From Pen to Podcast: Facilitating Critical Moral Reasoning and Critical Consciousness Through Narratives of Personal Conflict

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Abstract

This qualitative analysis draws on data from a mixed methods study that investigated 10th grade students' shifts in reasoning between handwritten narratives of personal conflicts and their production of digital podcast versions of the same conflicts. Specifically, shifts in perspective, resolution, domains of social reasoning, and domain coordination were compared. This study was implemented with 32 participants in a public high school in British Columbia. Analyzing multiple narrative constructions of the same personal conflict within different mediums is conceptualized as a way of stimulating and illuminating reasoning transformations, including the development of critical moral reasoning and critical consciousness. Key findings include changes in victim perspectives as well as in the use of the conventional domain in students' resolutions of their conflicts in the podcast format. This paper presents in-depth illustrative examples to document the type of reasoning shifts that took place between mediums.

There is an extensive body of literature investigating young people's learning processes as they engage in new media production (e.g. Bruce & Lin, 2009; Curwood & Gibbons, 2009; Ilten-Gee, 2019; Soep & Chavez, 2010). New media education has been used to facilitate and enable critical consciousness raising as young people critique status quo notions of power and normalcy through mainstream media and popular culture (Mirra et al., 2018; Stack & Kelly, 2006). Specifically, incorporating new media *production* into school contexts can increase students' reflexivity on social issues. New media education that enables students to produce counter-narratives that showcase nuance within status quo depictions of the world can facilitate identity development (e.g. Hull et al., 2010) and lead to collective action in communities (Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008).

Engaging in new media production has the potential to change not only how we communicate, but how we think and reason. This study examined how multimedia production facilitated reasoning shifts with regards to students' conceptualizations and understandings of personal conflicts. Specifically, students' reasoning about personal conflicts was compared between two mediums: pen and paper, and podcast. This study proposes that constructing personal narratives in multiple mediums has the potential to stimulate shifts in reasoning and move students towards critical moral reasoning and the development of critical consciousness. These concepts will be elaborated further below.

In this study, high school students were instructed to handwrite narratives about personal conflicts or tough decisions in their lives. Then they engaged in transforming those narratives into digital podcast episodes. The primary research questions for this study were: (a) What reasoning shifts occurred between a handwritten version of a personal conflict, and the podcast version of the same conflict? (b) What led students to, or prevented them from coming to critical conclusions in their podcasts? (c) How can critical consciousness and critical moral reasoning be conceptualized in the context of producing podcasts? The present study hypothesized that interacting with other people in one's community, conducting independent inquiry, and creating new multimedia compositions can lead to changes in how students construe their own conflicts. Specifically, it was hypothesized that students would draw on more domains of reasoning in their podcasts than in their narratives, include more characters and different types of characters in their podcasts, tell their stories from different perspectives, and come to different resolutions in their podcasts than in their narratives.

Theoretical Framework: Narrative Moral Agency

Personal narratives are positioned in this study as an educational tool, as well as an activity that can lead to changes in reasoning. As we construct narratives about ourselves and our actions we have the opportunity to take a moral stance on issues and identify with what we think is good and right about the world (McAdams, 1996; Ochs & Capps, 1996). Pasupathi and Wainryb (2010) argued that each time a young person narrates a morally relevant event, they have the chance to align their actions with their moral beliefs and values. Pasupathi and Wainryb's theory of narrative moral agency (2010) suggests that in order to become moral agents, people must reconcile their morally relevant actions with their moral beliefs and values, and that often this can be done through narratives of morally relevant events.

Their theory of narrative moral agency draws on social cognitive domain theory (Smetana, Jambon, & Ball, 2014; Nucci, Turiel, & Roded, 2017; Turiel, 1983) to define moral, social conventional, and personal events and identify justifications within participants' interview responses. Pasupathi and Wainryb asked: How do children use their own beliefs and desires to

make sense of their experiences? They wrote:

> Defined in this way, when people narrate morally relevant experiences, they engage in constructing an account of actions and consequences that also includes beliefs, desires, and emotions. Each time people engage in that constructive process, they further their understanding of their own and others' moral agency. They may reinforce their grasp of the complexity of individuals, situations, and judgments. They may strengthen their conviction that good people can do harmful things and remain, on balance, good people. They may enhance their capacity to be forgiving of their own, and others', harm. (2010, p. 65)

Their theory serves as a framework for connecting narratives to development within domains and thinking about domain coordination (defined below) as an ongoing process that can continue to become more sophisticated as we tell more complicated, nuanced stories about our lives. Narratives, therefore, can be conceptualized both as a useful tool for gaining insight into how children are making sense of their worlds, as well as a method for evolving those understandings.

Pedagogical Frameworks

This paper draws on two pedagogical frameworks that have transformative goals: domain-based moral education and critical pedagogy. Both of these fields strive to provide students with the opportunity and skills to become critically-aware, justice-oriented human beings that can influence their own communities. These two fields are rooted in very different assumptions and practices, but their goals are complementary. Both frameworks seek to foster critical reasoning transformations in students. These transformations occur when someone updates or refines their reasoning on an issue by taking new information into account, re-examining old assumptions about the status quo, and coming to a conclusion that is aware of structural and systemic forces at play and makes a thoughtful claim or judgment.

Domain-based moral education. From the perspective of domain-based moral education, this transformation is called developing a critical moral perspective. Domain-based moral education (DBME: Nucci, 2009; Nucci et al., 2014; Midgette et al., 2017) is rooted in findings from social cognitive domain theory, which is briefly explained here since the subsequent analysis draws on codes that refer to this theory.

