

- Institutional Review Board (submit completed form to Graduate Studies Office)
 Departmental Review Committee (submit completed form to Committee Chair)

Human Research Approval Form

Principal Investigator (must be MSUM faculty or staff): Date: 02/22/2011

Name: Dr. Christine Malone Dragon ID No: 00256185

Department: Psychology Telephone No: 477-2804

Building/Room No: BR 360 G E-mail address: malonech@mnstate.edu

Signature: Christine P. Malone NIH Training? Yes No

Co-Investigator: Attach separate sheet if more than two

Name: [Redacted]

Faculty Graduate Student Undergraduate Student

Department or Program: Psychology

Telephone: [Redacted]

E-mail address: [Redacted]

Dragon ID No: [Redacted]

NIH Training? Yes No

Signature: [Redacted]

Co-Investigator: Attach separate sheet if more than two

Name: _____

Faculty Graduate Student Undergraduate Student

Department or Program: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail address: _____

Dragon ID No: _____

NIH Training? Yes _____ No _____

Signature: _____

Title of study: THE IMPACT OF VIDEO GAMES ON ALTRUISTIC BEHAVIOR

Date submitted: 2/22/11 Project starting date: 3/3/11 Project ending date: 5/4/11

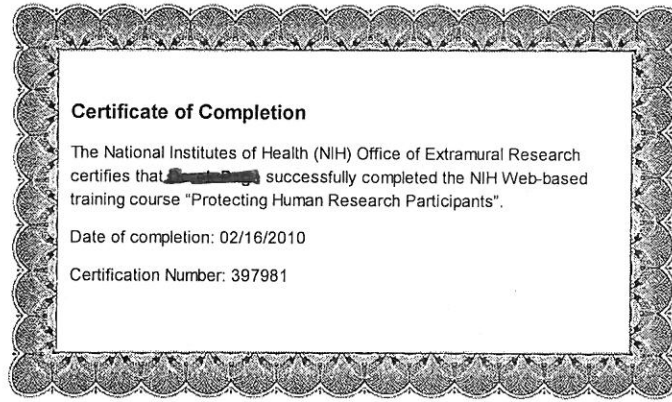
- Request: Exempt Status (complete Request for Exempt Status)
Submit 2 copies (original and 1 photocopy)
- Expedited Review (include reasons below) 3 copies
Submit 3 copies (original and 1 photocopy)
- Full Review
Submit 12 copies (original and 11 photocopies)

Reason for requesting Expedited Review:
No more than minimal risk is involved.

Institutional Review Board Recommendation:

- Exempt Status Approval: Yes No Revise and Resubmit (see attached)
- Expedited Review Approval: Yes No Revise and Resubmit (see attached)
- Full Review Approval: Yes No Revise and Resubmit (see attached)

[Signature] IRB Chair's Signature 02-25-11 Date



PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT
DRAGON ID: ~~_____~~

- Institutional Review Board (submit completed form to Graduate Studies Office)
 Departmental Review Committee (submit completed form to Committee Chair)

Ethical Compliance Questionnaire

Name of Principal Investigator Dr. Christine Malone
Title of study The Impact of Video Games on Altruistic Behavior

Complete all items on this form and/or on separate sheets of paper attached to this form.

I. Subject Recruitment and Requirements

1. What type and how many human subjects will you require? (gender, age, location, affiliation, special characteristics, estimated number required)

Sixty students enrolled in lower-level psychology courses at Minnesota State University Moorhead will participate in exchange for extra credit, contingent upon approval of their course professors. Both males and females will be recruited for the study.

2. Where and how do you propose to recruit subjects?

Participants will be recruited via the sign-up board across from the Psychology department office. The title that will be used is 'Video Games and Social Interaction.'

3. If your study involves subjects in institutions other than MSUM (schools, hospitals, other agencies), how will institutional consent be obtained? A signed letter of permission from an institutional representative is required. Attach copy to proposal.

This study does not require subjects in institutions other than MSUM.

4. How much time will be required of each subject?

About 30 minutes will be required for each subject.

5. Will subjects be compensated for participation? Yes No

If yes, please specify:

Participants will be given extra credit in participating classes, contingent upon approval of their course professors.

6. Is confidentiality assured? Yes No

If yes, how?

It is stated in the Informed Consent that participation for the experiment will remain confidential, and the identity of the individual will not be stored with their data. The Informed Consent Form and the data will be locked in a filing cabinet.

If no, why not?

7. What benefits do subjects obtain by participating?

Subjects will be given extra credit in participating classes, contingent upon approval of their course professors. As well as experiential knowledge of how psychological studies are conducted.

II. Subject Risk

Certain practices are generally to be avoided. If any are included in the proposed study, check the blank next to the appropriate category and justify with attachments.

