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## ABSTRACT

An experimental study was conducted in order to determine the effect of number of plays of the social simulation game "Ghetto" on attitudes toward people in general and ghetto people. It was expected that attitude change would increase with an increase in the number of plays of the game. This effect was not obtained. The game effect was greatest immediately after a thirty-five minute introduction to the game followed by two rounds of the game. The students' attitudes toward ghetto people seemed unusually positive for all treatment groups whether they played the game or not. Nevertheless, because the largest effect was obtained after the shortest experience with the game, it was suggested that teachers might use the game as a brief introduction to social problems in inner-city environments. (Author)


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Steven J. Kidder, Horace E. Aubertine

STAFF
John L. Holland, Director
Jane's M: McPrtland, Assistant Director

| Virginia B. Bailey | John H. Holliti.ld |
| :--- | :--- |
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| Robert T. Hogan | Evelyn Zulver |

# ATTITUDE CHANGE AND NUMBER OF PLAYS OF A 

 SOCIAL SIMULATION GAMEGRANT NO. OEG-2-7-061610-0207

PROGRAM NO. R16J1
PROJECT NO. R16J1A

STEVEN J. KIDDER
HORACE E. AUBERTINE

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THE JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

## INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Center for Social Organization of Schools has two primary objectives: to develop a scientific knowledge of how schools affect their students, and to use this knowledge to develop better school practices and organization.

The Center works through five programs to achieve its objectives. The Academic Games program has developed simulation games for use in the classroom. It is evaluating the effects of games on student learning and studying how games can improve interpersonal relations in the schools. The Social Accounts program is examining how a student's education affects his actual occupational attainment, and how education results in different vocational outcomes for blacks and whites. The Schools and Maturity program is studying the effects of educational experience on a wide range of human talents, competencies, and personal dispositions in order to formulate -- and research -important educational goals other than traditional academic achievement. The School Organization program is currently concerned with authoritycontrol structures, task structures, reward systems, and peer group processes in schools. The Careers and Curricula program bases its work upon a theory of career development. It has developed a selfadministered vocational guidance device and a self-directed career program to promote vocational development and to foster satisfying curricular decisions for high school, college, and adult populations.

This report, prepared by the Academic Games program, examines how the number of plays of a social simulation game affects changes in students' attitudes.

## ACk.NOWLEDGMENT

The authors would like to thank the teachers and students at the Metcalí Laboratory School, Illinois State University, Normal, Illinois for their cooperation in completing the instructional phases of the present study. We also thank Eugene H. Jabker, Director of Research, Illinois State University, Normal, Illinois for his assistance in the initial phases of the study. In addition, Samuel A. Livingston provided helpful comments on the final draft while Linda P. Ferraris typed the entire manuscript.

An experimental study was conducted in order to determine the effect of number of plays of the social simulation game Ghetto on attitudes toward people in general and ghetto people. Is was expected that attitude change would increase with an increase in the number of plays of the game. Ihis effect was not obtained. The game effect was greatest immediately after a thirty-five minute introduction to the game followed by two rounds of the game. The students' attitudes toward ghetto people seemed unusually positive for all treatment groups whether they played the game or not. Nevertheless, because the largest effect was obtained after the shortest experience with the game, it was suggested that teachers might use the game as a brief introduction to social problems in inner-city environments.

## INTRODUCTION

A great deal of time, money, and effort over the last ten years has gone into attitude-change research. Most of this research was done by sociologists and psychologists and focused on role-playing. Some of the role-playing activities used included improvising, speeches and delivering prepared speeches before a particular audience. Much of the research boils down to the fact that when a person plays a role, in one form or another, his attitude becomes more like the attitude he expresses during the role-playing experience.

Several individuals have studied the effects of simulation games on attitude change. Livingston \& Stoll (in press) summarize several research findings dealing with this topic:

Boocock (1963) noted that playing an election game produced both "realistic" attitudes about politics and a negative evaluation of politics as a career.

