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The Impact of Schadenfreude as an Emotional Frame in Crisis Communications on Perception of Corporate Reputation

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation expands on the recent research focus on the role of stakeholder emotions in crisis communications. Using a 2x2 experimental design, this study explores the emotions of sadness and anger, as well as the concept of *schadenfreude* in relationship to stakeholders' perceptions of corporate reputation. In addition to using the previously tested emotions of sadness and anger in this context, the concept of *schadenfreude* (the feeling of pleasure one experiences when a person or organization suffers a misfortune or set back) was re-introduced to the field to better assess its potential role in the crisis communication process, specifically its relationship with perceived corporate reputation. Additionally, both third-person effect and social identity theory were introduced to explore their presence, and potential application, in future crisis communications. While the stimulus materials were unsuccessful in creating significantly different emotions in the subjects, there was an indication that *schadenfreude* as a concept is present in crisis communication scenarios and that it may have a distinctly different effect on perceived reputation than its more negative counterparts of anger and sadness. The presence of a third-person effect, a previously under-studied concept in crisis communications, was found and social identity theory held true, predicting perceived reputation based on identification with one or another party/group. Finally, in an effort to control for demographic variables, gender was found to have had a mitigating effect on reputation.

Keywords: Crisis Communications, Schadenfreude

**THE IMPACT OF SCHADENFREUDE AS AN EMOTIONAL FRAME IN CRISIS
COMMUNICATIONS ON PERCEPTION OF CORPORATE REPUTATION**

By

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DISSERTATION

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This adventure began under a wave of uncertainty that I could, after a 20-year hiatus, pick up the books and take all the steps necessary to get my Ph.D. I have been accompanied on this journey by so many people, without whom I would have given up a long time ago.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Research in the field of crisis communication is only a couple of decades old, but a number of variables have already been identified by scholars as influential factors in an company's successful navigation of a crisis – the type of crisis, the company's role in creating the crisis, the company's response to the crisis, and the reputation and perception of the company by its stakeholders prior to the crisis. The company's stakeholders play an important role in this process, as their respective relationships with the company and their perceptions of the company's reputation is often at risk during a crisis. Tim Coombs (2007) emphasized the stakeholder role in his definition of crisis saying, "It is the perception of stakeholders that helps to define an event as a crisis" (p. 3).

Stakeholder perceptions about the cause of the crisis (the degree to which the company should be held responsible), the company's response to the crisis, and the resulting reputation of the company post-crisis have all been examined in communications literature. However, only recently have stakeholder emotions been introduced as potential predictors of stakeholder perceptions of reputation during and after a crisis.

The first study of emotion in this context appears to be Coombs and Holladay's (2005) examination of whether or not a crisis "type" would have an impact on stakeholder emotions. They determined that when a crisis was attributable to something other than the organization or company in question (natural disaster, sabotage, etc.), it triggered a different feeling in stakeholder groups (sympathy) than when the organization was perceived to be at fault (anger). The 2005 study also looked at the concept of *schadenfreude*, deriving pleasure from someone else's pain or misfortune, in this context and found that stakeholders said they would feel

“happy” if something bad happened to the organization if the crisis was “intentional” (i.e. if the crisis was attributable to the organization).

Despite its initial promise of having an impact, the concept of schadenfreude cannot be found in crisis communication research since 2005. Rather, the more recent studies on the role of stakeholder emotions in crisis have focused on the negative feelings – anger, sadness, fear, and anxiety – most often associated with crisis events (e.g. Coombs, 2010; Jin, Pang & Cameron, 2007; Jin & Pang, 2010; Kim & Cameron, 2011).

This study further explores the link between stakeholder emotions and effective crisis communications by continuing the research conducted by others. It also re-introduces the concept of schadenfreude, exploring the difference more positive emotions, such as happiness or pleasure, may have on stakeholder perceptions of a company in crisis. In addition, it explores the potential impact of third-person effect and social identity theory on stakeholder perceptions of a company in a crisis situation.

The future applications of this study in practice lies in the potential for practitioners to better understand how the emotions of stakeholders will impact perceptions of their respective company’s reputation during an organizational crisis. While there is still considerable work to be done before this is possible, once researchers identify how stakeholder emotions impact immediate perceptions of reputation, as well as how the same emotions effect the efficacy of specific company responses in a crisis situation, practitioners may be more confident in their decisions to communicate with stakeholder groups during crises and be better prepared to implement company responses to protect the long-term reputations of their organizations.

Chapter 2: Evolution of Crisis Communications Research

While the term “crisis” can be defined in a number of ways, there are relevant concepts included in most definitions used by crisis communications researchers including the unexpectedness of the event and the ability of the event to pose a credible threat to the organization. (Coombs, 2007; Coombs & Holladay, 2010; Fearn-Banks, 2006). For the purposes of this study, the following working definition from Ulmer, Sellnow and Seeger (2011) is used: “An organizational crisis is a specific, *unexpected*, and *nonroutine* event or series of events that create high levels of *uncertainty* and simultaneously present an organization with both *opportunities* for and *threats* to its *high-priority goals*” (p. 7). Likewise the definition of “crisis communications” used in this study is as follows: “Crisis communications is concerned with the transferring of information to significant persons (publics) to either help avoid or prevent a crisis (or negative occurrence), recover from a crisis, and maintain or enhance reputation” (*Fearn-Banks, 2009, p. 2*).

The potential impact a crisis can have on a company is enormous, as evidenced throughout history with events such as the sinking of the Titanic, which caused such damage to the reputation of its cruise line, the White Star, that it never fully recovered (Butler, 2003; Ziakas, 1999). The recent proliferation of massive crises involving corporations including BP, Toyota, and Goldman Sachs (Holmes & Sudhaman, 2011), has generated an unprecedented amount of media coverage and interest. Yet, in their meta-analysis of public relations literature from 1997-2006, An and Chen (2010) suggest that as late as the mid-1990s, there had been very little research focused on crisis communications with nothing at all prior to 1987. Consequently, while crisis communications is a relatively new field of study, it is a rapidly growing area of interest for both crisis communicators and academic researchers.

History and Theory of Crisis Communications Research

There are several theories and concepts that have shaped the field of crisis communications including apologia, image restoration theory, attribution theory, excellence theory, contingency theory, situational crisis communications theory, framing theory, and third-person effect.

Apologia.

Apologia is rooted in interpersonal communications as a rhetorical communication tool for defending oneself from a personal attack. Dionisopoulos and Vibbert (1988) were the first to introduce this at the organizational level in which corporate apologia is defined as the organizations' efforts to defend itself from an attack. In 1995, Hearit took this a step further, applying case study methodology from the public relations practitioners' point of view to the concept of corporate apologia. He used the Exxon and Dominos cases to explore not only how the companies defended themselves, but how individuals managed to separate themselves from the wrongdoing (Hearit, 1995). Hearit then took this information and tried to use it to teach other practitioners, but the use of case studies limited his work as it didn't provide practitioners with the information necessary to generalize the findings to other situations.

Allen and Caillouet (1994) also studied corporate apologia using content analysis and discovered that institutional players (specifically the government) could have a major impact on strategic communications during a crisis. They also introduced the use of ingratiation as a tool in crisis communication (probably more commonly referred to as "schmoozing") where individuals don't just defend their actions, but strive to have stakeholders "like" them.

Image restoration theory.

Benoit (1997) introduced image restoration theory (IRT), which posits that maintaining or rebuilding a company's reputation after a crisis is the primary goal of communications. In his view, there is a reputational threat in the crisis communications arena if 1) there has been a crisis event and 2) the stakeholders hold the organization responsible. He proposed a series of formalized corporate response strategies that could be used to protect or rebuild a reputation post crisis. They are as follows (p. 177):

- Denial
 - Simple – “We didn’t do it.”
 - Shifting the Blame – “Somebody else did it.”
- Evading Responsibility
 - Provoked – “They made us do it by doing something to us.”
 - Defeasibility – “We were unable to stop it.”
 - Good Intentions – “We were trying to do something good and this happened as a byproduct of our actions.”
- Reducing the Offense
 - Minimizing – “This isn’t a big issue.”
 - Differentiating – “This isn’t bad compared to what others have done.”
 - Bolstering – “We did something bad, but look at all the good things we have done.”
 - Transference – “We did it, but in the big scheme of things it’s not important.”
 - Attack Accuser – “We did it, but what they did was so much worse.”
 - Compensation – “We did it, but we are making it right with the victims.”
- Corrective Action – “We have taken steps so that this never happens again.”

- Mortification – “We did it, we accept full responsibility and we are sorry.”

IRT offer solutions, but is limited in its ability to offer the means by which a crisis situation should be analyzed. Practitioners do use it in practice, often implementing these responses through a trial and error method (trying the easiest or most time-efficient one first for practical purposes, reaching for another response only if the first doesn't work).

Attribution theory.

Another theory often adapted in crisis communications research is attribution theory, which is deeply rooted in psychology (Heider, 1958). This theory posits that the cause of an event has an influence on how people respond to the event. In the case of crisis communications, this means that the cause of a crisis will determine how stakeholders respond to the crisis. Weiner (1985) was the first to look at this in the context of crisis communications, examining the three main elements used to determine attribution: stability (whether the event was caused by something that remained consistent or was unusual), control (whether the event was controllable or not), and locus of control (whether the event was caused by something external or internal). In 1998, Hartel, McColl-Kennedy and McDonald brought this to another level, looking at both the cognitive and affective elements of attribution and determining that, as it applied to consumer behavior (buying intentions), both of these were very important.

Excellence.

