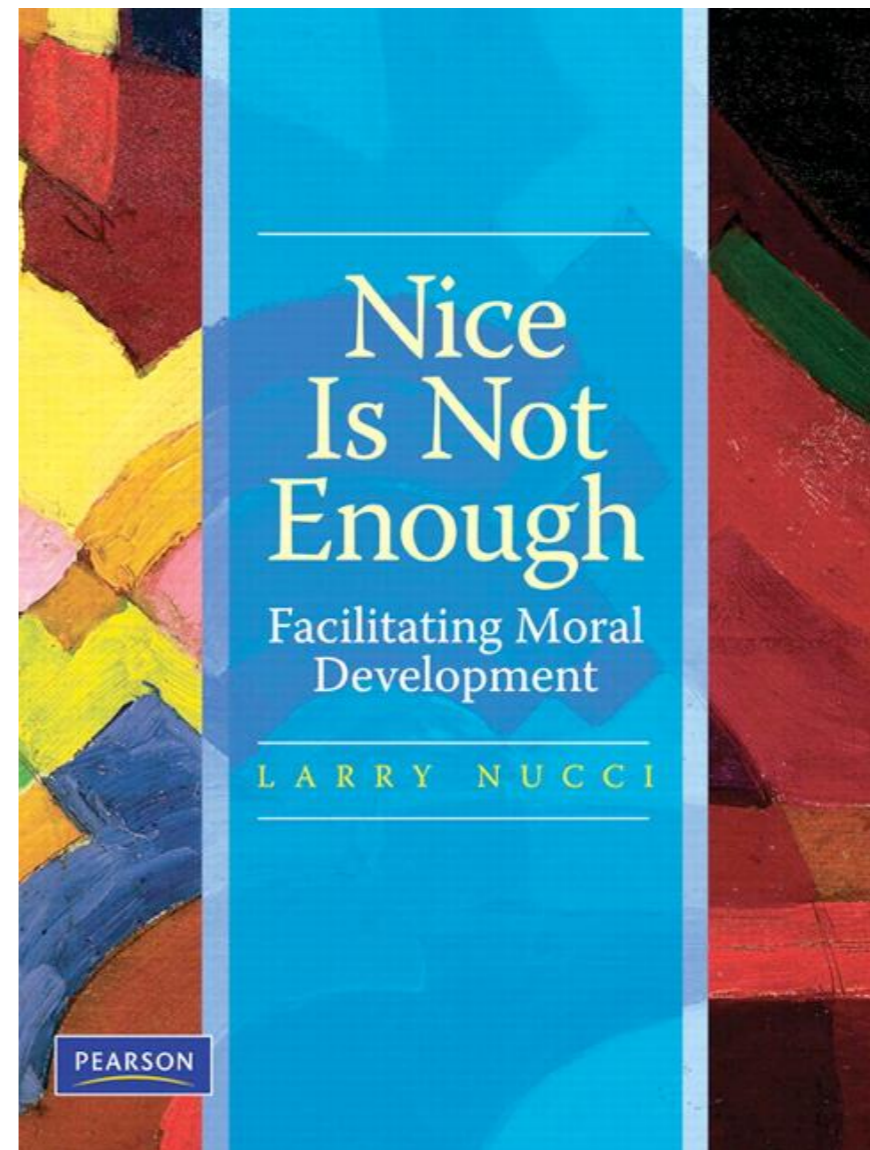


Applying Social Cognitive Domain Theory for Moral Education: An Overview

Larry Nucci
University of California

Project Goals

- Test efficacy of full-scale implementation of domain theory applied to classroom instruction.
- Develop students' moral reasoning, conceptions of societal convention and capacity to coordinate socio-moral judgments in multi-faceted contexts. [Increase the capacity to address moral complexity. (Turiel, 2014)].



Project Goals

- Gain increased understanding of classroom processes and discourse dynamics associated with social cognitive/moral development
- Contribute to development while also connecting with the goals of teachers and schools for academic instruction - 2 for 1.
- Demonstrate sustainability: “*The operation was a research success, but the classroom patient died.*” - Lawrence Kohlberg



Conceptual Framework

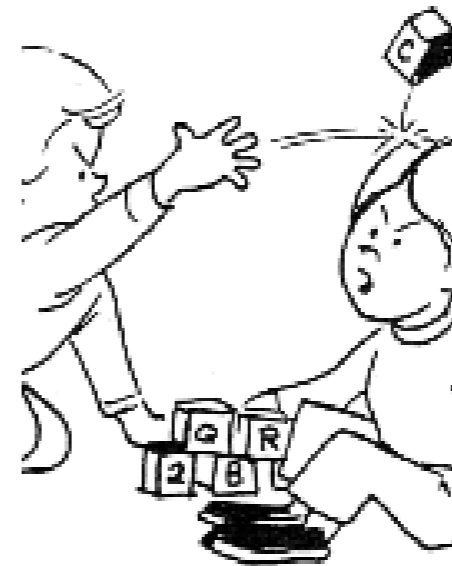
- Domain Theory

- Morality - issues of harm, welfare, fairness, rights

- Convention - norms established by consensus or authority in the service of social organization
functioning of social systems