Garvey and Seiler (1966) and Cherryholmes (1963) both found that the Inter-Nation Simulation produced "realistic" attitudes toward politics, though no more effectively than conventional teaching methods.

Boocock (1966) discovered that after playing the Life Career game, Joys seemed more sympathetic toward potential school dropouts, while girls seemed less so. She also found that boys and girls who played the Democracy game displayed no differences in political attitudes afterward.

In addition, several recent studies examined the structural effects of simulation games on attitude change. ${ }^{1}$ From the results of two studies, Livingston (1972) noted that students' acceptance of tolerance for the log-roling activities of congressmen increased after playing the Democracy game (Coleman, 1969). Building upon this finding, Livingston and Kidder (1972) provided evidence

1
The reader may note that a systematic attempt is being made in these studies to provide knowledge about simulation games that is both cumulative and generalizable as suggested by Fletcher (1971).
that this change in the students' acceptance of log-roling depended on both the game structure and the identification of the player's role as that of a congressman.

Edwards (1971), using th: simulction game, Trade and Develop (Livingston, 1969), found that "...after playing the basic version of T/D (Trade and Develop) twice, further playing of the basic game or the advanced game will not increase students' understanding of the mechanics of the game (perceptions), strategies of play, or analogies between the game model and the real situation." (p.iv) Although the latter study did not deal specifically with attitude change, the lack of findings for analogies between the game model and the real situation is significant if one believes that the learning process involved in attitude change is directly related to the subjecte' ability at developing such analogies.

The present study used as an experimental treatment the social simulation game Ghetto (Toll, 1969). The Ghetto game is effective in changing players' attitudes toward poor people (Livingston, 1970) but not for long time periods (Livingston, 1971). The objective of the present study was to analyze the effect of the number of plays of the Ghetto game on the players' attitudes toward ghetto people in particular. It was expected that, following a standardized introduction to the game, students playing the game for one, two, and three fifty-minute class periods would experience an increase in attitude change. In other words, attitude change would be greater after three class periods with the game than after two class periods which would be greater than after one class period with the game.

Subjects, Experimental Design, Procedure

Sixty-three high school seniors, mostly middle-class whites, participated in this study. ${ }^{1}$ They were assigned randomly to four treatment groups: three experimental groups and one control group. The three experimental groups played the Ghetto game for one, two, and three class periods, respectively. About half of the first period was taken up by a standardized introduction, in which the students were shown how to play the game. Following the introduction, the classes completed about two rounds of the game. In addition, about eight rounds were completed each period thereafter. Thus, Treatment Group 1 received the introduction plus two rounds, Treatment Group 2 received the introduction and ten rounds, while Treatment Group 3 received the intioduction plus eighteen rounds of the game. Each group answered the post-game questionnaire immediately after playing the game for their assigned number of periods. The control group answered the questionnaire without having played the game.

Dependent Variables
Attitudes towards two types of people were of interest in the present study. One instrument was used to collect attitudes toward "people in general" and "ghetto people." (See Appendix A for the complete instrument.) The definition of attitude reflected in the instrument is based on the work of Anderson and Fishbein (196'), as reported in Fishbein (1967).

1
This study was conducted at the Metcalf Laboratory School, Illinois State University, Normal, Illinois.

These authors suggest that one can define an attitude toward an object "...to be a part function of the total amount of affect associated with each of the beliefs about the object." (in Fishbein, 1967, p. 437).

The questionnaire was divided into two parts; Part 1 referred to people in general, and Part 2 referred to ghetto people in particular. Each part contained five groups of items, constructed to detect the subject's beliefs about people and the amount of positive or negative affect associated with each belief. The items were presented in a modified semantic-differential format. For example, the first group of items looks like this:

## People are honest.



The subject's responses to the first three items in each group indicate his degree of belief in a statement attributing some quality (in this case, honesty) to ghetto people (or to people in general); his responses to the next five items indicate his positive or negative feelings toward the quality. The seven options (the spaces that the subject could check) were assigned scores from 1 through 7, with the seven-point options being the "true" extreme for each belief item and the "goodness" extreme for each affect item. The scores
for the three belief items were then summed to yield a belief score for that quality, and the five affect items were summed to yield an affect score for the quality. The five qualities included in the statements were "honest," "hard-working," "responsible," "moral," and "law-abiding."