James Grunig's (1992) theory of excellence is probably the most recognized theory in the field of public relations and is based on interviews conducted by Grunig and his colleagues with both practitioners and organizational leaders. The purpose of the study was to paint a picture of what “excellent” public relations really looked like. They found that the ideal form of public relations is a “two-way symmetrical” model in which an organization maintains a two-way

dialogue with stakeholders in an effort to achieve “mutually beneficial” outcomes for both the organization and its publics. Larissa Grunig (1992) has done additional work with the theory, specifically in the crisis communications field as it relates to dealing with advocacy groups and balancing the needs of them against the organization.

Fearn-Banks (2006) is also a big proponent of excellence theory, saying good public relations is equivalent to good crisis communications. She explores crisis communication through case studies and evaluates the communications in an effort to then take the “best practices” and provide that information to other practitioners under the assumption that those practices can be transferred to other situations.

Contingency theory.

In opposition to excellence theory, Cancel, Cameron, Sallot and Mitrook (1997) introduced contingency theory which suggests that Grunig’s theory (1992) may not be the best approach for all situations. Rather, they suggest that public relations activities run on a continuum from complete advocacy for the client to complete accommodation of the stakeholder needs. When to use which? It depends. According to contingency theory, there are five components (which include a total of 86 variables) that must be evaluated for every situation before determining where on the continuum the public relations focus should be (advocacy vs. accommodation). The five areas are external threats, and characteristics of the publics, the organization, the public relations department, and the dominant coalition (Cancel et al., 1997).

Situational crisis communication theory.

Timothy Coombs is recognized for the development of situational crisis communications theory (2007) or SCCT, the first theory created specifically for use in the study of crisis communications. SCCT posits that characteristics of the situation influence the attribution

(blame for the situation) people assign to the company or organization and that the attribution, in turn, influences people's reputational perceptions, affects, and behavioral intentions toward the organization. Only then, by knowing these things, can practitioners apply the appropriate response strategy (deny, diminish, rebuild, or use bolstering as a secondary response) to best manage the reputational threat to the company.

Coombs (2007) says the situational characteristics that can be evaluated to determine the reputational threat are:

1. Attribution – Whether the organization is to blame depends on three crisis types. Was the organization a “victim” of an external event outside their control (natural disaster, terrorism)? Was the event an “accident” in which the company could not have predicted the crisis such as a technical glitch that they were unaware of? Or, was the event something that was either done intentionally (corporate malfeasance) or could have been prevented (ignoring safety warnings)?
2. Crisis History – Is this something new for the organization or does it have a history of similar events? For example, have they been cited for years about faulty wiring, which has now caused a fire?
3. Prior Reputational Relationships – Did the organization have good relationships with its stakeholder prior to the crisis that will help them navigate through the crisis?

Most of the research in recent years has built on SCCT and its components of crisis attribution and organizational response as determinants of stakeholder reputation after a crisis.

Framing theory.

Framing theory suggests that the “frame” or lens through which information is presented can have an effect on the audience. Entman (1993) said that, “To frame is to select some aspects

of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described” (p. 52). One of the examples he uses is the “cold war” frame in which all stories at the time offered moral judgments through a frame that favored capitalistic over communist beliefs and ideals. Likewise, in a corporate crisis involving a labor dispute, the articles written by “pro-union” writers are often framed very differently than those who write with a “pro-management” background. Readers, in turn, are affected by those frames as they form opinions about the company involved in the crisis.

Third-person effect.

Davison (1983) first introduced the concept of a third-person effect, saying people believe that communication messages have a greater impact on “others” than they do on themselves. In other words, when a message is delivered via a communication medium, people do not think the message will have as much influence on their own perceptions as they believe it will influence other people’s perceptions. He also said, ironically enough, that because we believe the information will have an influence on others, we often change our own behavior in response to the influence we believe the message has on others. For example, we may decide to buy or sell stock based, not on the messages we receive about the company, but on how we believe others will perceive and react to the same information (Davison, 1983).

Perloff (1993) outlined some of the contributing factors that impact third-person effect in his review of the first decade of literature on the subject, saying that the perceived differences in impact to “self” and “other” depend on whether the message is good or bad; whether the “self” deems the topic to be important; if the “self” believes the source to be credible; if “other” is of a lower socioeconomic status; or if the “other” is not known to the “self.” Others have highlighted

additional situational parameters such as whether the information is viewed as positive or negative, if the “other” is perceived as more distant, or if the information is presented at a faster pace (Chock, Fox, Angelini, Lee & Lang, 2007; Duck & Mullin, 2006).

Third-person effect has been measured in a variety of communication arenas from health communications (Chock, et. al, 2007; Scherr & Reinemann, 2011; Shin & Kim, 2011) to interpersonal relationships (Chia & Wen, 2010; Chock, 2011; Lo & Wei, 2002). Recently, Kim, Kim and Cameron (2011) were some of the first to examine the potential role third-person effect might have on corporate crisis communications. They found that, in crisis situations, people tend to perceive that members of other stakeholder groups will be more affected by the crisis than themselves. However, as is true in much of the crisis communication literature, these perceptions are often tied to the attribution of the crisis in that there were bigger differences between perception of “self” and “other” in situations with an internal locus of control than one with an external locus of control. This implies an opportunity for practitioners to be aware of the third-person effect in crisis situations and to respond accordingly, but exactly what the response should be is yet to be determined.

Role of Emotions in Crisis Communications Research

As noted earlier, the evolution of crisis communications research has introduced a number of potential variables that impact, or have the potential to impact, the effectiveness of crisis communications including how stakeholders attribute blame for the crisis, the company’s crisis history and prior reputation, and how the company responds to the crisis. More recently, the emotions experienced by the stakeholders before, during, and after a crisis have been considered as a contributing factor to the effectiveness of crisis communications (e.g. Choi &

Lin, 2009; Coombs & Holladay, 2005; Jin, 2010; Jin, Liu & Austin, 2011; Jin, Pang & Cameron, 2007; Kim & Kioussis, 2012; Liu, Austin & Jin, 2011; Moon & Rhee, 2012).

Coombs and Holladay first introduced the potential importance of emotions to crisis communications literature in 2005. They examined the amount of sympathy, anger, and schadenfreude (pleasure) individuals expressed when they were presented with a variety of crisis types and causes. They found significantly strong relationships between “crisis responsibility” and all three emotions studied. They noted, “This exploratory study is the first step toward integrating affect into the study of post-crisis communication. More research is needed to understand how affect impacts the effectiveness of various response strategies” (p. 277). Additional research has been done since that time, but none of it has included the concept of schadenfreude, one of the emotions Coombs and Holladay (2005) found to be “most salient” (p. 276).

More recently, others have acknowledged the role emotions should play in crisis communications research and application. Jin and Pang (2010) stated that,

despite the importance of affect in persuasion and strategic decision making in crisis communication, there remains a lack of a systematic and integrated approach to understanding how publics’ emotional experience in crisis influence their crisis information processing and behavioral tendencies, which will eventually determine the success or failure of any organization’s crisis communication practice. (p. 677)

They also suggested the use of the “integrated crisis mapping model (ICM),” which was introduced by Jin, Pang and Cameron (2007) as an aid for future research (see Figure 1). This model is an “... emotion-driven perspective to crisis communication modeling, mapping

different crisis types and underpinning them with two continua, the organization's involvement with the crisis issue and primary public's coping strategy" (p. 81).

Other emotion-focused crisis studies include Jin's (2010) work with how stakeholder appraisals of a crisis affect their emotions, coping strategies, and responses to crisis and Choi and Lin's (2009) look at which emotions were evoked by stakeholders after a recall by toy-maker, Mattel. Jin, Liu, and Austin (2011) explored which emotions might be triggered by exposure to crisis information and whether the information form, source or origin was influential. Finally, Moon and Rhee (2012) touched on emotions in crisis as they studied the effect of crisis attribution and corporate responses on stakeholders' willingness to forgive an organization post-crisis.

The only study that was found to incorporate framing theory and the framing of the crisis information was Kim and Cameron's (2011) look at the emotional framing of news articles related to corporate crisis. This is based largely on the work of Robin Nabi (2003), who found that emotions can serve as the frames we use for decision making. Her examination of how people responded to information about drunk driving and gun control, determined by the framing of the articles they read, was seminal in this area of study. She found that people's affect has an influence on information accessibility, information seeking behaviors, and policy decisions. In this case, she was looking at fear and anger and the differences in behaviors.

Kim and Cameron (2011) focused on the importance of these frames on audience perceptions in a crisis situation. The results of their study indicated that the emotions elicited by different news frames had an impact on the subjects' processing of the information and on their subsequent responses to the company's crisis response strategies. Specifically, "... those exposed to anger-inducing news tended to have more negative attitudes toward the responsible company

($M = 2.03$, $SD = 1.00$) than those exposed to sadness-inducing news ($M = 2.36$, $SD = 1.13$), even though the contents regarding the crisis situation were identical between the two groups ...”

(Kim & Cameron, 2011, p. 842).

Since 2005, all of the studies involving emotions in crisis communications have dealt with the perceived or potential negative emotions stakeholders have during a company’s crisis (e.g. sadness, fright, anger, anxiety, apprehension, disgust, contempt, embarrassment, guilt, shame, alert, worry, confusion, and sympathy). This despite the fact that, according to Coombs and Holladay (2005), schadenfreude or “taking joy from the pain of the organization” (p. 265) was one of the three “most salient emotions from Application Theory for application to post-crisis communications” (p. 276). This study re-introduces the concept of shadenfreude to the study of crisis communications and it’s potential impact on stakeholder perceptions.