Social cognitive domain theory (Smetana et al., 2014; Nucci et al., 2017; Turiel, 1983) research has shown that our abilities to reason about issues like fairness, harm, rights, social conventions, and personal choice, develop over time and through interactions with our world.

Research from this theory has shown that as children, we are interpreting our surroundings and making subtle distinctions between types of social actions. We come to understand that hitting other people is wrong—not only because there is a rule about it, but also because when we hit other people, they feel hurt and sad. Actions with inherent consequences—having to do with harm and welfare, fairness, and rights—do not need a rule to be wrong or right. This is the moral domain of social reasoning. Other actions do need a rule, such as raising your hand to speak in class. Violating this rule is wrong in a different way—it is only wrong because of the rule, or norm in place. Children make these judgments about cultural and religious norms, as well, distinguishing between those "rights" and "wrongs" that depend on a rule and those that do not. This is the social conventional domain of social reasoning.

From a young age, social cognitive domain theory research presents evidence that kids are resisting the conflation of morality and convention. In middle school and early adolescence especially, children come to claim certain actions as falling under their own jurisdiction—matters of lifestyle choice and preference (e.g. who I want to be friends with). We start to view some social actions as separate from moral and conventional obligations. These issues are in the personal domain. As we get older, the situations and decisions we face become more complicated and multifaceted. An issue that appears moral to one person, for example eating meat, appears conventional to another. We might be working from different factual assumptions, and end up coordinating, subordinating, or prioritizing these concerns in different ways—a process called *domain coordination*. As we receive new information, new facts, meet new people, our judgments and understandings of issues will change.

The takeaway, however, is that there are different ways for actions to be *right*— right in terms of fairness, harm and welfare, right in terms of social norms and conventions, and right in terms of "my choice." These distinctions become a cognitive resource for resisting unjust aspects of our society and pushing back against social conventions and norms that need to be revised or updated.

Domain-based moral education claims that our understandings within the moral, personal, and conventional domains can be stimulated through activities like transactive peer discourse (Berkowitz & Gibbs, 1983; Nucci et al., 2014) and domain-concordant teaching (Nucci & Weber, 1991). The goal of domain-based moral education is fostering critical moral reasoning, which includes the ability to draw on all three domains of social reasoning to make judgments and decisions. In adolescence, this specifically entails using moral understandings to evaluate conventional, status quo reasoning, and expanding our personal domain while navigating moral and conventional obligations. Critical moral reasoning means being able to coordinate between multiple concerns in moments of dilemma or conflict, evaluate facts and new information adapt one's reasoning to accommodate new information, and to view oneself

as a moral agent. Recently, Ilten-Gee and Nucci (2018) linked the ideas of Mikhail Bakhtin (1981) to the principles of domain-based moral education in order to expand upon teachers' abilities to operationalize this framework of moral education. One of Bakhtin's key principles was heteroglossia, or embracing multiple, varied voices and opinions. In order to embrace heteroglossia, one needs to cultivate a dialogic mindset—a mindset that welcomes challenges to previous assumptions and is willing to adapt to new information.

Critical pedagogy. The second pedagogical framework used in this study is critical pedagogy—originating with Brazilian educator, theorist, and activist Paolo Freire. For Freire, education also revolved around fostering critical reasoning transformations, which he called critical consciousness. The work of Freire gives us a guide for thinking about education and pedagogy in the face of student adversity and oppression. According to Freire (1970; 1973), the challenge for students facing oppression is to view the circumstances of their own reality in a critical light. Liberation from oppression, he argued, requires an activation of one's critical consciousness—seeing reality as something that is not inevitable, but can be transformed (1970). Developing a critical consciousness is described as a process of waking up to the contradictions that exist in one's life and in the world around us—for example, disparities in race, class, gender, ability, or sexual orientation, and changing the explanations that you hold about why things are the way things are, to explanations that rely on facts and history. Critical consciousness is a more urgent form of critical reasoning transformations, because it stems from students' immediate circumstances that involve oppression.

Freire advocated for "critical and liberating dialogue" which helps those who are oppressed realize anew the injustice of their circumstances, and "find the oppressor out." Educators, if they are to engage in humanizing pedagogy, must include the oppressed in constant dialogue. He wrote, "Attempting to liberate the oppressed without their reflective participation in the act of liberation is to treat them as objects which must be saved from a burning building; it is to lead them into the populist pitfall and transform them into masses which can be manipulated" (Freire, 1970: 65). While drawing on critical pedagogy, I am aware of critics like Ellsworth (1989), who argued, with a sentiment similar to Freire's argument, that attempts at critical pedagogy can fall short if educators seek an "emancipatory" experience for students but fail to interrogate the privilege present in the classroom and the partial nature of each voice—including the teacher's.

Duncan-Andrade and Morrell (2008) detail several teaching strategies that attempt to follow Freire's example. They described having their students act as ethnographers and interview people in their neighborhoods. They used hip-hop music side by side with canonical literature, let their students take the lead in making magazines about issues that were important to them, and supported their students in advocating for change in their community. These

strategies ground classroom learning in students' experiences, re-position students as experts, embrace digital media and technology as helpful tools for creating counternarratives, and provide opportunities for transforming students' lived realities. These methods are designed to foster critical consciousness in students.