Table 1 contains the means for the belief and evaluative (affective) components of the subjects' attitudes toward people in general for the control and treatment groups.

Table 2 contains the multivariate and univariate analyses of the main treatment effect of number of plays. The overall multivariate test nearly reached significance at the .05 level $(F=1.53, p<.055)$. On univariate tests the following dependent variables were significant: (1) Hardworkingaffect ( $\mathrm{F}=2.90, \mathrm{df}=3 / 55, \mathrm{p}<.04$ ); (2) Responsible-belief ( $\mathrm{F}=3.59, \mathrm{df}=3 / 55, \mathrm{p}<.02$ ); (3) Moral-belief $(F=3.31, d f=3 / 55, p<.03)$. Two other variables were nearly significant on these univariate tests: Honest-affect and Moral-affect. The three variables accounting for the largest proportion of the total variance were (1) Responsible-belief, (2) Moral-belief, (3) Hardworking-affect. If the mean values of the latter variables are compared to the values for the control group, one realizes that the students' feelings about human behavior immediately after their first encounter with the game have become quite pessimistic.

It should be noted that the original design included a sex factor. However, no sex effect was obtained in the analysis; nor were any interactions significant. Thus, only the simple effects for number of plays of the game are reported below.

Table 3 contains the analysis of variance for the simple effect of two rounds of the Ghetto game versus the control group on the subjects' attitudes toward people in general. The overall multivariate test was significant $(F=2.59, p<.01)$, and seven out of ten univariate tests of the dependent variables were significant; (1) Honest-affect ( $\mathrm{F}=5.44, \mathrm{p}<.02$ ); (2) Hard-working-affect ( $\mathrm{F}=6.47, \mathrm{p}<.01$ ); (3) Responsible-belief ( $\mathrm{F}=8.25, \mathrm{p}<.01$ );
(4) Responsible-affect ( $\mathrm{F}=4.32, \mathrm{p}<.04$ ); (5) Moral-belief ( $\mathrm{F}=7.65, \mathrm{p}<.01$ );
(6) Moral-affect ( $\mathrm{F}=6.50, \mathrm{p} \leqslant .01$ ); (7) Law-abiding belief ( $\mathrm{F}=4.74, \mathrm{p} \leqslant .03$ ). The game did influence the subjects' attitudes on substantive variables from morality and law-abidingness to being responsible. In addition, hoth the belief and affective component of the students' attitudes toward responsibility and morality were modified. The variables accounting for the largest proportion of total variance were the belief components of the responsibility and morality variables. However, the reader should refer to Table 1 with the treatment means for an analysis of the direction of attitude change for two rounds of Ghetto versus the control group. For all significant effects, the means for the first game group are lower than the means for the control group. The control group values represent the experimental population's "base-line" atticudes toward people in general at the time of the study. If reference is made to the instrument in Appendix A, the reader will note that the lower average responses of the game group relative to the control group imply a general pessimism with regard to people's behavior. The game participants were not as willing to believe that people are responsible and moral after the game experience. Did this generalized pessimism remain after ten and eighteen more rounds of the Ghetto game? No, it did not. The tests for the simple effects for the "ten rounds" and "eighteen rounds" groups were not significant for any dependent variables. Again, Table 1 provides the answer to this unexpected result. The subjects playing the game more often begin to "normalize" (approach the control group's means) their attitudes toward people in general. Table 4 contains the subjects' average ratings on the attitude measures for ghetto people by treatment groups. Similar patterns exist for ghetto people and people in general. However, there is an obvious difference in the magnitude of the means; nearly all of the mean ratings for ghetto people
are higher (i.e., more believable and more positive, affectively) than for people in general. Thus, for the sample in the present study (mid-western seniors in high school) ghetto people are more honest, hirdworking, responsible, moral, and law-abiding than people in general. Social desirability in responding must have occurred. Nevertheless, did the experience these subjects had affect their attitudes towards ghetto people? All multivariate and univariate tests of main treatment effects for these attitudes toward ghetto people proved non-significant. There was a tendency, after the first two rounds of the game, for the subjects to lower their high positive reactions to the ghetto related items. From ten to eighteen rounds, their reactions remained high relative to people in general and began approaching the control group mean.