Chapter 3: Defining and Operationalizing Schadenfreude

Schadenfreude is the feeling of pleasure one sometimes experiences when another person or an organization suffers a misfortune or setback. Most commonly cited in interpersonal literature when one person takes pleasure at the pain or misfortune of another, schadenfreude also appears in sociology when one group enjoys the failure of another group (e.g. sports fans from one team love to see a rival team fail, even when their own team won't benefit from the loss). And, while it has not been the subject of much academic research, anecdotal evidence suggests that schadenfreude exists in the area of crisis communications as members of an organization's stakeholder group often appear to take pleasure at seeing the company or its leaders suffer in the aftermath of a crisis, especially if the stakeholders hold the company accountable.

For example, schadenfreude was expressed in an online comment posted by a reader in response to the BP oil spill that read, "We would actually enjoy seeing their stock holders [*sic*] lose their shirts...because stock holders [*sic*] have abandoned their ownership responsibilities, in favor of making money." (Condon, 2010). Or, in a recent Facebook post about the Tennessee Valley Authority having financial problems one customer commented, "Good. I'm glad they are losing money. Maybe they shouldn't charge all the fuel cost adjustments so they can have more money in their greedy hands" (WRCB, 2012).

Roots of Schadenfreude Research

To say that schadenfreude is a recently-discovered emotion would be incorrect. In fact, at one point Plato quoted Socrates as saying, "Did we not say that pleasure in the misfortunes of friends was caused by envy?" (Smith, Powell, Combs, & Schurtz, 2009, p. 158). Yet, schadenfreude doesn't appear to have been explored in depth until 1989 when a psychology

professor from Australia, N.T. Feather, published a series of three studies designed to look at attitudes toward “tall poppies” or those who have achieved at a high level to rise above others (overachievers), and feelings of either sympathy or pleasure experienced by others when the tall poppies fell.

Feather (1989) found that subjects were likely to be more pleased when the “tall poppies” fell than when people of average achievement failed, yet he noted that there were a number of mediating variables, such as the reason for the fall (self-inflicted or a result of the environment) and perceptions about how the “tall poppy” reached a level of high achievement (through hard work or luck). In other words, people asked the question, “Did they deserve it?”

Many scholars since Feather have linked the concept or emotion of schadenfreude with another emotion that has been around for a very long time – envy (Hareli & Weiner, 2002; Smith et al., 1996). Envy is the “painful or resentful awareness of an advantage enjoyed by another, joined with a desire to possess the same advantage” (Envy, 2012). Research shows that envy and schadenfreude act as antonyms – one unpleasant and one pleasant. According to Smith et al. (1996), “Although envy is painful and Schadenfreude is pleasurable, we hypothesize that envy creates the conditions under which Schadenfreude should occur – if a misfortune befalls the envied person” (p. 158). These studies assume that the individual experiencing schadenfreude believes the envied party to be undeserving of the advantages for which they are envied and, therefore, the feelings of schadenfreude are justified. The envious party sees themselves as equally deserving and feels justified in wanting “justification of lots” (Heider, 1958) or, in essence, coveting the advantage for them. Heider goes on to say that schadenfreude isn’t just pleasurable, it is malicious. His argument is that schadenfreude is a “discordant” reaction to

sympathy and that it builds antagonism between parties and can be harmful to individual relationships.

In their 2009 article, Smith, Power, Combs and Schutz reviewed the literature and identified three conditions under which schadenfreude occurs: as a result of personal gain, as a result of deserved misfortunes, and as a result of envy.

The “personal gains” condition assumes that the suffering/loss to one group or individual means an advantage/win for another group or individual (Smith et al., 2009). The argument here is that if an individual or group will benefit from another’s loss, the group that benefits is happy. In this case, there is little malice against the suffering “other.” Rather, the focus is on the benefits to “self.”

The second condition, schadenfreude resulting from deserved misfortunes, offers a new perspective because it does not require prior feelings of perceived benefit to self or feelings of envy. Rather, the feelings of schadenfreude are “righteous satisfaction” (p. 537). In this case, the “fallen” is often perceived to be hypocritical such as the company that promotes itself to be the “environmentally-friendly” alternative and is then fined for egregious pollution or the TV evangelist who preaches against extra-marital affairs and is then caught engaged in an inappropriate relationship. This comes full-circle back to Feather’s (1989) discussion on deservedness in which he says the “valence of the outcome fits with or is consistent with the valence of the action that led to it” (p. 40).

Finally, Smith, et al.’s (2009) last condition, schadenfreude as a result of envy, reiterates the findings of previous scholars, but notes a unique relationship between the concepts of envy and self-benefit, noting that “ a misfortune befalling the envied person is likely to lead to competitive gain as well as the relief from the unpleasant emotion of envy itself” (p. 540).

Hareli and Weiner (2002) furthered this research, noting that envy is only one negative emotion that might elicit feelings of schadenfreude. They posit that other negative emotions toward an individual or group may also serve as antecedents for schadenfreude including “hatred, anger, dislike, contempt, and disgust” (p. 258). Their results indicate that, not only are these “other-directed negative emotions” strong indicators of schadenfreude at the misfortune of another individual or group, but that they may have a stronger relationship with schadenfreude than envy. These findings also suggest a great reason to look at schadenfreude in the context of corporate crisis communication because, while an individual or stakeholder group may not “envy” an organization, there could very well be other negative feelings toward a company or organization that may precipitate feelings of schadenfreude during a crisis and should be taken into account.

More recently, Wilco van Dijk and his colleagues (van Dijk, Ouwerkerk, van Koningsbruggen, & Wesseling, 2012; van Dijk, Ouwerkerk, Wesseling, & van Koningsbruggen, 2011; van Dijk, van Koningsbruggen, Ouwerkerk, & Wesseling, 2011) have focused on other reasons why some individuals experience schadenfreude instead of sympathy when someone else suffers or fails. Their studies focus on relationships between self-esteem and self-affirmation with schadenfreude, even in situations where the effect is based on watching someone fail on television. The model they present indicates that there is a negative relationship between self-esteem and feelings of schadenfreude, but that the relationship exists only when there is an opportunity for increased self-affirmation (van Dijk et al., 2011). In addition, they found that feelings of schadenfreude were intensified if there was a prior perception of self-threat to the observer by the “high achiever” that fell (p. 1445). Specifically, van Dijk et al. (2012) found that

people who reported lower self-evaluations were more pleased than others when contestants in the early rounds of TV's American Idol did poorly and were ridiculed by the judges.

One of the first studies to explore schadenfreude and its impact on relationships between groups of people, rather than individuals, was published in 2003 by Leach, Spears, Branscombe, and Doosje. The study examined the feelings of schadenfreude experienced by sports fans of one country's football (soccer) team when another country's team suffered a big loss. In this study, they borrowed from the German philosopher Frederick Nietzsche (1844/1900), who contrasted the passive observation of watching someone suffer at the hands of a third party to watching someone suffer at your own hands through the normal course of competition.

Schadenfreude in Groups/Social Identity Theory

The study of schadenfreude in group settings can be tied closely to social identity theory, which recognizes the human tendency to search for people who are like themselves and a need for self and group esteem that motivates people to evaluate their own group (the in-group) more favorable than they do other groups (the out-group). (Tajfel, 1974; Cuhadar & Dayton, 2011).

In their study of group behavior, Leach, et al. (2003) proposed three factors that would impact feelings of schadenfreude between groups. The factors described include: "domain of interest" or the need for the in-group to share an interest with the out-group relevant to the observed suffering; "threat of inferiority" or the need for the in-group to perceive themselves as superior and the suffering of the out-group to have the ability to change their own status; and "legitimate circumstances" or the need for the out-group's advantages to be perceived by the in-group as undeserved. They found that "domain of interest" was the most important factor and concluded that "intergroup schadenfreude may constitute a covert or insidious form of prejudice that is used in the maintenance of group identity and self-worth" (p. 942). Leach and Spears

(2008, 2009) went on to look at the role of in-group dejection or pain in feelings of schadenfreude toward an out-group. Their findings indicate that the feeling stems from inferior feelings about the in-group (similar to the work van Dijk, et al., 2012, did with individuals) rather than feelings of hatred or dislike of the out-group (envy).

Cikara and Fiske (2012) have added to the research in this area, relating schadenfreude to social identity theory with their look at the role stereotypes play in the process. They base this on the perceptions an in-group may have toward an out-group (are they warm, competitive, friendly, etc.) and how these perceptions, in turn, might affect the potential for schadenfreude at the sudden misfortune of the out-group. Their results, which are applicable to crisis communicators, indicate that “perceived status and competition can determine when and which targets are most likely to evoke schadenfreude” (p. 70).

Finally, Sundie, Ward, Beal, Chin and Geiger-Oneto (2009) explored the concept of schadenfreude in scenarios where a company’s product fails. Their hypothesized model illustrates the antecedent conditions often considered to be important in the study of schadenfreude: an advantaged or high performing target (a “tall poppy”), feelings of envy, and feelings of hostility.

This also has the potential to be applicable for practitioners as product failure is, in fact, one of the many crises a company can face. While Sundie, et al. (2009) were not studying the concept from the viewpoint of a crisis communicator, their results indicate that schadenfreude could have an impact, not only on stakeholder feelings, but on stakeholder’s perception of an company and its products or services.