Deception

Pain, threat, or aversive stimulation

Embarrassment

Invasion of privacy

III. Informed Consent

A copy of the signed Informed Consent form must be given to subjects or guardians. For surveys and questionnaires that do not involve sensitive topics or minors, return of the questionnaire can be taken as implying consent. However, a cover letter must be included which contains the elements of consent and gives enough information about the survey that the subjects can choose to participate or not. Attach copy of cover letter if appropriate.

Minors and/or Adults Incapable of Giving Consent

1. Will your study use minors or adults legally incapable of giving consent? Yes No

If yes, how will permission be obtained from parents or guardians and assent from the subject?

2. Is informed consent form, method of obtaining assent, and/or cover letter attached? Yes No

Consenting Adults

1. If subjects are of legal age and capable of giving consent, how will consent be obtained?

The prospective participants will receive the consent form upon entering the lab. Participants will have adequate time to read the form and all questions will be answered.

2. Is informed consent form or cover letter attached? Yes No

IV. Debriefing

1. Will subjects be provided with feedback about the study? Yes No

If yes, when and how?

Students will receive general information about how participants usually perform on the aspect of helping behavior. They will be given a written debriefing statement and reminded that upon completion of the study, the results will be posted on the bulletin board across from Bridges 360.

2. Is a debriefing form attached? Yes No
Include debriefing statement when applicable.

3. If deception has been used, how will the subjects be informed?

N/A

4. What follow-up supports will be available if subjects experience undesirable consequences of participation?

Undesirable consequences have not been experienced in past studies similar to this one. However, as a precautionary measure, students will be given contact information for the Principle Investigator and for the MSUM Counseling Center.

V. Materials

1. What questionnaires, inventories, tests, or other instruments will be used? Attach copies of investigator-prepared materials or a description of commercially prepared or copyrighted materials.

A rating scale of altruistic behavior will be used, as well as demographic information.

2. Will you make audio-tapes, video-tapes, or photographs of subjects? Yes No
Consent must be obtained from subjects in the informed consent form for these types of materials. Include statements about assurance of confidentiality, the planned use and eventual disposition of these materials (i.e., use of materials at conferences, published research, posting to the internet).

3. What electrical, electronic, or mechanical equipment will be used? If any have been specially constructed or modified for use in this study, provide a description with sufficient detail so that any physical danger may be assessed. Supplementary documents may be attached if necessary.

A TV provided from the Psychology department. A PS3 and the use of the games Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2 and Little Big Planet - See Appendix A for a description of the video games, as well as screenshots.

Clear Form

Federal guidelines require that *all* materials related to the research be retained for at least three years. See current copy of *Code of Federal Regulations* for details.

Minnesota State University Moorhead is an equal opportunity educator and employer.

This information will be made available in alternative format (Braille, large print, audiocassette tape) upon request by contacting Disability Services at 218-477-2652/V or 218-477-2047/TTY. For TTY communication, contact Minnesota Relay Service at 1-800-627-3529.

Abstract

Previous research has documented that playing violent video games has various negative effects on social behavior, in that it causes an increase in aggressive behavior and a decrease in prosocial behavior (Wilson, 2008). In contrast, there has been much less evidence on the effects of nonviolent video games in regards to prosocial behavior (Greitemeyer, 2010). Approximately 90 participants will play one of two video games (Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2, or Little Big Planet) for fifteen minutes. The Self-Report Altruism Scale will be used to measure the impact of video game content on helping behavior. Results will be discussed in the context of Social Learning Theory.


Method

Participants

Sixty students enrolled in lower-level psychology courses at Minnesota State University Moorhead will participate in exchange for extra credit, contingent upon approval of their course professors. Both males and females will be recruited for the study. It is anticipated that the study will be predominately female and white with a university population of 58% female and 94.5% white (MSUM facts).

Materials

Two different video games will be used for this study. Both video games will be played on a PlayStation 3 (PS3); Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2 (MW2) and Little Big Planet. See Appendix A for description of the games and screenshots. The games will be played on a TV borrowed from the Psychology department.



MW2 is intended for mature audiences. MW2 is a very commonly played video game throughout the nation. MW2 has sold over 20 million copies worldwide and is second as the best-selling video game of all time in the United States (Wikipedia). It is a first-person shooter video game. The participant will play the story mode of the game and will start the game assaulting a Russian airport with a terrorist in the game. They will be asked to shoot citizens and police to stay alive until that mission is completed. This game was chosen because a violent game is needed for the study and it is slightly more realistic than other violent video games. Instead of killing mythological creatures, the participant will be asked to kill cops and unarmed citizens. The game will be used to see if there is a difference in self-reported altruistic behaviors immediately after playing this violent game compared to a nonviolent video game – Little Big Planet.