It was originally hypothesized that the subjects' attitudes toward people in general and ghetto people would be modified most effectively with approximately three class periods of the game Ghetto plus an introduction. This effect was not obtained. The greatest attitude change occurred immediately after the introduction plus two rounds of Ghetto. This effect was greatest for students' attitudes toward people in general. Their attitudes toward ghetto people were "abnormally" high. The test instrument and experimental conditions must have induced the students to respond with what they considered to be socially acceptable answers to the items for ghetto people as effectively as their attitudes toward people in general.

As noted in the introduction, studies by Boocock (1963), Garvey and Seiler (1966) and Cherryholmes (1963) found that game participants' attitudes were more "realistic" following the game experience. In the present study, the students rated attitudes toward people in general less positively (affectively) and believed less in the concepts after their first experience with the game. Whether this change resulted in more realistic attitudes is questionable because the treatment group is being compared to a control group that provides "normal" attitudes. The game seemed to induce pessimism with regard to human conduct which may have lead to less positive attitudes toward people in general. In addition, the effect was greatest after one class period of the game, then decreased with subsequent plays of the game. Perhaps the emotional impact of the simulation decreased during increased exposure.

The lack of substantial changes in the subjects' attitudes toward ghetto people was unexpected. Attitude change theory suggests that one's attitude may become more like the attitude one has to express during role-playing exercises. The types of roles one may play in the Ghetto game are such that a player experi-
iences the self-defeating nature of the ghetto. A person may "give up" and start hustling people or become depressed over the number of children he is having and/or the constraints keeping him on welfare. This effect might also cause players to sympathize with ghetto people. If this occurred during the game, their attitudes toward ghetto people, which were highly sympathetic, could reasonably have remained unchanged.

If attitude change in a simulation game depends upon the player's ability to make an analogy between his role and its real-life counterpart (ghet to people in the present study), would this help to explain the present findings? We could assume that the players never really adopted their roles because they had nothing in their past experience that related to the game situation. Perhaps to them ghetto people meant migrant workers. Perhaps their inability to make analogies between the game and real-life lessened the overall effect of the game on their attitudes toward ghetto people.

The findings in the present study suggest that the initial experience with a social simulation game may have the greatest effect on the participants' attitudes toward the phenomenon being simulated. If this finding can be verified by further research, the implication for classroom uses of social simulation games in modifying students' attitudes seems clear; simulation games could be used at the beginning of curriculum units to create more realistic attitudes toward the material being covered in the unit.

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## TABLE 1

MEAN RATINGS ON ATTITUDES TOWARDS
PEOPLE-IN-GENERAL BY TREATMENT GROUPS

| Dependent Variables | Control Group ( $\mathrm{N}=15$ ) | $\begin{aligned} & 2 \text { Rounds } \\ & \text { Of Ghetto } \\ & (N=16) \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 10 \text { Rounds } \\ & \text { Of Chetto } \\ & (\mathrm{N}=17) \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 18 \text { Rounds } \\ & \text { of Ghetto } \\ & (N=15) \end{aligned}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| affect | 11.0 | 6.7 | 8.8 | 9.3 |
| Hardworking: |  |  |  |  |
| belief | 6.7 | 7.4 | 6.8 | 7.1 |
| affect | 9.8 | 5.6 | 8.4 | 7.6 |
| Responsible: |  |  |  |  |
| affect | 9.4 | 5.8 | 8.0 | 8.3 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| affect | 9.6 | 6.9 | 11.4 | 9.9 |
| Law-abiding: |  |  |  |  |
| affect | 9.7 | 6.4 | 8.0 | 8.9 |

NOTE: EACH TREATMENT GROUP RECEIVED A THIRTY-FIVE MINUTE INTRODUCTION TO THE GHETTO GAME ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE STUDY.