Schadenfreude in Crisis Communications Research

Again, the determination of how likely it is that a stakeholder group feels schadenfreude

when something negative happens to an organization would appear to be very applicable to the practice of crisis communications. After all, numerous crisis communications studies are steeped in the tradition of attribution theory (Allen and Caillouet, 1994; Benoit, 1997; Coombs, 2007, 2010; Dean, 2004; Hartel, McColl-Kennedy, & McDonald, 1998), a theory of motivation and emotion that suggests the cause of an event has a key influence on an individual's perception of and reaction to a given event (Weiner, 1985).

As noted earlier, Coombs and Holladay introduced the potential importance of emotions to crisis communications literature in 2005 with a study that incorporated the concept of *schadenfreude*. They examined the amount of sympathy, anger, and *schadenfreude* individuals expressed by individuals who were presented with a variety of crisis types and causes and found that there were significantly strong relationships between "crisis responsibility" and all three emotions.

Operationalization of Schadenfreude

Before additional efforts are made to measure the potential impact of *schadenfreude* in crisis communications research, there should be some consistency in how the emotion is measured. To date, *schadenfreude* has been operationalized in a number of ways, almost all of which involve the subjects self-reporting their own feelings of pleasure after some stimulus in which a high achiever experiences some level of suffering or failure.

In Feather's seminal work on *schadenfreude* (1989), he used a four-variable measure to describe subjects' perceptions "after the fall." The first variable, "deserve to fall," was measured on a seven-point scale from "John (Anne) didn't deserve what he (she) got" to "John (Anne) got what he (she) deserved." There were similar measures for the other three variables: the respondents' satisfaction with the fall, the subjects' perception of the stimulus person's

satisfaction with the fall, and whether or not the respondents felt more or less friendly toward the stimulus person after the fall. (p. 246-47).

Smith et al. (1996) added six items designed to measure *schadenfreude* and six items designed to measure sympathy to an existing mood scale, which assumed that respondents would feel one or the other, but not both. Some of the added items include: “*schadenfreude* – ‘happy because of how things have turned out for the student, especially since the interview’ and ‘delighted because of how things have turned out for the student since the interview’; sympathy – ‘sad because of how things have turned out for the student since the interview’ and ‘sorry for the student because of what has happened to him since the interview’” (p. 162).

Van Dijk et al. (2011 & 2012) used a five-item assessment in which the subject chose a one of the following statements (personalized by study) in their study on response to American Idol contestants: “‘I enjoy what happened to Eliza,’ ‘I’m satisfied with what happened to Eliza,’ ‘I couldn’t resist a little smile,’ ‘I actually had to laugh a little bit,’ and ‘I felt *schadenfreude*.’” (p. 171).

Two of the reviewed scales, Hareli and Weiner’s (2002) and Sundie et al.’s (2009), measured combinations of terms designed to indirectly measure *schadenfreude*. Sundie et al. (2009) used a four-item scale that measured the related emotions of “happy, joyful, satisfied, and glad” on a nine-point scale from “not at all” to “extremely” (p. 360), while Hareli and Weiner (2002) used a combined measure of “joy, pleasure, happiness, and content” (p. 261).

In Cikara and Fiske (2012), the measurement was unique in that it assessed subjects’ response to a combined photo and caption as opposed to a full-text scenario. In this case, after seeing the photo and the caption describing the pictured individual, subjects were asked to answer two questions: “How GOOD [BAD] would each make you feel?” and “As viewed by

society, how COMPETENT/WARM is this person?”

And, Takahashi, et al. (2009) measured schadenfreude physiologically, examining the neurocognitive mechanisms of both schadenfreude and envy with magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). As subjects were presented with scenarios, they self-reported feelings of envy and schadenfreude on six-point scales (1 = no envy, 6 = extremely envious and 1 = no pleasure, 6 = extremely pleasant) while undergoing an MRI. The results showed “a correlation between the mean rating of schadenfreude” (p. 938) and the degree of activation found in the ventral striatum, part of the brain associated with pleasure.

In their seminal crisis communications-related study on schadenfreude, Coombs and Holladay (2005) used an eight-item, seven point scale to measure “sympathy, anger, schadenfreude, and crisis responsibility” (p. 272). The one item they designed to measure schadenfreude was “I actually feel a little happy that something bad happened to x, the company deserves it.” An adaptation of this question is used for this study. In addition, an adaptation of the index used to measure “joviality” on the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS) (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988) is used in an attempt to further develop a reliable measurement of schadenfreude in the context of crisis communications. “Joviality” is measured using a combination of terms, much like those use in previous studies (Hareli & Weiner, 2002; Sundie et al., 2009), which include happy, joyful, delighted, cheerful, excited, enthusiastic, lively, and energetic.

Chapter 4: Defining and Operationalizing Corporate Reputation

Corporate reputation -- every company is reported to have one, companies devote vast resources to protect them, researchers study the effects on them, and crisis managers work diligently to rebuild them. But what is corporate reputation? Who determines what a corporation's reputation is in the marketplace? What elements do people measure to determine whether a corporation's reputation is either positive or negative and is there a comprehensive definition that remains constant across situations and disciplines?

Defining Reputation

These questions are not new. In the inaugural issue of *Corporate Reputation Review*, Fombrun and Van Riel (1997) called for an inter-disciplinary approach to corporate reputation research and a comprehensive definition. At that time, they proposed Fombrun's 1996 definition of the concept which states that,

A corporate reputation is a collective representation of a firm's past actions and results that describe the firm's ability to deliver valued outcomes to multiple stakeholders. It gauges a firm's relative standing both internally with employees and externally with its stakeholder, in both its competitive and institutional environments (Fombrun & Van Riel, p.10).

This definition has been used by many scholars, but has never been adopted across the board. Today, the call for an agreed-upon, consistent definition remains unanswered. Yet, there does seem to be an increased sense of urgency as corporate reputation has become a mainstream concept, dominating news coverage and gaining in popularity as a topic of scholarly research.

Barnett, Jermier and Laffery (2006) point out that the number of studies focused on corporate reputation has increased dramatically in recent years. They found that "the average

number of scholarly articles on corporate reputation published during the period 2001-2003 is nearly five times as large as is the average for the period 1990-2000” (p. 27). They attribute this increase to the numerous high-profile events that have been profiled in the press and garnished so much attention.

Carter (2006) points out that the concept has also become more common in board rooms. Corporate executives have become more interested in managing corporate reputation because they have seen some companies lauded for their performance in seemingly reputation-damaging situations while have been criticized for damaging reputations in relatively positively circumstances. There has also been an exponential growth of citizen journalism and the ability of key publics to broadcast their views to the masses via social media, which may have also played a role in pushing the issue to the forefront.

Yet, even with a seemingly growing interest in the need for reputation management, there is still no consensus on a comprehensive definition. Rather, Walker (2010) found that fewer than half of the well-cited articles in his analysis, all of which specifically examined corporate reputation, even attempted to define the term. Perhaps it would help to begin with the dictionary’s definition.

“Reputation” is defined in Merriam Webster’s online dictionary (Reputation, 2010) as the “overall quality or character as seen or judged by people in general ... recognition by other people of some characteristic or ability ... or ... a place in public esteem or regard ... a good name.” The focus on the terms “people” or “public” indicates that reputation is determined by a corporation’s stakeholders as opposed to something the corporation itself dictates. The plethora of definitions used by scholars across disciplines appears to be consistent with this point. However, that is where much of the agreement ends.

Under the assumption that a corporation's reputation is determined by its stakeholders, the differences in the definitions of corporate reputation research appear to be in three primary areas: which stakeholder group(s) determine a corporation's reputation; which dimensions or elements of a corporation's performance should be considered in the evaluation of a reputation and subsequent determination of whether it is positive or negative; and whether a reputation remains consistent across disciplines and situations.

Defining Stakeholders

Whether a company's reputation is good or bad has to be determined by somebody and, as Mahon (2002) points out, the models used to measure corporate reputation vary significantly as to which of a corporation's stakeholder(s) are given this responsibility.

Miriam Webster's online dictionary (Stakeholder, 2010) defines "stakeholder" as "one that has a stake in an enterprise or one who is involved in or affected by a course of action." In the field of public relations, the "stakeholders" or "publics," terms used interchangeably for the purpose of this paper, are generally understood to be the groups or subgroups with the potential to impact the corporation, either positively or negatively. In addition, these groups can be either internal or external and, depending on a number of factors, can differ in the amount of influence they have on the corporation at any given time or in any given situation.

This means there is a seemingly infinite number of groups or subgroups that could be considered a public or stakeholder for any given corporation. They could include the most obvious of groups, such as a publicly traded corporation's institutional investors, or the most obscure of groups, such as a small group of advocates whose agenda doesn't appear to include items affiliated with the corporation or its policies.

The challenge this poses to the development of a consistent definition of corporate reputation is paramount. Which stakeholder(s) perceptions or beliefs should be taken into account? Which stakeholder or combination of stakeholders determines a corporation's reputation?

It further complicates the issue when each of these diverse groups has its own expectations from the company. For example, elements or dimensions of a corporation's performance that may improve its reputation with one or more of the stakeholders (such as high profit margins with shareholders) may actually hurt its reputation with other stakeholders (consumers). After all, shareholders expect a return on their investment while customers expect a good product or service at a fair price. Whose expectations should be met in order to have a "good" corporate reputation? The answer isn't simple, as the research indicates.

Fombrun (1996) in Fombrun and Gardberg (2000) takes an inclusive approach to this dilemma stating that, "by 'reputation' I mean the net perceptions of a company's ability to meet the expectations of all its stakeholders." This inclusion of all potential stakeholders in the definition is ambitious if taken literally. Chun (2005) took a more conservative approach, suggesting that corporate reputation should be seen as a "summary view of the perceptions held by all relevant stakeholders of an organization" (p. 105). Of course, that begs the question as to who is relevant and whether that answer remains consistent over time.