Little Big Planet is a platforming game. A platforming game consist of the character running forward in the scenario with a few different obstacles in the way, with the end result being getting to the finish line. The game revolves around the player's control of a small character, known as a Sackboy or Sackgirl owing to their appearance, in a variety of platforming scenarios. The game features a set of pre-built levels for the player to explore. The game will be used as a nonviolent video game because it provides humor to those who play it. Little Big Planet is also going to be used to see if there is a difference in helping behavior from the participants playing this video game compared to that MW2.

Participants will be given the Self-Report Altruism Scale (see Appendix B) and they will rate twenty questions using a 5-point scale ('never,' 'once,' 'more than once,' 'often,' 'very often') that will measure each participant's willingness to help an individual in various situations (e.g.; I will point out a clerk's error (in a bank, at the supermarket) in undercharging me for an item).

They will provide demographic information about their age, gender, previous gameplay, and two favorite games. The reason why the demographic information is required is because the study will also be looking to see if there is a difference in helping behavior between genders. Participants will also be asked to provide the number of hours that they spend playing video games and what some of their favorite games are, simply for prevention of confounding variables. If a participant is regularly playing video games similar to MW2 or Little Big Planet, they may not be as affected by the gameplay and would thus result in confounding variables.

Procedure

The participants will be tested individually in a quiet laboratory room. The researcher will be in the room with the participant, but will not be watching the participant play the video game. The researcher will be there strictly to answer questions if questions happen to arise. Participants will be randomly assigned to one of the two video game conditions and will play the assigned game for fifteen minutes. After gameplay, participants will complete the Altruism Scale and then the demographic information. Participants will then be given a debriefing form and proof of their participation.

Appendix: Description of Video Games

Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2

Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2 (MW2), is rated M for mature audiences. MW2 is a first-person shooter video game that is played on all game consoles. MW2 has three different types of game play: Cooperative, Campaign, and Multiplayer (Online). Participants will be playing MW2 on a PlayStation 3 and they will play the campaign style of gameplay. The campaign is the story mode where the individual will play the protagonist for a certain mission. The participant will play Joseph Allen in the mission 'No Russian.' The character Joseph Allen will be working alongside the terrorist Vladimir Makarov and will assault a Russian airport, by shooting citizens and police.

Little Big Planet

Little Big Planet is rated E for everyone. The game revolves around the player's control of a small character, known as a Sackboy or Sackgirl owing to their appearance, in a variety of platforming scenarios. A platforming game involves the Sackboy character running in a straight line, with a few different obstacles in the way, but the end result is to finish the platforming scenario. The game features a set of pre-built levels for the player to explore. Sackboy can run, jump, and grab certain objects. These objects can have the designation of being purely for mobility, such as swinging, or they can be pushed, pulled, switched, or operate in other forms of function. The player uses these abilities in several ways: to play and explore the environments that come with the game, which feature platforming elements such as jumping, pushing, grabbing, and running.

Call of Duty: Modern Warfare 2



Little Big Planet



The Self Report Altruism Scale

Instructions: Check the category on the right that conforms to the frequency with which, given you encounter a situation; you will carry out the following acts **based on your feelings right now**.

	Never	Once	More than once	Often	Very often
1. I will help push a stranger's car out of the snow.					
2. I will give directions to a stranger.					
3. I will make change for a stranger.					
4. I will give money to a charity.					
5. I will give money to a stranger who need it (or asked me for it).					
6. I will donate goods or clothes to a charity.					
7. I will do volunteer work for a charity.					
8. I will donate blood.					
9. I will help carry a stranger's belongings (books, parcels, etc.).					
10. I will delay an elevator and hold the door open for a stranger.					
11. I will allow someone to go ahead of me in a lineup (at photocopy machine, in the supermarket).					
12. I will give a stranger a lift in my car.					
13. I will point out a clerk's error (in a bank, at the supermarket) in undercharging me for an item.					
14. I will let a neighbor whom I don't know too well borrow an item of some value to me (e.g., a dish, tools, etc.)					
15. I will buy 'charity' Christmas cards deliberately because I know it is a good cause.					
16. I will help a classmate who I do not know that well with a homework assignment when my knowledge is greater than his or hers.					
17. I will before being asked, voluntarily look after a neighbor's					

pets or children without being paid for it.					
18. I will offer to help a handicapped or elderly stranger across a street.					
19. I will offer my seat on a bus or train to a stranger who was standing.					
20. I will help an acquaintance to move households.					

[Rushton, J. P., Chrisjohn, R. D., & Fekken, G. C. (1981). The altruistic personality and the self-report altruism scale. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 2, 293-302.]

