects	Explicit guilt: care/harm Exp(B) = .24 fairness/cheating Exp(B) = .37 Implicit guilt: care/harm partial η ² = .065 fairness/cheating η ² = .087 MFSS: rs -.04 to .06

Can you spot the six moral scenarios below?