The well-respected *Fortune* magazine's "Most Admired Corporations" ranking limits their stakeholder list to only senior executives, outside directors, and financial analysts (Mahon, 2002). While some may argue that this list of group of stakeholders is too exclusive to get a true measure of corporate reputation, it is specific and consistent from year to year.

Others seem to focus on a single stakeholder without being specific. This suggests that a corporation could have numerous and potentially divergent, reputations at any given time, depending on which stakeholder's perception they are consulting or measuring. For example, Wartick (1992) defines corporate reputation as "the aggregation of a single stakeholder's perception of how well organizational responses are meeting the demands and expectations of many corporate stakeholders" (p. 34). Which stakeholder? Likewise, after a comprehensive review of several definitions, Gotsi and Wilson (2001) suggested that corporate reputation is "a stakeholder's overall evaluation of a company over time" and the evaluation should be "based on the stakeholder's direct experiences with the company" (p. 25).

In practice, the Reputation Institute, a well-respected private research firm affiliated with the peer-reviewed, scholarly journal, *Corporate Reputation Review*, publishes annual reputation measurements for the largest companies in the United States (Reputation Institute, 2010). Again, their evaluations are based on a single stakeholder – the respective corporations' consumers.

Operationalization of Reputation

In order to fully define corporate reputation, it's not enough to know how many or which stakeholders are included in the evaluation. It's also important to know what factors might shape their decision – a corporation's financial performance, the treatment of employees, level of social responsibility, customer satisfaction results, or something else? Is it a combination of elements and, if so, which ones?

Scholars and practitioners across disciplines are currently using a multitude of models, each with their own combination of "key" dimensions, to evaluate corporate reputation.

In the case of the Reputation Institute (2010), they use more than one model for different projects. Their annual listing of corporations uses four indicators -- trust, esteem, admiration, and

“good feeling” -- to evaluate and rank the country’s top achievers of corporate reputation. Yet, the proprietary tool they use with clients, RepTrak (2010), employs 23 performance values around seven dimensions – “products and services, innovation, workplace, governance, citizenship, leadership, and performance” (Reputation Institute, 2010, para. 4). Similarly, Walsh and Beatty (2007) tested a corporate reputation scale with five dimensions including “customer orientation, good employer, reliable and financially strong company, product and service quality, and social and environmental responsibility” (p. 127).

While there are a plethora of evaluation models, some are more popular than others. Hillenbrand and Money’s (2007) examination of the measurement tools designed to assess corporate reputation indicated that the most common models include “variations of *Fortune’s* Most Admired Companies List (MAC); the Reputation Quotient (RQ); the Corporate Personality Scale; and the Stakeholder Performance Indicator and Relationship Improvement Tool (SPIRIT)” (Hillenbrand & Money, 2007), all of which have their own, very distinct evaluation dimensions.

Fortune magazine’s annual ranking of the country’s most admired companies is one of the most commonly used measurement tools (Kioussis, Popescu, & Mitrook, 2007). It includes “innovation, financial soundness, employee talent, use of corporate assets, long-term investment value, social responsibility, quality of management, quality of products and services” (Hillenbrand & Money, 2007). The *Fortune* scorecard, however, has a number of critics. While Fryxell and Wang (1994) recognize a “corporate reputation element” in *Fortune’s* evaluation, they found that the measurements used were more of a determinant of how well a company was reaching its financial goals. Brown and Perry (1994) claim that the “financial halo” must be removed from the *Fortune* listing before it can be used in other research. Dowling (2004) notes

that he was unable to find any academic research that indicated that the predictors used by *Fortune* would “predict an independent measure of a company’s reputation” (p. 197).

Additionally, Mahon (2002) points out that having an assessment depend so much on financial performance negates its use as a measure of overall reputation.

The “Reputation Quotient” created by Fombrun uses his six pillars of reputation: corporate appeal, products and services, financial performance, workplace environment, and social responsibility (Fombrun & Gardberg, 2000). In this model, he also takes into consideration that some of the pillars may be more important to some audiences.

Davies, Chun, Da Silva, and Roper’s (2003) Corporate Personality Scale relies on how customers and employees, one internal and one external stakeholder group, view the “corporate character” of an organization. Their model has seven, personality-driven dimensions: agreeableness, enterprise, competence, chic, ruthlessness, machismo, and informality. This connection to personal characteristics is also found in Dutton, Dukerich, and Harquail (1994) as they employ impression management to measure people’s impressions of an organization. They note that “a person is strongly identified with an organization ... when his or her self-concept has many of the same characteristics he or she believes define the organization as a social group” (p. 239).

MacMillan, Money, Downing, and Hillenbrand (2004) use the SPIRIT measurement tools which start with a common set of questions that are then customized to meet the specific needs of the businesses being measured. The first part of the two-part SPIRIT measurement tool, the Stakeholder Performance Indicator (SPI), is designed to “demonstrate a business’ responsibility and reputation to others” (p. 28). The second part of the tool, the Relationship Improvement Tool (RIT), then applies techniques such as regression analysis to the data from the

SPI to give the business information on which items are the most important “in bringing about positive or negative outcomes.” The specific dimensions measured include “experiences (communication, material benefits, experience of outside influences); feelings (trust and positive emotions); and intentions (supportive behaviors such as advocacy and retention of stakeholders towards a business)” (MacMillan, et al., 2004)

The models become even more complex when other related, yet sometimes overlapping, concepts come into play. Coombs (2007), in a discussion of corporate reputation management says, “most of the information stakeholders collect about organization is derived from the news media” (p. 164). This would indicate that media coverage, either positive or negative, would have to be considered as a dimension of corporate reputation. And, in fact, Wartick (1992) looked at the effect of intense media coverage on changes in a corporation’s reputation and noted some association between the two.

Once again, the numerous evaluation models being used to measure the concept suggest there is virtually no agreement as to which dimensions should be considered in a comprehensive definition of corporate reputation. Some of them rely heavily on financial performance, while others don’t even include it in the measure.

Consistency in Disciplines

The final area of differences in definition of corporate reputation seems to be whether the definition allows for consistency across disciplines. Mahon (2002) suggests that any progress made in researching the term corporate reputation will be incremental unless scholars find a way to collaborate across disciplines and, in Fombrun and Van Riel’s (1997) call for inter-disciplinary cooperation, they said that corporate reputation was the “crossroads of converging disciplines” (p.5). They aren’t alone in this assessment.

Chun (2005) says corporate reputation is now recognized as an independent area of study, but is “dogged by its origins in a number of separate disciplines” (p. 91). She goes on to further analyze Fombrun and Van Riel’s (1997) six categories of literature which outline their view of the disciplines involved and the differences in defining corporate reputation:

- accountancy - reputation seen as an intangible asset and one that can or should be given financial worth;
- economics - reputation viewed as traits or signals. Perception held of the organization by an organization’s external stakeholders;
- marketing - viewed from the customer or end-user’s perspective and concentrating on the manner in which reputations are formed;
- organizational - viewed as the sense-making experiences of employees or the perception of the organization held by an organization’s internal stakeholders;
- sociology - viewed as an aggregate assessment of a firm’s performance relative to expectation and norms in an institutional context; and
- strategy - reputation viewed as assets and mobility barriers. (Fombrun & Van Riel, 1997, in Chun, 2005, p. 92).

This extensive listing, however, doesn’t include all of the disciplines using the term. For example, Carmeli (2005) applied corporate reputation to organizational studies by combining two definitions: one with a focus on internal and the other external stakeholders. Fombrun and Van Riel’s (1997) list does not include public relations, the discipline that is probably most often responsible for managing a corporation’s reputation.

While the concept of corporate reputation is applicable to many disciplines, it is crucial to the study of public relations and crisis communications as so many people believe practitioners

should be evaluated on how well they manage corporate reputations or how their efforts impact a corporation's reputation before, during and after a crisis.

The confusion surrounding a comprehensive definition is also evident in public relations scholarship. For example, as Kiouisis, et al. (2007) studied the relationships between public relations efforts and corporate reputation using the Relationship Quotient. They noted in their manuscript that there is a great deal of diversity in evaluation methods and, "although some consensus exists regarding the importance of reputation as a concept, operational definitions of how to measure it have varied" (p. 149). They also acknowledge the challenge this dilemma poses to scholars, saying their study "highlights the need for further explication of corporate reputation given the use of the Reputation Quotient as opposed to other indicators employed in prior analysis" (p. 162).

Other public relations scholars have applied definitions from across disciplines in their work. Grunig and Hunt (2000) in Yang and Grunig (2005) applied a psychology approach in their study and defined "reputation of organizations" as "the distribution of cognitive representations that members of a collectivity hold about an organization, representations that may, but do not always, include evaluative components" (p.308). This illustrates the wide variances in definitions of corporate reputation not just across disciplines, but within certain disciplines.

For the purposes of this study, corporate reputation will be determined through a combination of three dimensions: crisis blame attributions, attitude toward the company, and behavioral intentions. The measurements for each of these are adapted from Kim and Cameron's 2011 study on the effect of emotional framing in crisis communications.

Hypotheses/Research Question

Based on the previous work done with framing and emotions in crisis and to re-introduce schadenfreude to the study of crisis communications, the first two categories of hypotheses for this study are related to the framing of the traditionally studied emotions of anger and sadness and the introduction of happiness as an emotional indication of schadenfreude.

Emotional Framing of Articles

H1a: Subjects exposed to the anger-inducing articles will be angrier than those who were exposed to the sadness-inducing articles.