- Personal - issues of choice privacy

- Overlap - more than one domain within same context (e.g., gender norms privileging males)



Development Within Domains: Convention - (Turiel, 1983)

- **Level 1: Conventions from Authority Provide Social Order.**
Concrete understanding that conventional rules maintain order (e.g., prevent people from running in the halls). Top-down conception of social authority and rules. People in charge make rules that preserve order. People who are not in charge should follow rules so that order is preserved
- **Level 2: Negation of Convention as Part of Rule System.**
Convention now seen as arbitrary and changeable regardless of rule. Evaluation of rule is coordinated with evaluation of the act. Conventions are “nothing but” social expectations and dictates of authority.
- **Level 3: Convention as Mediated by Social System.**
The emergence of systematic concepts of social structure. Convention as normative regulation in systems with uniformity, fixed roles, and static organization. Conventions as constituent elements of social systems.

Age Related Changes in Moral Reasoning (Nucci & Turiel, 2009; Nucci, 2014)

- Level 1: Simple/Straight Forward - straight forward evaluation of right/wrong based on salient moral elements
- Level 2: Uncoordinated/conflicted - appreciation of moral ambiguity; unable to resolve or coordinate moral and non-moral concerns
- Level 3: Coordinated - consideration and weighing of moral and non-moral aspects with resolution

Educational Principles

- Identify issues of morality, convention, personal and overlap within issues covered in regular curriculum “Curriculum oriented moral education.” Schuitema, Dam & Veugelers” 2008
- Frame classroom discussion, and written assignments in alignment with domain: **domain concordant**
- Foster **transactive student discourse** (Berkowitz & Gibbs) that contributes to social cognitive growth and fosters a pattern of “**conversational responsiveness**” in which the moral principles of equality are enacted through conversational acts (Laden, In press.)
- Combine with reflective written assignments



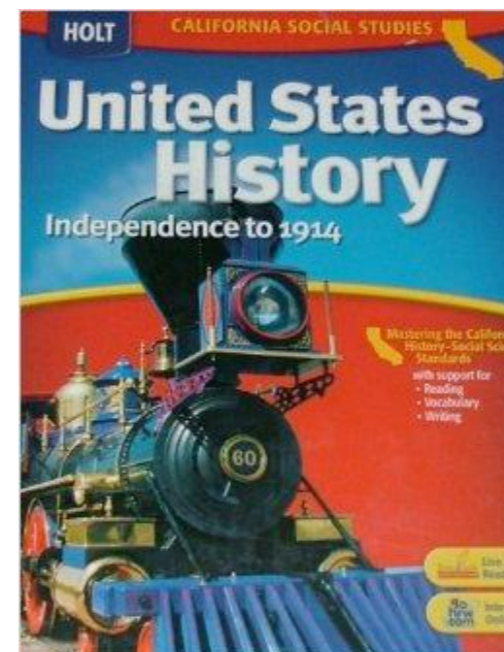
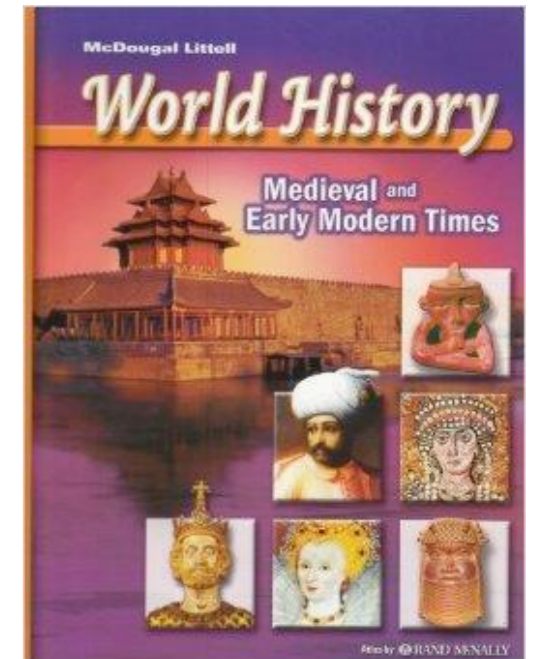
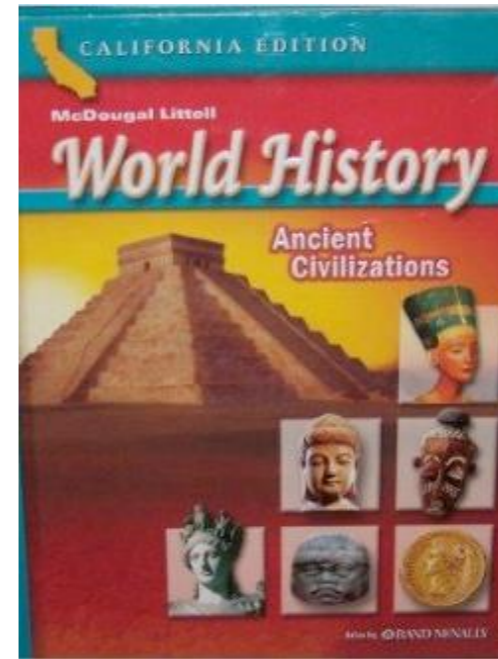
Participants

