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The Search for Self/Other Distinctions in the Moral Judgment of Five, Six, and Seven-Year-Olds

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THE SEARCH FOR SELF/OTHER DISTINCTIONS
IN THE MORAL JUDGMENT OF FIVE,
SIX, AND SEVEN-YEAR-OLDS

by

Vivian A. Proffitt

Report of Master's Project
Submitted to the Faculty
of Pedagogical Studies

In fulfillment of requirement for
the degree Master of Arts

University of Texas of the Permian Basin

March 30, 1977

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APPROVAL

We, the undersigned members of the examination committee, certify that we have examined the student and that she has met all requirements for the degree Master of Arts with a major in Early Childhood Education; further, we have examined her on this date and have determined that she has demonstrated a satisfactory knowledge of her field of specialization and that the project report is satisfactory in scope and quality for the degree Master of Arts.

Approved by

Robert D. Shing Chairman

Ronan K. Thompson

Walter J. J. J. J.

George H. J. J. J. Graduate Council Representative

March 31, 1977
Date

ABSTRACT

Ninety-six children, ages 5, 6, and 7 responded to six Piagetian type story pairs that contrasted good intentions/high damage with bad intentions/low damage to determine differences in how the child judges (a) himself, and (b) another child in identical imaginary situations. The story themes included lying, stealing, and property damage. The taped and illustrated story pairs were presented twice during the testing period with (a) self as the central character, and (b) another child as the central character. No support was found for the Piagetian supposition that the child first makes autonomous choices in situations that involve self. However, older children did increase in their use of intentionality in making moral judgments.