It is argued here that the reasoning transformations articulated in these frameworks (critical moral reasoning and critical consciousness) are complementary. Each framework has elements to share with the other. Domain-based moral education can illuminate complex cross-domain reasoning in multimedia narratives, like podcasts, and point to developmentally relevant, sociomoral conflicts that pertain to the curriculum. Critical pedagogy introduces strategies like inquiry, investigation, and media making as relevant to moral reasoning and development, and presents a mandate for connecting moral education to students' own circumstances.

The design of this study draws on the idea of bringing students' own personal conflicts into the learning environment from critical pedagogy, and relies on the analytic tools of domain-based moral education, like domain definitions and domain coordination, to identify changes between mediums. Key components of each framework are listed in Table 1.

Critical Moral Reasoning	Critical Consciousness
Domain coordination	Awareness of root causes of structural / systemic inequality
Dialogic mindset	Ability to connect personal struggles to societal struggles
Transactive Reasoning	Collective inquiry that leads to action (praxis)
Evaluating new facts and information	Agency in fighting injustice / counternarratives
Heteroglossia	Evaluating facts and new information

Table 1: Key Components of Critical Moral Reasoning and Critical Consciousness

Why the podcast? The current study argues that the podcast is a unique form of storytelling that has the potential to stimulate moral reasoning. First, the podcast relies on multiple voices to communicate a message, which means the producer must engage in a heteroglossic reasoning process. This concept aligns with social domain theory's claims that our conceptions of morality, convention, and personal preferences develop as we interact with our worlds and come into contact with lifestyles, opinions, and ideas different from our own. The podcast is an ideal forum for bringing together multiple voices that may represent different domains of social knowledge, to tell a story.

Secondly, the act of remixing existing media clips presents an opportunity to employ a critical media literacy sensibility. If a student was investigating the issue of gender inequality, he or she could use examples of advertisements that perpetuate gender stereotypes or include clips of popular songs. This positions the producer as someone with the opportunity to create a counternarrative, an essential tool in critical pedagogy. Recognizing mainstream media messages as capable of perpetrating moral harm simply because they are taken for granted as social conventions, is an example of multidomain reasoning.

Methods

This mixed-methods study was conducted at a public secondary school in the lower mainland of Vancouver, British Columbia. The author collaborated with Ms. C., the classroom teacher of record, to create and implement this intervention that took place in two Grade 10 English Language Arts classrooms. The average age of students was 191 months (or 15.9 years old). The standard deviation in months was 3.27. Although racial demographic information is not consistently collected in Canadian schools, the diversity statement for this public school's website reads:

> Diversity at [Focus School] further includes the second largest secondary school enrollment of Indigenous students in Vancouver and over 52 languages spoken in students' homes. 12% of our students are identified as having special needs. [Focus School] provides an English Language Learning program to support approximately 60 students including new Canadians and International students. [Focus School] receives funding for Enhanced Services. The School Meal program provides subsidized hot lunches for more than 200 students in need…

The province of British Columbia reports 6% of students identified as Aboriginal, and 2% were English language learners; 19.5% of students spoke Cantonese as their home language, 7.6% spoke Vietnamese, and 4.9% spoke Tagolog at home.

Students that participated in this study disclosed a range of positionalities, including coming from immigrant families, refugee families, being adopted, identifying as multiracial, having learning differences, and being homeless, as well as coming from privileged backgrounds. Critical pedagogy is traditionally implemented with populations that are experiencing oppression. This study proposes, however, that individuals' personal conflicts can be utilized to stimulate the development of critical moral reasoning and the development of more critically conscious perspectives, even though some participants may not characterize themselves as experiencing oppression.

Institutional Review Board approval was obtained from University of California, Berkeley. Data was collected between November (2017) and March (2018). Thirty-two students participated in total (13 males, 17 females). In Classroom 1, seven males and five females participated (n=12), and in Classroom 2, six males and 14 females participated (n=20). Leading up to the start of data collection, the researcher worked with Ms. C. to plan the intervention unit. Teaching responsibilities throughout the unit were divided between Ms. C. and the researcher. Rubrics were created for the pen-and-paper narratives and the podcasts.

Lesson procedures. This storytelling unit was built into Ms. C.'s English language arts curriculum. Students were asked to respond in writing to the following prompt: *Write about a time when you faced a really tough decision or conflict. It should be an experience that you can remember in detail or is ongoing and is important to you. If you cannot think of a personal conflict or experience, perhaps something that you witness everyday troubles you, or makes you frustrated.* Over the next three class periods, Ms. C. led activities about components of effective narratives, including imagery, detail, description, emotion, and dialogue. She used materials and example narratives from a book called *Lessons that Change Writers* by Nancie Atwell (2002). These were activities that Ms. C. would have normally done during a narrative writing unit.

The researcher then taught lessons on interviewing techniques, scripting, tone of voice, and incorporating media and music into podcasts. Students were guided through how to download a free voice-recording app onto their mobile phones to do their interviews. A few voice recorders were loaned to students who did not have mobile phones with voice recording capacity. Students were given time with the classroom iPads and computers to research their topics, in case they needed outside information. For homework, students were instructed to collect interviews, background noise, and scenes using their recording devices. Once students had collected outside interviews, they were assigned a class iPad to produce and assemble their podcasts. The researcher led a series of class periods about exploring the functions of GarageBand. After this, students had seven class periods where they worked on transferring files into GarageBand, doing interviews with peers in class, editing, and assembling their podcasts.

Data Collection and Analysis

Elements of data that were collected included: students' written narratives, audio recordings of students' peer discourse, peer discourse reflection sheets, classwork from podcast planning activities, digital podcast files, initial and final interviews with students, field notes and analytic memos.

