

Nanopublication – The game-master's alibi: induced diffraction sits exactly where manipulation theory admits it has no settled line

by Arnaud Quercy

The boundary is whether 'designing the board' (P26/P30/P31) is exempt from the manipulation-critique by virtue of being framed as game-conception rather than psychological tampering – the source shows this exact exemption is precisely what a half-century of the manipulation literature has failed to establish, since the situational/psychological line it rests on has never been shown to carry moral weight.

WHAT THE SOURCE SAYS [1]

The entry surveys how philosophers try to define 'manipulation' – as bypassing reason, as trickery inducing faulty beliefs/emotions, or as sub-coercive pressure – and how they try to explain why it is wrong (harm, loss of autonomy, treating a person's own agency as a lever for someone else's ends). It shows none of these definitions is settled: pressure-tactics like nagging or peer pressure resist the trickery model, trickery resists the pressure model, and moralized definitions are avoided by most authors. It further distinguishes manipulating a person's psychology directly from manipulating their situation/environment (Riker's 'structuring the world so you can win'), and admits this distinction, while intuitively real, has never been shown to track any actual moral difference. Responsibility for engineered influence, especially via nudges, algorithms, and choice-architecture, remains an open, contested question even among specialists.

WHERE THE LENS GRIPS

P26 (induced diffraction as engineered emission designed to maximize the probability of a receiver's creation) and P31's ethical-center claim (the emitter is responsible for conditions, not outcomes – 'the game master who designs a dangerous game cannot defer to the players') land squarely inside the source's own terrain of 'environmental/situational manipulation' – Riker's phrase 'structuring the world so you can win' is almost a paraphrase of what P26/P30 call pre-conceiving diffrac-

tion conditions without pre-determining outcomes. The lens grips a real, named philosophical debate, not an invented analogy.

WHERE IT BREAKS

The grip is contestable at exactly the point where the framework treats 'engineering emissions to force diffraction' as clean design (a fair game whose responsibility ends at the conditions) and the source explicitly says the environmental/psychological distinction has never been shown to track any actual moral difference – it flags this as unresolved after decades of work, not settled in either direction. X slips if one reads P31's 'game master' language as an implicit exemption of induced diffraction from the manipulation-critiques the source catalogs (trickery, pressure, treating reasons as causal levers); it holds if one reads P31 as already conceding the exact moral burden the source assigns to choice-architects – in which case the framework and the source are in genuine, unresolved agreement rather than in tension.

PROPOSITIONAL GRID [2]

Read this grid. “Not evaluated” does **not** mean the source has nothing to say about that proposition. It means **the reading did not instruct it**. That is not a result, and it counts in no denominator. A silence, by contrast, is a finding: the reading touched the proposition without concluding, or noted its absence itself.

Evaluated

proposi-tion		audit status	relational verdict
P26	Induced Diffraction	not audited	pressure-against
P30	Pre-Conception, Not Pre-De-termination	not audited	evidence-for
P31	Ethical Center	not audited	pressure-against

Not evaluated (34) – P1, P2, P3, P3a, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11, P12, P13, P14, P14a, P14b, P15, P16, P16a, P17, P18, P18a, P19, P19a, P20, P21, P22, P23, P24, P25, P27, P28, P29

Overall verdict: Bounded – taxonomy of the August 2026 pass, predating the move to relational verdicts. Kept as metadata: the gap between the two forms is data, not residue. This reading’s judgement is in the grid above.

Reading of 2026-04-01 · model claude-sonnet-5 · source 119,682 chars · 1 attempt(s)

FIRST PASS – KEPT AS WRITTEN

Reading produced by the T50 RSS pass, before the boundary lens. It is reproduced UNCORRECTED. Keeping it is the point: without it, a changed title is just a changed title – with it, what the second pass refused becomes legible.

This article on the ethics of manipulation connects to the practice's interests in algorithmic and computational art processes, as well as the philosophical underpinnings of art and aesthetics. Questions around the ethical implications of using technology to shape or manipulate human perception and experience are relevant to the practice's exploration of synesthetic translation and multimodal research methodologies. The article provides a useful framework for considering the ethical dimensions of art that aims to alter or expand sensory and cognitive processes.

T50 RSS assessment · 2026-04-01 · remplacée par boundary-lens-2026-08

REFERENCES

[1] The Ethics of Manipulation. Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2026-04-01. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ethics-manipulation/>

[2] Quercy, A. (2026). The 31 Propositions of Ideamorphism. <https://ideamorphism.org/en/publications/2026/03/the-31-propositions-of-ideamorphism.html>

EPISTEMIC PROFILE

Claim type	boundary reading
Voice	third person analysis
Epistemic status	bounded grip
Methodology	Boundary-finding lens applied to one source, model claude-sonnet-5, 1 attempt(s), traceability check passed.

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