Demographic Information

Gender: Male Female

Age: _____

Approximately how many hours a day do you play video games? _____

Name two of your favorite video games: _____

**Department of Psychology
Minnesota State University Moorhead
Informed Consent Form**

Please read this consent agreement carefully before agreeing to participate in this experiment.

Title of Experiment: Video Games and Social Interaction

Primary Investigator: Dr. Christine Malone, Associate Professor of Psychology

Co-Investigator: Derek Page, undergraduate student in Psychology

Purpose of the experiment: To study if video games impact interactions with other people.

What you will do in this experiment:

You will be asked to play a video game. After the game, you will be asked to answer questions about behavior using a 5-point scale. You will be asked to provide demographic information about your age, gender, and past gaming experience. Note: some video games may contain graphic violence, and are intended for adults ages 18 and older.

Time required: The experiment will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Risks: No lasting effects are expected on participants after playing the video game.

Benefits:

You will acquire first-hand experience in how psychological research is conducted. You also may receive credit in your psychology class for participating in this experiment. At the end of the experiment, you will receive a thorough explanation of the experiment, the hypotheses, and the potential implications of the results of the study. A summary of the results of the study will be posted on the research bulletin board across the hall from the Psychology Department at the end of this semester.

Confidentiality: Your participation in this experiment will remain confidential, and your identity will not be stored with your data. The informed consent form and data will be locked in a filing cabinet.

Participation and withdrawal:

Your participation in this experiment is completely voluntary, and you may withdraw from the experiment at any time without penalty. You may receive credit for participating in accordance with your course instructor's policies. You may withdraw by informing the experimenter that you no longer wish to participate (no questions will be asked).

Contact:

If you have questions about this study, or if you would like to receive a summary report of this research when it is completed, please contact me through Dr. Christine Malone, malonech@mnstate.edu, 477-2804.

Whom to contact about your rights in this experiment:

~~Dr. Ernest Hallford~~, hallford@mnstate.edu, phone 477-4082, Chair, Psychology Department Human Research Committee, or else Dr. Richard Adler, adlerri@mnstate.edu, phone 477-2474, Chair of MSUM Institutional Research Board.

Agreement:

The purpose and nature of this research have been sufficiently explained and I agree to participate in this study. I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time without incurring any penalty.

In signing this agreement, I also affirm that I am at least 18 years of age or older.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Name (print): _____

Debriefing for Video Games and Social Interaction
Minnesota State University Moorhead
Department of Psychology

This study is concerned with the ways video games influence the behavior of individuals after playing for an allotted time. Social theorists have long argued that the media, whether it is a movie, a video game, or television, has become a major influence in the behavior of individuals. Previous research on video games and other media has focused mostly on the influence that violence has on people. Thus the purpose of this project is to develop a procedure for studying the ways in which two different types of video games –violent\or nonviolent, will impact an individual's helping behavior.

In this study, you were asked to play a video game for fifteen minutes. You were then asked to answer questions on an altruistic scale to indicate your willingness to help in that situation, given your current state of mind. All participants played a video game and answered the questions on the altruism scale. We expect to find that the scores on the altruism scale will show that the participants who played the nonviolent video game will report more instances of willingness to help others.

Understanding the relation between video games and their influence on altruistic behavior may help us understand why younger generations are becoming more apathetic and less empathetic. Most of the work on the impact of video games on behavior focuses on violent behavior from violent video games, with very little research focusing on altruistic behavior. With more studies similar to this one, researchers may be able to arrive at an answer regarding how video game content affects our likelihood to help others.

Whom to contact for more information:

If you have questions about this study, or if you would like to receive a summary report of this research when it is completed, please contact me through Dr. Christine Malone, malonech@mnstate.edu, 477-2804.

Whom to contact about your rights in this experiment:

~~Prof. Ernest Hallford, hallford@mnstate.edu, phone 477-4082~~, Chair, Psychology Department Human Research Committee, or else Dr. Richard Adler, adlerri@mnstate.edu, phone 477-2474, Chair of MSUM Institutional Research Board.

Whom to contact if experiencing abnormal effects following this study: Please contact the MSUM Counseling Center at 218-477-2227 if you are experiencing any abnormal biological or psychological effects after participating in this study.

If you are interested in learning more about the topic of this research project, you may want to consult:

Greitemeyer, Osswald, & Brauer. (2010) "Playing Prosocial Video Games Increases Empathy and Decreases Schadenfreude." American Psychological Association, 10, 796-802

Greitemeyer, Tobias, & Osswald. (2010) "Effects of Prosocial Video Games on Prosocial Behavior." Personality and Social Psychology, 98, 211-21

Thank you for your participation!