Students' podcasts were transcribed using a five-column multimodal transcription format (example shown in Table 2). The narrator's voice was the central object of study and was

positioned in the left-most column after the time codes. This indicated that the narrator had editorial control over the other characters and voices in the podcast, including how their words were edited and positioned. Time codes were noted on the far left, then the author's narration, then media and music, then the author's questions to interviewees, and finally interviewees' responses on the far right. This mode of transcription provided a visual aid for noticing how often the author transitioned between different sections of the podcast with narration. An Excel spreadsheet allowed the researcher to merge multiple cells together, if the music continued underneath several seconds of narration or interview. Whenever possible, the specific song was researched on the Internet and exact lyrics, the name of the artist, and a link to the song was included in the spreadsheet cell.

Time code	Narration	Music / sound	Narrator's interactions w/ Interviewees	Interviewees
1:15	Let's see how my dad feels about LGBTQ	Blackbird (guitar)		
1:30			Do you know what LGBTQ stands for?	
1:45				I think so

Table 2: Example of Multimodal Transcription

Coding of narratives and podcasts. The coding process for this data drew on existing theoretical categories and prefigured codes (Creswell, 2013), such as Domain of conflict (moral, conventional, personal), Psychological states, and Perspective. The researcher also engaged in the process of emergent coding, which led to the creation of new theoretical codes, such as Positioning, Type of interview question (for podcasts), and Connections to social issues (for narratives and podcasts).

Students' narratives and podcasts were coded for the same elements. Each subcode of the following overarching categories was treated as a binary variable (either yes or no): domain of conflict, perspective, resolution, domain of resolution, coordination, psychological states, emotions, time setting, and narration strategies.

The researcher read through the handwritten narratives multiple times, making notes about domains used, emergent themes such as conflicted or resolved endings, strong opinions, and type of conflict. During the first listen, the researcher took notes on the narration style, the type of interviewees, the framing of the conflict, and the sound elements that were included were

documented. Certain coding schemes only applied to podcasts, such as number of interview questions, positioning, type of media used, etc. A secondary coder was recruited to code 30% of the data in order to establish reliability for these coding schemes.

This paper offers illustrative case studies of two students, Emory and Iguana (pseudonyms), and the transformation of their handwritten narratives into podcast episodes. This analysis process entailed comparing the coding of their handwritten narratives to the coding of their podcast, identifying differences, and then engaging in a close analysis of the text of the narrative and the transcription of the podcast. Field notes and interview transcriptions were used to triangulate these findings. Emory and Iguana were selected as examples because they demonstrated significant changes between their narratives and podcasts.

Results

The qualitative case studies demonstrate the types of changes that occurred between mediums (handwritten narrative and podcast), and how a student's design choices and interactions may have influenced their shifts in reasoning.

Illustrative Case Study: Emory

Emory (pseudonym), a Grade 10 student, sat in the back of the classroom with her two close friends. She demonstrated her creativity in unique ways throughout the project, even inserting clips of herself playing the guitar and singing "Blackbird" by the Beatles, into her podcast as a series of musical interludes.

Narrative. Emory's narrative was a rant about her father, whom she called racist, sexist, homophobic—guilty of every "ism" possible. This conflict was coded as drawing on the moral and conventional domains, because she expressed that her father was offensive (moral harm), and because she referenced norms of different generations (social conventions). In her narrative, she especially took issue with how brazenly her dad would say things that she found offensive *in front of her*, as if he did not consider her feelings or her identity. Throughout the narrative she made sure to acknowledge that she was grateful to him for raising her, and she makes several caveats before criticizing his behavior, writing, "I'm not saying everyone has to love how a lot of people are embracing who they are…" and "It's hard though because he's family," and even, "I could understand how he feels and of course his opinions are valid, and being raised by another figure from a completely different generation is definitely going to affect his opinion." These statements gave the reader an impression that Emory felt obligated to acknowledge external influences on her dad's behavior.

Emory's narrative was coded as coming from both a victim and critic perspective. Aside from the statements mentioned above, she wrote in a frustrated tone: "I guess what drives me

the most crazy is that he won't even give these people a chance. We are literally all the same underneath our skin and it is absurd that we treat each other according to our skin colokjr or gender!!!" She complained about things her dad had said directly to her. She wrote, "Does it ever occur to him that he shouldn't say this to me or just out loud at all?" and "Sometimes I can't even tell him something because I'm afraid of the racist comment / joke he'll make." Her narrative made it clear that she was struggling between her belief that everyone should get to think what they want, and her moral concerns about her dad's behavior.

Bakhtin describes how we wrestle with the influence of competing discourses in trying to figure out what we believe. This struggle is present in Emory's narrative. She wrote, "Even sometimes I feel myself talking like him and his opinions coming through me, like I have no control." Bakhtin wrote that we are always struggling to distinguish our own internal voice from authoritative voices that may be more representative of the status quo or mainstream ideology during our process of ideological becoming (1981). This is similar to a process of domain coordination (e.g. Turiel & Gingo, 2017)—she is weighing concerns that have moral justifications against concerns that have conventional justifications. Emory shows us a developmental struggle; she feels herself adopting her father's words, and she is upset about it.

It is clear from her narrative that Emory wants her father to adapt to what she considers the general air of acceptance in 2018. She wrote, "He needs to get cultured!!!" and "I don't want to change him, I simply want to help him learn about what he's missing. I want him to evolve." These are conventional concerns about her father and how he adheres or does not adhere to the norms of her peer group and her community. She also wrote, "I don't know how to help him though," which resulted in the narrative's resolution being coded as unresolved.