H1b: Subjects exposed to the sadness-inducing articles will be sadder than those who were exposed to the anger-inducing article.

H1c: Subjects exposed to articles with company consequences will be happier than those exposed to the articles with no company consequences (schadenfreude).

Effect of Emotions in Crisis Communications

H2a: The angrier a subject is, the more likely they will be to perceive the company's reputation as negative.

H2b: The sadder a subject is, the more likely they will be to perceive the company's reputation as negative.

H2c: The happier a subject is, the more likely they will be to perceive the company's reputation as positive.

The final two categories of hypotheses/research questions posited for this study are tied directly to the concept of schadenfreude in crisis. The first is based on the recent study (Kim, Kim & Cameron, 2012) that found third-person effect in crisis and the recent work into the

presence of schadenfreude in groups (Cikara & Fiske, 2012; Sundie, et al., 2009) that suggest a link between social-identity and perceptions or behaviors in crisis.

Third-Person Effect

H3: Subjects will predict that other people are more likely than themselves to experience schadenfreude if something bad happens to the company.

Social Identity Effect

R1: Is there an effect on a subjects' perception of company reputation if the subject identifies with either company representatives or victims in the article?

Chapter 5: Methods

Research Design

A 2x2 between-subjects online experiment with four conditions was conducted to test the hypotheses and research questions. The first independent variable was the emotional frame of the article (anger-inducing/sadness-inducing). The second independent variable is whether or not the company faced consequences for causing the crisis (company consequences/no company consequences). This second variable is based on the premise that company consequences will be happiness-inducing and, thus, create a schadenfreude experience. The dependent variable was perception of corporate reputation using three dimensions: blame attribution; attitude toward company; and behavioral intentions.

Sampling

A total of 213 subjects were recruited, of which 173 completed the study. These subjects were recruited through the online survey company, SurveyMonkey.

SurveyMonkey provides a “SurveyMonkey Audience” service to users, in which users pay SurveyMonkey for respondents to their surveys. These respondents are recruited from the 30+ million people who answer SurveyMonkey surveys every month (SurveyMonkey, 2012). They currently have approximately 1 million members as part of the program, all of whom agree to take surveys and are rewarded for their participation with a 50 cent donation to the charity of their choice and a chance to win \$100. SurveyMonkey states that the “audience is, overall, a diverse group of people and is reflective of the U.S. population (and of other country populations for our international members). However, it is comprised of people who have Internet access and have joined a program to take surveys” (SurveyMonkey, 2012). The program automatically

collects demographic information including age, gender, education level, income level, and geographic location for each of the respondents.

As noted above, the sample used was not a randomly-selected subset of the population and, therefore, the results cannot be generalized to the entire population. However, the sample is appropriate for this study as the study is a correlational study. That is, the study is designed to explore the relationships (co-variation) between variables within the sample and not to generalize the results to the entire population of the United States.

Stimulus

Based on the research done by Nabi (2003) and Kim and Cameron (2011), the stimuli for the first two conditions of the experiment were variations of an online news article about a company crisis. One variation of the article was framed to induce anger in the subjects and the other to induce sadness. The variations used to induce anger and sadness in the articles were based on the criteria noted by Kim and Cameron (2011) in their study, using the same emotional frames. These variations consist of the following: the crisis type was the type most often used in crisis communications studies, a technical error accident (An & Cheng, 2010) and the topic was fictitious because the level of prior reputation needed to be controlled. Also, following the lead of Kim and Cameron (2011) and based on Nabi's (2003) research, the facts presented in both the anger and sadness inducing articles were the same. However, the framing of the stories differed in that the anger-inducing article focused on the intentional wrongdoing or negligence of the company, while the sadness-inducing article focused on the victims and their personal stories. Both of these articles were written by an experienced journalist to better ensure that the article was written in a more realistic, journalistic tone. (See APPENDIX A)

For the second two conditions, those designed to induce happiness in the subjects through the inclusion of company consequences, the first two variations of the article were repeated with the addition of a paragraph in each that indicated the company was facing consequences for its wrongdoing. The additional paragraph read as follows: “***Story Update: In the weeks following this incident, OSHA referred the Brightly case to the Department of Justice for criminal prosecution. The DOJ charged both the company and Brightly CEO Dewayne Arnold with willfully violating OSHA safety standards. This morning, the company was fined \$147 million and Arnold was found guilty and sentenced to seven years in federal prison.”

Stimulus pretest.

The inducement of emotions in all four conditions was pretested with 25 respondents utilizing a snowball sample of adults. While the sample size for the pretest was too small to test for statistical significance, the results trended in a manner that indicated the stimulus materials were successfully inducing the emotions intended.

The pretest subjects who were exposed to the anger-inducing articles reported being more angry ($M = 19.0$, $SD = 4.57$) than those exposed to the sadness-inducing articles ($M = 16.55$, $SD = 6.12$). Similarly, the pretest subjects who were exposed to the sadness-inducing articles reported being more sad ($M = 12.92$, $SD = 4.39$) than those exposed to the anger-inducing articles ($M = 11.42$, $SD = 3.18$).

The pretest results also indicated that the stimulus materials for the second condition (having the company receive no consequences or receive negative consequences in an attempt to stimulate happiness/schadenfreude) were going to be successful. Pretest subjects who were exposed to articles in which there were consequences for the company reported being more happy ($M = 7.21$, $SD = 2.29$) than those exposed to the articles in which the company received no

consequences ($M = 6.0$, $SD = .000$). The trends in the pretest results indicated that no changes needed to be made to the stimulus materials prior to the implementation of the full study.

Experimental Procedure

Subjects recruited by the SurveyMonkey Audience program were asked to take an online “survey.” The first page of the survey was an informed consent that explained the study and required that subjects indicate their voluntary willingness to participate. The survey was designed in a manner that randomly assigned one of the four conditions (anger or sadness-inducing article/with or without company consequences) to each subject. On the second page of the “survey,” each subject read the article that was been randomly assigned to them. Once they read the article, they responded to a series of questions that measured their emotions toward the situation. Following the self-reported measurement for emotion, each subject was asked a series of questions that measured their perception of the company’s reputation based on blame attributions, attitude toward the company, and behavioral intentions. They were also asked questions to ascertain any third-person effect as well as whether or not they identified with company representatives or victims in the scenario.

Measures

Emotions.

The independent variable (emotion induced in the subject after reading one of the three versions of the framed crisis news article) was measured using an adaptation of the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PANAS) (Watson & Clark, 1994; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). The emotions being induced were expected to be sadness, anger (designated as hostility on the PANAS scale) and happiness/schadenfreude. Since schadenfreude is defined as happiness or pleasure as a result of someone else’s pain or misfortune, the PANAS scale for joviality was

used. Subjects were asked to indicate, on a scale from 1 (very slightly or not at all) to 5 (extremely), to what extent each of the adjectives listed in a series described their emotions after reading the article randomly assigned to them. The adjectives in the series represent the items on the PANAS scale used to measure hostility/anger (angry, hostile, irritable, scornful, disgusted, and loathing), sadness (sad, blue, downhearted, alone, lonely), and joviality/happiness (happy, joyful, delighted, cheerful, excited, enthusiastic, lively, and energetic).

Third-person effect/schadenfreude.

Each subject was asked to rate, on a scale from 1 (very slightly or not at all) to 5 (extremely), the following statement adapted from Coombs and Holladay (2005) “To what degree do YOU agree with this statement? I would be happy if something bad happened to the company after this incident – they deserved it.” They were then asked to rate, on the same scale, “To what degree do you believe MOST PEOPLE would be happy if something bad happened to the company after this incident – they deserved it.”

Social identity.

At the end of the survey, each subject was asked to rate, on a scale from 1 (don't identify at all) to 7 (completely identify), the following statement “To what degree did you identify with the CEO in this article?” They were then asked to rate, on the same scale, “To what degree did you identify with the PARENTS in this article.”

Reputation.

The subjects' perception of company reputation is a combination of three measurement tools, designed to assess blame attribution, attitude toward the company, and behavioral intentions.

Blame attributions. The degree to which the subject blames the company for the crisis, a variable that has been linked in numerous studies to stakeholder perception of corporate reputation (Coombs, Fediuk & Holladay, 2007; Coombs & Holladay, 2005; Kim, Kim & Cameron, 2009), was measured using a scale adopted by Kim and Cameron (2011) from Malhotra and Kuo (2009). Subjects were asked to what extent they think the company should be blamed for the incident on a seven-point scale from 1 (not at all) to 7 (very much).

Attitude. The subjects' attitude toward the company was measured using a scale adopted by Kim and Cameron (2011) from MacKenzie and Lutz (1989). The scale consists of three items measured on a seven-point semantic differential scale and include good-bad, favorable-unfavorable, and pleasant-unpleasant (p. 840).

Behavioral/buying intentions. The subjects' future behavioral intentions toward the company were measured on the scale adopted by Lyon and Cameron (2004). Subjects were asked to determine the likelihood of their participating in a series of three behaviors on a seven-point, Likert-type scale. The behaviors include: I would purchase the products of this company if I have the opportunity in the future; I would invest in this company if I have the opportunity in the future; and I would recommend this company's products to a friend if I have the opportunity in the future. (p. 841).