TABLE 2

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR MAIN EFFECT OF NUMBER OF PLAYS OF GHETTO

| Dependent Variables | Mean Square | $\begin{gathered} \text { Univariate } \\ F \end{gathered}$ | P Less Than | $\eta^{2}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Honest: belief affect | $\begin{array}{r} 0.92 \\ 48.93 \end{array}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 0.17 \\ & 2.56 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & .92 \\ & .06 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & .01 \\ & .12 \end{aligned}$ |
| Hardworking: bellef affect | $\begin{array}{r} 1.57 \\ 48.63 \end{array}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 0.30 \\ & 2.90 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & .82 \\ & .04 \end{aligned}$ | .02 .13 |
| ```Responsible: bellef affect``` | $\begin{aligned} & 16.32 \\ & 36.83 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 3.59 \\ & 1.70 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & .02 \\ & .18 \end{aligned}$ | .16 .08 |
| Moral: belief affect | $\begin{aligned} & 16.48 \\ & 56.44 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 3.31 \\ & 2.66 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & .03 \\ & .06 \end{aligned}$ | .15 .12 |
| ```Law-abiding: belief affect``` | $\begin{aligned} & 19.38 \\ & 30.23 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & 2.46 \\ & 1.50 \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{aligned} & .07 \\ & .23 \end{aligned}$ | .12 .08 |

Multivariate F-ratio $=1.53, \mathrm{p}<.055$.
NOTE: ALL UNIVARIATE TESTS WERE BASED UPON MULTIPLE F-RATIOS WITH 3 AND 55 DEGREES OF FREEDOM.

## TABLE 3

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR TWO ROUNDS OF GHETTO GAME VERSUS CONTROL.

| Dependent Variables | Mean Square | Univariate F | P Less Than | $\eta^{2}$ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Honest: |  |  |  |  |
| belief | 2.00 | 0.36 | . 55 | . 01 |
| affect | 103.93 | 5.44 | . 02 | . 09 |
| Hardworking: |  |  |  |  |
| belief | 3.81 | 0.74 | . 39 | . 01 |
| affect | 108.29 | 6.47 | . 01 | . 10 |
| Responsible: 3751 |  |  |  |  |
| belief | 37.51 | 8.25 | . 01 | . 12 |
| affect | 93.80 | 4.32 | . 04 | . 07 |
| Moral |  |  |  |  |
| belief | 38.13 | 7.65 | . 01 | . 12 |
| affect | 138.22 | 6.50 | . 01 | . 10 |
| Law-abiding: |  |  |  |  |
| belief | 37.39 | 4.74 3.38 | . 03 | . 07 |
| affect | 68.31 | 3.38 | . 07 | . 06 |

Multivariate F -ratio $=2.59, \mathrm{p}<.01$.
NOTE: ALL UNIVARIATE TESTS WERE BASED UPON MULTIPLE F-RATIOS WITH 1 AND 55 DEGREES OF FREEDOM.