Podcast. Emory's podcast introduction showed that she was on a mission to expose her dad's bigotry. She first asks her dad, "Do you know what LGBTQ stands for?" And then we hear him stumble as he tries to remember what the acronym means. This was a question that packed a punch—she was able to make him look ignorant on the subject of LGBTQ identity. However, her father failed to fulfill these expectations (at least while the recorder was on). Instead of expressing distaste or disgust for members of the LGBTQ community, he says in the podcast, "I don't know how to address a transgender person in the world so it's uh it's kind of uh confusing, weird, awkward."

Immediately after this, Emory says in her narration, "Throughout the interview with my dad I discovered that he is not so much *against* transgenders but he is just confused about what to call them after they have transitioned." This response is an acknowledgement that she might have mischaracterized her father's views. Emory did not *have* to include bits of tape that made her father sound more accepting than she believed he actually was. This design choice indicates an openness to discovering something new. She took his words into account when deciding on

her narration, instead of sticking with her original case against him.

In her conclusion, Emory says, "It is also very evident to me that my dad doesn't have as much knowledge on subjects like these as he could so I think it is important for him to do his research and understand why people feel like they are a boy trapped inside a girl's body." In this final judgment, she does not let her dad "off the hook" for his behavior. She demonstrated a dialogic mindset by adjusting her reasoning, and then presented a solution that does not vilify him (as she did in her narrative), but suggests why his reasoning is still inadequate. Since she eliminated her own anecdotes about feeling personally victimized by her father from the podcast, she transformed his transgression from being one of interpersonal harm, to being ignorant, and needing more information. She now faults him for failing to actively seek out perspectives from people he does not understand—she gives him the benefit of the doubt that if he *understood*, then he would accept.

Instead of including her personal grievances in her podcast, she opted to include the voice of a friend from the LGBTQ community, demonstrating a heteroglossic approach to storytelling. Emory interviewed her friend Bethany who identified as pansexual. She asked Bethany simple, overarching questions about dealing with other peoples' hate and ignorance. Choosing to omit her own frustration signifies that Emory understood the greater consequences of her father's behavior. Bethany represented the people that her father may have been harming on a daily basis with his offensive comments. This design choice was perhaps a recognition that the issue of homophobia / transphobia impacts others more severely than it impacts herself, connecting her own interpersonal story and a larger social issue.

For her podcast, Emory she did not look to any factual sources of information to gain knowledge about the issue of discrimination against the LGBTQ community. She also did not try to prove her father wrong or convince him to think another way. She also did not confront her father with Bethany's testimony, and force him to reckon with these points of view. She in fact spares him from the systematic take-down that she set up for him at the beginning of the podcast. She was gathering information from two opposing camps and trying to make sense of it. She was *not* on a mission to persuade, convert, or prove.

The conclusion of Emory's podcast entailed a mini-monologue that praised Bethany's assertion to "be yourself" and ignore hate, because you cannot expect to be liked by everyone. She said, "[Bethany's] answer was she just needed to remember to be herself even if not everyone likes that… everyone is unique and it is so important to not change yourself for someone else." Instead of condemning homophobia, she looked inward and re-centered the conclusion within the personal domain. Her resolution was coded as an assertion of truths and values. She veered away from the moral concerns and focused on what this story meant for her own life. She opted to resolve her podcast by asserting that everyone should "be themselves."

The contradiction in this conclusion is: What happens when one's beliefs cause moral harm? However, Emory's conclusion aligns with what research shows is a primary dilemma for adolescents—finding coherence between one's core self (thoughts, beliefs, and values) and one's outward projection of this self (actions, speech, self expression) (Nucci, 2009). Emory asserts that everyone should strive to be the most authentic version of themselves.

Producing a podcast provided Emory with a context in which to interrogate her father about his ideas about the LGBTQ community. Table 3 shows how Emory's narrative and podcast were coded in relation to four key variables.

VARIABLE	NARRATIVE	PODCAST
Type of conflict	Problematic relationship / Social norm	Problematic relationship / Social norm
Perspective	**Victim** / Critic	Critic
Resolution	Unresolved	**Assertion of truths and values / Refined stance**
Domain of resolution	Moral	Moral / Personal
*Bold codes indicate changes between mediums.		

Table 3: Codes for Emory's Handwritten Narrative and Podcast

In terms of critical pedagogy, an educator could use this podcast as a starting point to begin a discussion about freedom of speech, and the importance of our everyday language—points that Emory brought up in her interview.

Illustrative Case Study: Iguana

Iguana—a goofy 10th grader, full of jokes and beloved by his classmates—could not stay quiet for even 30 seconds. Sometimes during class his friends would just shout at him to "Shut up!" with huge smiles on their faces. He participated willingly in activities and demonstrated complex thinking, and was often called on to provide examples and answers to tough questions by Ms. C. When he was interviewed at the very end of the project, he said he was very worried that he would fail the project because all of his data was stored on his phone, and the night before he had dropped the phone into the toilet. Iguana got an extension on the project and finished a week later.

The conflict he chose to focus on was the observation that his friends had been starting to use drugs—he was even offered cocaine once. In this illustrative example, we will explore the details of his narrative and podcast, and how they demonstrate aspects of critical consciousness and critical moral reasoning.