Chapter 6: Results

The raw data from the survey were downloaded from the SurveyMonkey software and imported into SPSS, a statistical software package. As shown in Table 1, of the 173 subjects that completed this study, 51.4 percent of them were female and 48.6 percent were male. The subjects' age was reported by category with 14.9 percent between the ages of 18 and 29, 15.4 percent between the ages of 30 and 44, more than a third of the sample (37.1 percent) between the ages of 45 and 60, and another third (32.6 percent) over the age of 60. Sixty percent of them reported an annual household income of more than \$50,000 while 64 percent of them held a college degree. The subjects represented all nine U.S. geographic locations that make up the four regions: Northeast (21.1 percent), Midwest (28 percent), South (27.5 percent) and the West (23.4 percent).

As mentioned earlier, the method utilized to recruit the sample for this study was not random. Rather, the sample is made up of SurveyMonkey users who have agreed (self-selected) to participate in additional surveys in exchange for having small donations made to charities of the participant's choosing (SurveyMonkey, 2012). Because of this, the results of the study cannot be generalized to the population as a whole. However, in an effort to determine how close the sample demographics were to the population, a comparison was made between the sample demographics and the results of the 2010 U.S. Census (U.S. Census Bureau, March, 2011; May, 2011; 2012; September, 2012; 2013) as seen in Table 1 and illustrated in Figure 2.

The sample's gender makeup appears fairly similar to the census data with 48.6 of the sample reporting as male compared to 49.2 percent of the population.

The sample is slightly older, have a little higher annual household income, and a little higher education than the general population. Nearly 10 percent more of the sample group was over the age of 60 while more than 10 percent fewer of them were between the ages of 30 and 44

(U.S. Census Bureau, May 2011). The sample population's annual household income is higher with a lower total percentage of subjects falling into the two categories under the \$50,000 - \$99,999 group than the general population (39.4 vs. 49.9 percent) and a higher total percentage of subjects falling into the two categories over the \$50,000 - \$99,999 group (27.1 vs. 21 percent) (U.S. Census Bureau, Sept. 2012). And, the sample population does have a higher educational attainment level than the general population with 89.1 percent of the sample attending college or higher compared to only 57 percent of those in the general population with the same attainment level (U.S. Census Bureau, Jan 2013).

The geographical distribution of the sample is slightly different than the general population with only 27.5 percent of subjects located in the South, compared to 37.1 percent of the general population and slightly lower representation of the sample in the Midwest (27.5 percent compared to 37.1 percent) and the Northeast (21.1 percent compared to 17.9 percent) (U.S. Census Bureau, March 2011).

Reliability of Indices

Emotion indices.

The three emotional indices used in this study were adapted subsets of the Positive and Negative Affect Scales (PANAS) (Watson & Clark, 1994; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). The subsets adapted included hostility (anger), sadness, and joviality (happiness). For the purposes of this study, these were named the anger, sadness and happiness indices and descriptive statistics were run for each (see Table 2).

Anger. The anger index consisted of six items (angry, disgusted, hostile, irritable, loathing, and scornful) with a Cronbach's alpha of .865, indicating a strong inter-correlation between the items. The range of scores in the index was from 6 to 30 ($M = 16.65$) with a

skewness of .121 (close to zero) which indicated a relatively normal distribution of scores around the mean, and a kurtosis of -.557 (less than zero), indicating that the distribution was flatter than normal. In addition, a Pearson's correlation test was run and, as seen in Table 3, showed that the relationships between each of the variables in the anger index was significant at the $p < .01$ level.

Sadness. The sadness index consisted of five items (alone, blue, downhearted, lonely, and sad) with a Cronbach's alpha of .750, indicating a relatively strong inter-correlation between the items. The range of scores in the index was from 5 to 21 ($M = 11.17$) with a skewness of .281 (relatively close to zero), which indicated a relatively normal distribution of scores around the mean, and a kurtosis of -.700 (less than zero) which indicated that the distribution was flatter than normal. In addition, a Pearson's correlation test was run and, as seen in Table 4, indicated that the relationships between each of the variables in the sadness index was significant at the $p < .01$ level.

Happiness. The happiness scale consisted of eight items (cheerful, delighted, energetic, enthusiastic, excited, happy, joyful, and lively) with a Cronbach's alpha of .969, indicating a very strong inter-correlation between the items. The range of scores in the index was from 8 to 38 ($M = 10.48$) with a skewness of 2.85 (much higher than zero), indicating that the distribution of scores around the mean is far from normal. Rather, more than 70 percent of the scores actually landed on the minimum score of 8, which is at the bottom of the range, denoting that there are a number of outliers with higher scores pulling the mean in a more positive direction. In addition, the kurtosis of distribution for the index was 7.62, indicating that the peak in the distribution was much steeper than normal and reinforcing the fact that a large percentage scores in this distribution fell at the bottom of the range. A Pearson's correlation test was run and, as seen in

Table 5, indicated that the relationships between each of the variables in the sadness index was significant at the $p < .01$ level.

While a normal distribution of scores around the mean is not one of the assumptions for linear regression (Berry, 1993), the abnormally large skewness of this variable was a concern so steps were taken to normalize the data. The transformation of data was done by first using the Schweinle method (multiply the standard deviation to determine the new upper limit of the range and remove any scores above that limit) to remove outlying scores (Raszkowski, 2008). Once the outliers were removed, the new variable (HAPPYREVISED) had an average score of 8.77 ($SD = 1.92$) with a skewness of 2.86.

Two transformation methods were attempted, square root and logarithm, based on Ender's (2000) instruction that these are the best two methods for positively skewed results (square transformation is more appropriate for negatively skewed distributions. The results of the square root transformation ($M = 2.95$, $SD = .29$) decreased the skewness over "HAPPYREVISED" by .14, while the results of the logarithm transformation ($M = .936$, $SD = .076$) reduced it by .28 (see Table 6).

To test the resulting covariance of this transformed variable on the dependent variable, Pearson's correlations were run and the results indicated that, with both transformation methods, the correlations remained significant at the $p < .01$ level (square root: $r = .242$ and logarithm: $r = .239$).

Every researcher should decide on a case-by-case basis, if the advantages gained by transforming data (normalizing the distribution and better ensuring reliable covariance scores with other variables; Ender, 2000) outweigh the potential disadvantages of using transformed data (relationship of the transformed variables may be difficult or confusing since interpretation

of the regression involves a transformed version of the original variable – Horn, 2008). In this case, since the lack of variation in the variable was not significantly modified through the transformation process, it was decided to do the analysis using the original variable. Limitations of the study due to this abnormally distributed variable are discussed later in the “Limitations and Future Research” section of this paper.

While the Cronbach’s alpha for each of the three emotional indices showed a strong inter-correlation between the related variables, an additional analysis was run to see if the deletion of one or more variables would further strengthen the measure. Results of this analysis, as shown in Table 7, indicated that the removal of any one of the variables would, in fact, weaken its respective index. Therefore, no variables were removed.

Reputation index.

The subjects’ perception of the dependent variable, company reputation, was a combination of three measurement tools designed to assess the following: blame attribution (Kim & Cameron, 2011), attitude toward the company, and behavioral intentions (Lyon & Cameron, 2004). Descriptive statistics were run for each (see Table 8).

Attribution. As the attribution portion of the reputation index consisted of only one item, there was no analysis of the inter-correlation of items. However, the variable did have to be reverse-coded before using it in the analysis. After the recoding, the range of responses on the item measure from 1 to 7 with an average score of 1.95 ($SD = 1.23$). The responses had a skewness of 1.345, indicating that there were more cases on the lower end of the curve, and a kurtosis of 1.484 indicating that the curve was a little more steep than normal.

Attitude. The attitude subscale consisted of three items (bad/good, unfavorable/favorable, and unpleasant/pleasant) with a Cronbach’s alpha of .873, indicating a strong inter-correlation

between the items. The range of scores in the index was from 3 to 20 ($M = 6.13$) with a skewness of 1.082 (above zero), which showed that the distribution of scores around the mean was not normally distributed, and a kurtosis of 7.638, indicating a distribution curve that was relatively normal in relation to its peakedness. In addition, a Pearson's correlation test was run and, as seen in Table 9, indicated that the relationships between each of the variables in the sadness index was significant at the $p < .01$ level.

Buying intention. The buying intentions subscale consisted of three items (intent to purchase, invest, and recommend to others) with a Cronbach's alpha of .964, indicating a very strong inter-correlation between the items. The range of scores in the index was from 3 to 21 ($M = 4.54$, $SD = 3.23$) with a skewness of 2.595 (much higher than zero), indicating that the distribution of scores around the mean was not normally distributed (again, with more scores at the bottom of the range), and a kurtosis of 7.638, indicating that the peak in the distribution is much steeper than normal and reinforcing the fact that a large percentage scores in this distribution fell at the bottom of the range. However, a Pearson's correlation test was run and, as seen in Table 10, indicated that the relationships between each of the variables in the sadness index was significant at the $p < .01$ level.

Once again, while a normal distribution of scores around the mean is not one of the assumptions for linear regression (Berry, 1993), the abnormally large skewness of this variable was a concern so steps were taken to normalize the data. The transformation of data was done by first using the Schweinle method (multiply the standard deviation by 2.5 to determine the new upper limit of the range and remove any scores above that limit) to remove outlying scores (Raszkowski, 2008). Once the outliers were removed, the new variable (BUYREVISED) had an average score of 3.43 ($SD = 1.10$) with a skewness of 2.78.

Two transformation methods were attempted, square root and logarithm, based on Ender's (2000) instruction that these are the best two methods for positively skewed results (square transformation is more appropriate for negatively skewed distributions). The results of the square root transformation ($M = 1.83$, $SD = .25$) decreased the skewness over "BUYREVISED" by .22, while the results of the logarithm transformation ($M = .52$, $SD = .10$) reduced it by .40 (see Table 11).