- Three Middle Schools (grades 6-8) Oakland Unified School District
- 8 participating teachers across grades; 3 control teachers (1 per grade)
- 254 students total
- multi-racial; multi-ethnic - lower to working class SES



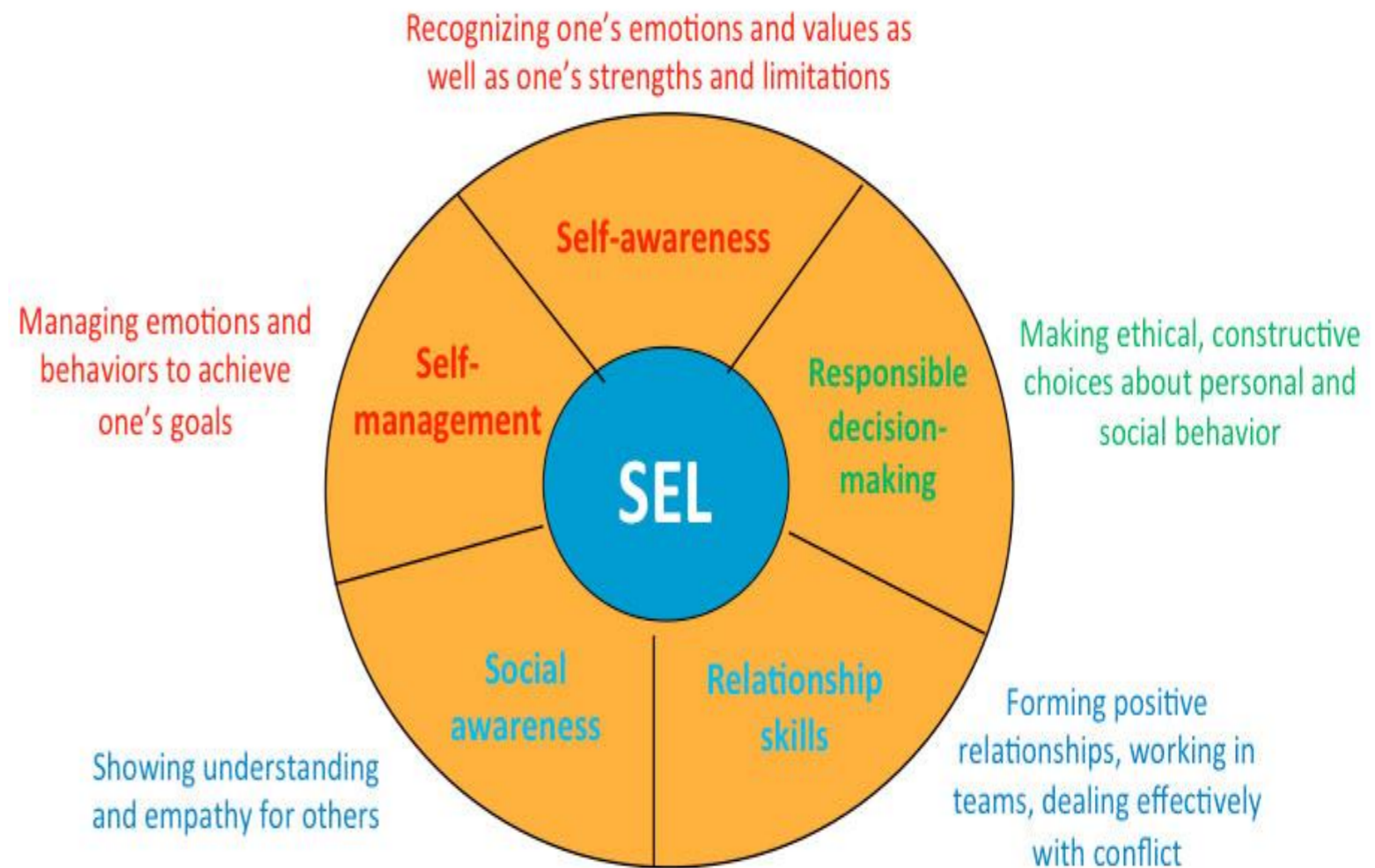
Course Content

- 6th grade World History - Ancient Civilizations
- 7th grade World History - Medieval and early modern times
- 8th grade United States History