Narrative. Iguana's narrative was a description of an event that took place at the beginning

of high school. He sets the scene by explaining, "All my life I have been told 'Don't do drugs, [Iguana]' or 'people who do drugs are never going to be successful' and I believed it for a long time." But shortly after starting high school, Iguana notices that some of his straight-A friends are doing hard drugs, and still getting A's. He mentioned being surprised, and racing home to research on his phone whether marijuana made you smarter. Iguana identified examples from his own life that stand in exception to the dominant narratives he has taken for granted. He is questioning the legitimacy of the "rule" that has been handed down through authoritative voices: Don't do drugs. During the ages of 14–16, social cognitive domain theory suggests young people are more likely to become critical of social conventions as being unnecessary or arbitrary rules of society. It is interesting to witness Iguana, in a sense, think to himself: "Wait a minute, were my parents lying to me?"

His narrative then describes walking with a close friend after school, when his friend pulled out a Ziploc bag from his backpack. Iguana mistakenly thought it was flour. The friend said, "This is cocaine my dude." The friend asked if Iguana wanted to "get lit" with him. Then Iguana writes, "I said yes and now I'm completely addicted. Just kidding, I said no." He added one more sentence to the narrative in which he attributes his strength to say no to the drug prevention education he received.

This sarcastic tone added humor to the story, and also made light of a potentially serious issue. The reader gets the impression that Iguana is straddling two worlds: he is "freaking out" at first that his friends are doing drugs—because it goes against everything he has been taught. He is torn between making a big deal out of something, and downplaying it. It is not the typical story of peer pressure and teenage drug use. However, Iguana had identified a shift within the social norms of his friend group, and was wondering how to feel about it. This is why his handwritten narrative was coded as pertaining to both prudential and conventional domains. The prudential domain relates to issues of health and safety—actions that one believes carry consequences due to facts of nature (e.g. gravity, germs, etc.). For example, the decision to rest while one has the flu is not a moral, personal, or conventional issue, but a prudential one.

Podcast. Iguana chose to eliminate this personal story of being offered cocaine from his podcast, and instead explore teenage drug use as a larger social issue. He nods to the fact that his friends are using drugs, but does not include the cocaine story. He says, "Recently I've noticed that some of my friends have been trying out drugs and I think that's alright as long as they're not doing anything like cocaine." Up front, he lets the listener know that he believes in personal choice (drawing on the personal domain of reasoning), and he is not judging his friends for smoking weed. Even though he leaves out his own "saying no" experience, he does not erase himself from the investigation. He used his own experiences and reflections to guide the podcast.

Iguana's podcast is unique because of how many different people he interviewed, and how he went about doing it. He used techniques that no other participant used, resulting in a podcast that keeps the listener interested and curious. He gathered a diverse collection of voices to triangulate his argument. While in the narrative, the only other voice in the story was that of the friend who asked him to "get lit," the podcast features a friend who also said "no" to drugs. This may be because it was impossible to get the drug-using friend to go on the record for the podcast, or because he decided to change the focus from one incident to a larger phenomenon. He also interviewed the vice principal of his school for an adult's perspective on teen drug use. Iguana was one of only two participants that interviewed a school faculty member. He asked the Vice Principal what she thought about teens using drugs. At first she says, "An Advil is okay, you have a headache. But using um- are you talking about alcohol and marijuana?" He says, "Cocaine." She responds instantly, "Cocaine never. Don't do it. No I- I- I'm pretty clear on that. Um substances that are now legal, or soon to be legal, with discretion and the older you are the better just because your brain's not fully developed yet. It's not fully developed until you're 25." (For context, since this podcast was made, marijuana has been legalized in Canada.)

After this interview, Iguana expressed surprise at his Vice Principal's response. "My Vice Principal's interview surprised me a little bit. Because I would expect someone in her position to be a little bit more conservative in her opinions on drugs. But her opinions completely lined up with mine." Here, he aligns himself with his Vice Principal's opinion, but it is an unexpected alignment. This is a powerful aspect of the podcast production process; producers not only encounter opinions that surprise them, but people that surprise them. Iguana realized that the Vice Principal, at least on this issue, was his ideological ally. In his final interview about the project, Iguana mentioned, "I interviewed the Vice Principal, that was pretty cool since I've never talked to her before." This speaks to the power of engaging in projects that require social interactions, and facilitate opportunities for students to meet the authority figures in charge of their education.

Iguana then pivots to investigating a potential source of his friends' attraction to drugs: music. He says, "I started to look at one of the biggest influencers in my life. And that was music. I found many songs in my playlist talking about drugs and how glamorous it is." This is a classic critical media literacy move; he decides to look for the hidden messages in popular culture that perpetuate ideas about what is cool and not cool. He is able to turn a critical eye towards the culture that he is immersed in, dissect his own circumstances, and apply an investigative lens to his own music collection. The song excerpt he plays in his podcast next, is from a song called "Molly" by the artist lil' Pump. The lyrics he excerpted are as follows:

I pop a X, so you know I be geek (damn)

Rockin' Balmains and they all on my jeans (ooh)

I'm off the Xans, and I pour me some lean (Lil Pump)

I sell your mama some crack, she a fiend (huh?)

I crash the Porsche and I just left the scene (brr)

Drippin' designer, Burberry my sweater

Lil Pump pulled up, he changin' the weather (brr, brr)

I popped a molly, I popped a bean

These lyrics refer to ecstasy/ Molly / MDMA (also called bean), and Xanax. Lean is a concoction made of prescription-strength cough syrup, soda, and hard candy (https://drugabuse.com/library/lean-purple-drank/). Iguana is the only participant who used music as an example of a social phenomenon. Other students used YouTube videos as examples of social phenomena, but not music lyrics. Lil' Pump becomes another voice in Iguana's podcast.