## TABLE 4

means on attitudes towards ghetto people by treatment groups

| Dependent Variables | Control Group $(N=15)$ | 2 Rounds of Ghetto ( $\mathrm{N}=16$ ) | 10 Rounds of Chetto ( $\mathrm{N}=17$ ) | 18 Rounds of Ghetto ( $\mathrm{N}=15$ ) |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Honest: |  |  |  |  |
| belief | 9.33 | 9.12 | 9.18 | 9.87 |
| affect | 16.00 | 15.25 | 14.06 | 18.00 |
| Hardworking: |  |  |  |  |
| belief | 7.80 | 8.06 | 7.53 | 7.33 |
| affect | 11.33 | 10.06 | 9.18 | 11.20 |
| Responsible: 8.73 ( 7.69 er 12 |  |  |  |  |
| belief | 8.73 |  | 8.12 | 8.13 |
| affect | 12.13 | 10.62 | 10.53 | 12.27 |
| Moral: |  |  |  |  |
| belief | 9.20 14.20 | 8.88 11.37 | 8.35 13.65 | 8.33 12.53 |
| affect | 14.20 | 11.37 | 13.65 | 12.53 |
| Law-abiding: |  |  |  |  |
| belief | 9.20 | 8.69 | 9.59 | 10.00 |
| affect | 14.13 | 14.50 | 13.06 | 13.13 |

## Instructions for Questionnaire I

We would like to know your feelings about certain ideas or concepts. We would like you to rate several. ideas on scales (the broken lines between two words shown below) as follows:

People are honest.
true $\qquad$ : $\qquad$ : $\qquad$ : $\qquad$ : $\qquad$ : $\qquad$ : $\qquad$ false

If you feel that the concept being rated (People are honest.) is very closely related to one end of the scale, you should place a checkmark as folluws:
true $\checkmark$ $\qquad$ : $\qquad$ : $\qquad$ : $\qquad$ $:$ $\qquad$ : $\qquad$ false
or
true $\qquad$ : $\qquad$ : $\qquad$ : $\qquad$
$\qquad$
$\qquad$ $: \downarrow$ false

If the concept is quite closely related to one or the other end of the scale (but not extremely), you should place your checkmark as follows:
true $\qquad$

$\qquad$ : $\qquad$ : $\qquad$ : $\qquad$ false
or
true $\qquad$ : $\qquad$ : ___ : $\qquad$
$\qquad$ $: \sqrt{ }:$ $\qquad$ false

If the concept seems only slightly related to one or the other end of the scale (but not closely), you should place your checkmark as follows:


If you consider the concept to be neutral on the scale, then you should place your checkmark as follows:
$\qquad$

You will be rating two types of statements; a complete sentence like "People are honest." followed by a statement of the form "Being honest is:" . You are to rate the concept on the scales below that concept.

Work at a fairly high speed. Do not wiorry or puzzle over individual statements. We want your first reactions to the concepts.

Begin rating the concepts. If you are unsure of the procedure, ask the monitor or teacher. Work through the entire booklet, without looking back. When you have finished, place the questionnaire in the box at the front of the room.

## People are honest.

| true |
| :---: |
| never |
| possible |

Being honest is:

| good |
| :---: |
| foolish |
| harmful |
| wrong |
| important |

People are hardworking.

| true |
| :---: |
| never |
| possible |

Being a hard worker is:


People are responoible.

| true |
| :---: |
| never |
| possible |

Being responsible is:

| good |
| :---: |
| foolish |
| harmful |
| wrong |
| important |

People are moral.

|  | true |
| :---: | :---: |
|  | never |
|  | possible |

Being moral is:


## People are law-abiding.



Being law-abiding 1s:


## Ghetto people are honest.

| true |
| :---: |
| never |
| possible |

In your opinion, for ghetto people, being honest is:

| good |
| :---: |
| foolish |
| harmful |
| wrong |
| important |

Ghetto people are hardworking.

| true |  |
| :---: | :---: |
| never |  |
| possible |  |

In your opinion, for ghet to people, being a hardworker is:

| good |
| :---: |
| foolish |
| harmful |
| wrong |
| important |

## Chetto people are responsible.

| true |  |
| :---: | :---: |
| never |  |
| possible |  |

In your opinion, for ghetto people, being responsible is:


In your opinion, for ghet to people, being moral is:


## Ghetto people are law-abiding.



In your opinion, for ghetto people, being law-abiding is:

harmful _______ : :___ :___ beneficial wrong ________ : $:$ ______ right


END OF QUESTIONNAIRE