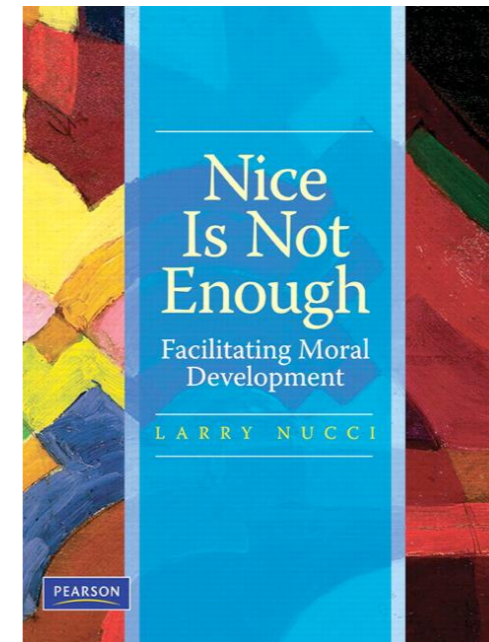
Larger District Context

- District collaboration with CASEL and DSC for SEL for elementary and middle schools to be initiated 2014
- District collaboration with Mills College (Joseph Kahne) for Civic Engagement with High Schools initiated 2013



Teacher Preparation

- Baseline observations of two-four sessions with each participating teacher engaged in instruction with the target class
- Three 2-hour in-service sessions led by Larry Nucci:
 - 1 - Domain theory and developmental changes in moral reasoning and concepts of convention in middle school years;
 - 2 - lesson construction and transactive discussion;
 - 3 - implementation practice
- Fourth session held late in Fall semester to share lessons and mid-year feedback



Ongoing Teacher Support and Observations

- Teachers provided lesson plans in advance by email to the DBME team
- Graduate assistants provided feedback and comments that were then reviewed by team leader before returning to the teacher
- Teacher then taught lesson.
- A sample of up to 5 lessons taught by each teacher was observed and small group discussions audio recorded
- Following each lesson teachers provided a self-evaluation



Sample Lesson Topics

- **Social Convention**

- West African family roles
- Use of titles and forms of address in Ancient Egypt



- **Morality**

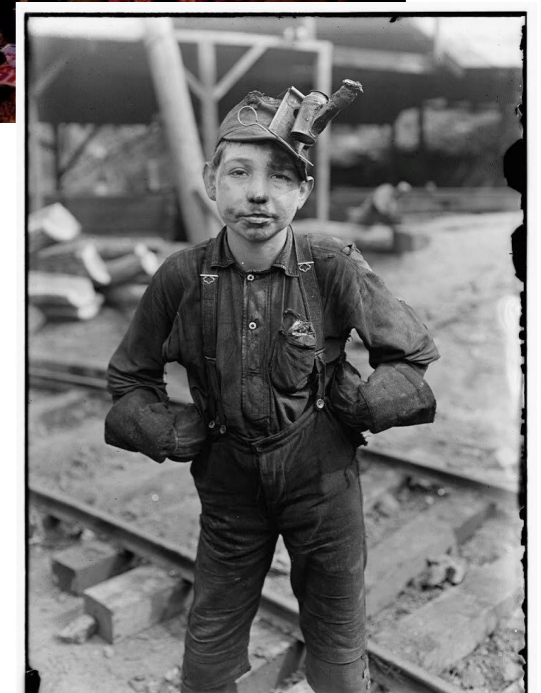
- Boston Tea Party and Occupy Demonstration - destruction of property to protest injustice
- John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry - use of violence to achieve moral goals



- **Domain Overlap - coordination**

- Child labor in the late 1800s
- Caste System in India

- Lesson plans may be accessed at moraledk12.org



Project Data and Assessments

- Observations of control and project classrooms
 - Baseline and post-inservice observations of project classrooms
 - Time series checklists + audio recordings of discussions
- Essay assessments of student moral and conventional levels and coordination of mixed domain (morality and convention) issues - pre and post for project classrooms; year end for control classrooms
- Copies of all student written work associated with project lessons
- Teacher lesson self evaluations
- Teacher evaluations of project - questionnaire and focus group
- Student evaluations of lessons and classes
- Teacher self reports of engagement in lesson use and lesson construction post- intervention.

Thank you

- Domain Based Moral Education web site: moraledk12.org
- Acknowledgements: S. D. Bechtel Jr. Foundation