Iguana, however, does not just assume that music subconsciously infiltrates the brains of teens. He interviews his younger brother as a test case and while recording, shows him a Public Service Announcement (PSA) about drugs—a YouTube video of Pee Wee Herman warning against the deadly effects of crack cocaine. As listeners, we hear the entire PSA, which is just under a minute long. The PSA is creepy and foreboding, with loud clanks and a crescendo-ing heartbeat at the end. Afterwards, Iguana asks his brother, "So after that PSA what do you think about crack cocaine and hard drugs?" His brother replied, "I wasn't going to do drugs in the first place but now that I've seen the PSA I'm glad that I know the dangers of it." And finally, Iguana said, "So what do you think about those rappers and their music videos? [...] And do you still think it's as cool as before?" To which his brother replied, "No not at all because now I think they're putting themselves in danger every time that they do drugs."

This type of audio in a podcast is a called a *scene*—a moment of real-time action that Iguana is showing his audience. As listeners we can picture ourselves watching the PSA with Iguana and his brother. He does not know what his brother will say. He is conducting a small experiment and letting the audience watch. This is a sophisticated design move. This scene also conveys that perhaps Iguana is worried about his younger brother using drugs, in addition to his friends.

Iguana demonstrates once more a dialogic mindset, by explaining that he has changed his previous perception. He says, "After my interview with my brother, I learned that people don't start using drugs just because popular music and media depict it as a really cool thing to do. It's also because they don't get the information about how dangerous drugs can be. And they don't know about all the damage it could cause." He then cites statistics from the National Institute on

Drug Abuse and shares the number of deaths due to drug overdose between 2002–2016. After listing these numbers, he says, "I could finally give my friends who are experimenting with drugs a list of drugs to definitely not try." This statement reveals perhaps an underlying purpose or goal of the podcast, and we glimpse a connection between his podcast and the incident described in his narrative.

Iguana concludes that most drugs should not be experimented with until age 25 because teenage brains are not fully developed, but there are some that one should never try, including synthetic opioids, heroine, cocaine, and meth(amphetamine). His concluding statement is: "I now feel that the key to having a completely drug free world is to educate people about the dangers of drug use." This concluding statement is a window into Iguana's new perspective—if teens knew more about the dangers of drug abuse, they would choose not to experiment with cocaine, and presumably, be able to ignore the influence of glamorous rappers.

Table 4 shows how Iguana's narrative and podcast were coded on four key variables.

VARIABLE	NARRATIVE	PODCAST
Type of conflict	Choice / Social norm	Social norm / **Advocacy**
Perspective	**Storyteller**	**Critic / Investigator**
Resolution	Removed self from situation	**Assertion of truths and values / Refined stance**
Domain of resolution	Prudential	Prudential
*Bold codes indicate changes between mediums.		

Table 4: Codes for Iguana's Handwritten Narrative and Podcast

In terms of the domain coordination, in his handwritten narrative, Iguana subordinated the issues of choice and friendship to the prudential concerns of whether marijuana made one smarter, and the worry of becoming addicted. He did not acknowledge any other concerns in the conclusion of his narrative. In the podcast, he has considered the influence of society and social norms (convention), he has considered the extent to which individuals should be able to choose to do drugs if they want (personal choice), and he has gained information about the health consequences of taking different types of drugs (prudential). He concludes that the health consequences outweigh personal choice to some extent. His conclusion gives the prudential domain priority, just as in his narrative, but the resolution is robust and thoughtful.

There has been a significant shift away from a passive resolution in Iguana's narrative, to an active one in his podcast. In the narrative, Iguana says "no" but he does not entirely take credit for this action. Instead he defaults to what his parents told him and the teachings of antidrug education. He even jokes about accepting the drugs, and then makes it seem lucky that he said no—otherwise he would probably be addicted. This attitude is in contrast to his podcast, where he is armed with statistics, the testimony of a trusted school official, and evidence from his

brother's interview. The podcast demonstrates Iguana's newfound agency around the issue of saying no to drugs.

Engaging in a multimedia, journalistic storytelling process facilitated this shift in reasoning. In terms of Pasupathi and Wainryb's (2010) theory of narrative moral agency, each time one narrates a story, is a chance to reconcile one's actions with one's moral beliefs, ideas, and emotions. The second version of Iguana's story had to include other voices than his own, by nature of the assignment. Because of this, he had to reconcile his Vice Principal's and younger brother's opinions with his own.

Iguana stands out as an example of a critical reasoning transformation. He used his personal story to examine the world around him and conducted an investigation to gain more knowledge and perspectives on this issue. As a result, he feels able to combat the influence of peers and music that might push him to use drugs.

Proposed Model of Critical Podcasting Praxis

In Table 5, general phases of the podcasting activity are explained and then aligned with key components of critical moral reasoning and critical consciousness. The idea behind this table is to shed light on how these pedagogical concepts come to life within the activities in this study, as well as point to various phases in the podcasting process where educators could choose a certain aspect of critical reasoning to focus on. For example, if educators wanted to spend time fostering the idea of heteroglossia, they might spend time on the critical questioning phase, that entails interviews and research. Educators could encourage students to interview at least three sources they have never met before or find at least one dissenting opinion.

