

Keynote Address
2017 London Chess Conference
William Bart
Educational Psychology

**Making School Chess Research
Relevant**

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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- Chess –
 - A complex game.
 - International appeal.
 - Over 500 million players worldwide.



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- Chess -
 - Cognitively challenging.
 - Cognitive components.
 - Critical thinking
 - Problem solving.
 - Decision making.



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- Chess -
 - Cognitive components.
 - Planning.
 - Visualization.
 - Calculation.
 - Creative thinking.



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- Scholastic Chess
 - Chess instruction in many schools.
 - Programs of scholastic chess in many countries.
 - Scholastic chess programs.
 - Elementary school.
 - Secondary school.
 - Junior college.
 - College.



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- Effects of Scholastic Chess.
 - Improvements in Chess Competency.
 - Improvements in Scholastic Achievement and Cognitive Ability.
 - Pros – e.g., “chess training has salutary cognitive and educational effects among school-aged students (Bart, 2014).
 - Cons – e.g., “training chess, music, or WM capacity does not reliably enhance any skill beyond the skills they train” (Sala & Gobet, 2017)



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- Views on Effects of Scholastic Chess.
 - “As a competitive sport and an educational tool, it is of great value. Chess has been proven to increase, among many other things, creativity, concentration, strategic planning, abstract reasoning, and decision-making.” (Kramnik Afterword, Hesse, 2011).



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- Need for Scientific Study of Scholastic Chess.
 - To Separate Fact from Opinion.
 - To Address Questions regarding Scholastic Chess in a Scientific Manner.
 - To Examine Effects of Scholastic Chess in an International Context.



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- Sample of Questions that Warrant Scientific Study.
 1. What Specific Features of Scholastic Chess Programs account for the Positive if Any Benefits of Scholastic Chess?
 2. How do the Effects of Scholastic Chess compare to the Effects of Competitive Chess?



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- Sample of Questions that Warrant Scientific Study.
 3. What are Distinctive Qualitative Effects of Scholastic Chess?
 4. Does Scholastic Chess contribute to STEM Education and STEM Achievement among Students, especially Economically-Disadvantaged Students?



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- Recommend Three Courses of Action.
 - 1. Establish an International Center for Chess Research (ICCR) to advance the scientific study of scholastic chess through empirical research on the effects of scholastic chess.



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- Recommend Three Courses of Action.
 - 2. Establish an International Fund for Scholastic Chess Research (IFSCR) to provide financial support to and basis for the ICRR.



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- Recommend Three Courses of Action.
 - 3. Establish a Scholastic Chess Network (SCN) to promote communication among and collaboration between scientific researchers of scholastic chess and practitioners of scientific chess for the purpose of the design and implementation of scientific studies of scholastic chess.



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- Conclusion.
 - Those three entities would
 - provide the basis for answering many questions regarding the effects of scholastic chess in a scientific manner and
 - facilitate the scientific study of scholastic chess and the effective expansion of scholastic chess.



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