Phase of Podcasting Activity	Relevant Components of Critical Moral Reasoning and Critical Consciousness
Critical Questioning: Students decide who to interview, and what to ask. How to get the right information from the right people? What sources will students use? How can students make sure their facts are reliable?	• Heteroglossia: Multiple voices and perspectives • Dialogism: Engaging in dialogue, being open to changing one's mind • Curious about root causes of inequality and personal conditions • Evaluating new facts and information

Critical Connections: Students take stock of the information they have gathered. Who agrees with who? Who agrees with you? Where does your personal story / experience fit into the larger scope of facts accumulated through interviews and research? Does your story connect to a larger social struggle or movement?	• Connecting personal struggles to societal struggles, historical struggles • Evaluating new facts and information
Critical Construction: Students plan and script their podcasts. What information goes together? Who gets the last word?	• Transactive reasoning: Organizing the voices and information in such a way that one creates an argument or a narrative, or perhaps proves a point. • Counternarratives: Creating a new image of one's community that pushes back on stereotypes
Critical Conclusion: Students take a new, refined stance on their issue, taking everything that they have learned, heard, and found into account.	• Coordination: Drawing on multiple domains of reasoning and sources of information • Narrative moral agency: Reconciling one's beliefs and actions, with ideas of what is right

Table 5: Critical Podcasting Praxis: Phases of Podcasting Aligned with Critical Moral Reasoning and Critical Consciousness

Barriers to Coming to Critical Conclusions

Not every student in this study came to a critical conclusion in his or her podcast. Students occasionally drew conclusions that were not based on facts and stayed within their own peer group when seeking perspectives. Table 6 shows some recommendations for how critical educators could focus on helping students construct critical multimedia narratives.

Barriers	Recommendations
Lack awareness of structural inequality	Lessons on shared struggles / collective inquiry into injustice / require one source to be connected to history of the issue
Asking the right questions to the right people	Practice writing different types of questions (self-reflect, opinion, experience) in class / reflect on which gave the most information
Staying inside one's own "bubble"	Take a buddy along on uncomfortable interviews / role-play in class / brainstorm with a peer one dissenting view
No audience	Gradual sharing: first with a peer, then a listening walk with headphones, then a class blog.

Table 6: Barriers to and Recommendations for Arriving at Critical Conclusions in Podcasts

Conclusion

The two case studies of Emory and Iguana demonstrate that the process of transforming a handwritten narrative about a personal conflict into a podcast episode that includes multiple voices and sound and media elements, can lead to changes in how the author conceptualizes this conflict. Not only did Emory and Iguana change the language and formats of their stories, but the conclusions they came to changed as well. In Emory's case, her conclusion drew on the personal domain in addition to the moral domain and involved cross-domain coordination. While Iguana's conclusion prioritized the prudential domain in both cases, his podcast included complex social conventional reasoning about the norms of popular music. In both Emory and Iguana's cases, they shifted from passive resolutions in their handwritten narratives to active ones in their podcasts. Both authors also shifted the perspective from which they presented their story, in Emory's case eliminating the victim perspective and in Iguana's case, shifting to assume the role of a critic and investigator.

This study drew on two pedagogical frameworks: domain-based moral education and critical pedagogy to design a learning experience that incorporated the critical pedagogy strategies of inquiry, investigation, and media-making, into a developmental framework for how young people reason about fairness, harm, rules, norms, and personal choice. This study showed that in alignment with the goals of domain-based moral education, personal narratives and podcast production in the classroom can stimulate reasoning shifts towards becoming critical of one's own surroundings. This study also showed evidence of students moving towards

critical consciousness in the context of thinking about a personal conflict; they reevaluated old assumptions, they considered new information and integrated it into their existing reasoning frameworks, and connected their own struggles to societal struggles, looking beyond the self to interpret their own conflicts.

In this study, high school participants constructed handwritten narratives about personal conflicts and then transformed them into digital podcast episodes. The podcast format required students to do research, interview people, gather relevant media clips, and then design and organize them into an audio composition. Students chose to tell stories that in some cases included complex themes about encountering racism as refugees, fending off homophobic stereotypes, and navigating the stigma of being adopted. As students interviewed people with different perspectives, their resolutions, viewpoints, and even the key characters that played a role in their stories shifted. These shifts often revealed that students were willing to change their minds or reevaluate an initial opinion.

While Emory and Iguana took the podcast production process as an opportunity to expand their thinking and turn a critical eye towards their issue, not all of the students in this study moved in the direction of a more critical stance. These findings were similar to that of other researchers (Stack, 2010; Jenkins, 1997), who found that youth-produced media can often disrupt and perpetuate stereotypes at the same time. Additionally, although participants raised issues in their podcasts that were relevant to the school's social and moral culture, their stories never reached an audience beyond the classroom—in fact, students were reluctant to share their podcasts even within the classroom.

Young people need to be able and willing to change, expand, and modify their construals of personal conflicts when new information and perspectives are presented. This skill—to change the story that we tell ourselves about something that happened in the past or an ongoing conflict in the present—is a skill that connects to being an agent of change and a critical moral thinker in society. More specifically, it connects to developing resilience in the face of trauma, forgiving those who have wronged you, identifying hidden injustices buried in the status quo of everyday life, and connecting one's own struggles to social movements. This skill implies knowing that no version of a story is final or wholly true but partial and incomplete; embracing this skill, therefore, will help us update our judgments and evaluations of important issues as our perceptions of society expand and we encounter unpredictable problems. It also ensures that we will be able to work toward the updating of society, and how we function as members of a global community.

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