To test the resulting covariance of this transformed variable on the dependent variable, Pearson's correlations were run and the results indicated that, with both transformation methods, the correlations remained significant at the $p < .001$ level (square root: $r = .659$ and logarithm: $r = .652$).

Again, it was decided that the advantages gained by transforming this data did not outweigh the potential disadvantages of using transformed data and, therefore, the original variable was used. Limitations of the study due to this abnormally distributed variable are discussed later in the "Limitations and Future Research" section of this paper.

While the tests for attribution/blame, attitude toward the company and behavioral intention showed a strong inter-correlation between the related variables, an additional analysis was run to see if the deletion of one or more variables would further strengthen the measure. Results of this analysis (see Table 12) indicated that the removal of any one of the variables would, in fact, weaken its respective index. Therefore, no variables were removed from the reputation index.

Stimulus Materials and Emotion

The first three hypotheses are related to the stimulus materials and whether the framed articles successfully stimulated the emotions expected – H1a: Subjects exposed to the anger-

inducing articles will be angrier than those who were exposed to the sadness-inducing articles.; H1b: Subjects exposed to the sadness-inducing articles will be sadder than those who were exposed to the anger-inducing articles., and H1c: Subjects exposed to articles with company consequences will be happier than those exposed to the articles with no company consequences - schadenfreude.

The stimulus materials were designed to induce the emotions of anger, sadness, or happiness in the subjects. Two articles, one anger-inducing and one sadness-inducing, were produced (Appendix A) and subjects in the first condition were exposed to the anger-producing article while subjects in the second condition were exposed to the sadness-inducing article. For conditions three and four, the first two conditions were replicated with the addition of company consequences (the company was required to pay a fine for their wrongdoing and the CEO was found criminally liable and was given a seven-year prison sentence.)

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was run with all four conditions on the three emotional indices of anger, sadness and happiness. As seen in Table 13, the results indicate that the four conditions did not have a significant effect on the emotional indices: main effect of the stimuli on the anger index, $F(3, 176) = 1.702, p = n.s.$; main effect of the stimuli on the sadness index, $F(3, 176) = .882, p = n.s.$; and the main effect of the stimuli on the happiness index, $F(3, 176) = .816, p = n.s.$

To further analyze the potential impact of the stimulus on the subjects' emotion, as defined by the emotional indices, responses from subjects exposed to the two anger-inducing articles were combined into one group and responses from subjects exposed to the two sadness-inducing articles were combined into another. A one-way ANOVA was run using the resulting two groups (anger vs. sadness articles) to see if there was an effect on the three emotion indices.

As shown in Table 14, there was a main effect of anger-inducing or sadness-inducing article on anger $F(1,178) = .041$ at the $p < .05$ level. However, there was still no significance found for either sadness $F(1, 178) = .016, p = n.s.$ or happiness $F(1, 178) = .025, p = n.s.$ and, therefore, while H1a was supported, H1b was not.

To assess the impact that consequences for wrongdoing would have on stakeholder emotion, as defined by the emotional indices, responses from subjects in the two conditions without consequences were combined into one group and responses from subjects in the two conditions with consequences were combined into another. A one-way ANOVA was run using the resulting two groups (no consequences vs. consequences) to see if there was an effect on the three emotion indices. As shown in Table 15, the results indicated that there were no significant effects on any of the three emotional indices: anger $F(1,178) = .1010, p = n.s.$; sadness $F(1, 178) = .371, p = n.s.$; and happiness $F(1, 178) = .506, p = n.s.$ Therefore, H1c was not supported.

Since the only significant finding of the stimulus material on the emotional indices was an effect of the anger-inducing vs. sadness-inducing articles on the anger index, one last look at any additional effect of the stimulus material on emotion was explored. A one-way ANOVA on the anger and sadness-inducing articles on each of the emotional variables, rather than the indices, was run. As shown in Table 16, the only significant main effect of anger-inducing vs. sadness-inducing articles on these individual emotional variables were on “angry” $F(1, 178) = 6.111, p < .05$ and “disgusted” $F(1, 178) = 4.560, p < .05$, both of which are variables in the anger index for which the main effect for these groups was also significant and further supports H1a. The only other independent variables that approached significance also were variables on

the angry index and included “loathing” $F(1, 178) = 1.784, p = .183$ and “scornful” $F(1, 178) = 1.902, p = .170$.

A similar look at each independent emotion variable was done to explore any possible effect of no consequences vs. consequences. Just as these two groups had no significant impact on the emotion indices, the results shown in Table 17 indicated that they did not have any main impact on the individual variables. However, they did approach significance on three variables, “alone” $F(1, 178) = 3.402, p = .067$; “delighted” $F(1, 178) = 2.285, p = .132$; and “irritable” $F(1, 178) = 2.187, p = .141$. None of these three individual variables share inclusion on any one of the three emotional indexes and, therefore, this trend doesn’t seem to indicate that the presences of consequences as a stimulus had an impact in any specific direction.

Emotions and Reputation

The hypotheses related to emotions and reputation (H2a, H2b, and H2c) posited that the degree to which a subject reported being angry, sad or happy would have an effect on his or her perception of the company’s reputation. For the case of both anger and sadness, H2a and H2b state that the higher these emotions, the lower the corporate reputation. H2c, on the other hand, predicted that the happier the subject was, the more likely they would be to perceive the reputation as higher.

In order to establish whether or not there the relationship between the three emotions and reputation, a correlation was run for each emotion individually and then OLS regression was used to test if the emotions significantly predicted subjects’ perception of reputation.

All three emotions were found to be significantly correlated to reputation (see Tables 18, 19 & 20). The negative correlations for “angry” ($r = -.403, p < .05$) and “sad” ($r = -.174, p < .05$) indicated a negative relationship which supports H2a and H2b. “Happy,” on the other hand, had

a positive correlation, ($r = .448, p < .05$), which indicated that the happier the subject, the better the perceived reputation. Therefore, H2c was also supported.

The emotions were also included in an OLS regression model (see Table 21) to further test their potential relationship with the concept of reputation. The overall model (which included demographic variables, measures of social identity and the three emotional variables) was significant at the $p < .001$ level ($F = 13.804$). The R^2 of .467 indicates that nearly half of the variance in corporate reputation can be explained by the overall model and the $R^2\Delta$ of Model 3 (.129) indicates that nearly 13 percent of that variance is attributable to additional of the emotional variables in the model.

Specifically, there was a significant negative relationship between subjects who indicated that they were angry and their perceived reputation of the company ($b = -.312, p < .01$), indicating that someone who is angrier will have a more negative perception of the company's reputation. This further supports H2a.

The regression model also showed a significant positive relationship between subjects who indicated that they were happy and their perceived reputation of the company ($b = .335, p < .001$). This indicates that someone who is happier will have a more positive perception of the company's reputation and further supports H2c. In fact, happy is the strongest coefficient in the overall regression model with a standardized beta of .283.

The model does not show a significant relationship between subjects who indicated that they were sad and their perceived reputation of the company ($b = -.086, p = \text{n.s.}$) so, as before, there is no support for H2b.

Third-Person Effect on Schadenfreude

H3 predicted that subjects believed they would be less likely to experience schadenfreude (being happy if something bad happened to the company in crisis) than other people. To test for the presence of third-person effect of schadenfreude in crisis, subjects were asked to what degree they agreed with the two following statements: “You would be happy if something bad happened to the company.” And “OTHERS would be happy if something happened to the company.” This was measured on a scale from 1 (Completely Disagree) to 5 (Completely Agree). To compare the differences in means between “self” ($M = 2.93, SD = 1.33$) and “other” ($M = 3.61, SD = 1.02$), a paired sample t-test was run. As seen in Table 22, the results indicate that there is a significant difference between the means, $t(172) = 8.47, p < .001$. Therefore, H3 was supported.

Since this is the second measure of schadenfreude in the study, an effort was made to replicate the findings above where “happiness,” as the primary measure of schadenfreude was found to have a significant, positive correlation with perceived reputation ($r = .448, p < .05$). To accomplish this comparison, a correlation was run for the “self” measure of schadenfreude where subjects were asked to what degree they would be happy if something bad happened to the company. As shown in Table 23, the correlation for this second measure of schadenfreude was also significant, but the relationship with perceived reputation was negative ($r = -.316, p < .001$). This contradicts the valence of the relationship found with the primary measure of schadenfreude. If this had been the primary measure, H2c would not have been supported.

Social Identity in Crisis

R1 asked whether there was a difference in perception of reputation between people who claimed to identify more with either the CEO or parents in this crisis situation. The degree of identity for both were measured on a scale from 1 (Don’t Identify at All) to 7 (Completely

Identify). Correlations between reputation and both “Identify with CEO” ($M = 1.88, SD = 1.30$) and “Identify with Parents” ($M = 5.31, SD = 1.63$), as seen in Table 24 and Table 25, indicate that there is a relationship between identifying with the players in the crisis and perceived reputation.

Specifically, the results indicate a significant positive relationship between identification with the CEO and perceived reputation ($r = .274, p < .01$). Conversely, there is a significant negative relationship between identification with the parents in the situation and perceived reputation ($r = -.442, p < .01$).

As shown in Table 21, the role of social identity was further explored through OLS regression by introducing the social identity variables as moderating variables to emotions on reputation in Model 2. This model, which included both demographic variables and identification with either the CEO or parents is significant at the $p < .001$ level ($F = 12.298$) and is stronger than Model 1 with an R^2 of .337, indicating that 34 percent of the variance in subjects’ perception of reputation is attributable to the combination of the demographic variables and their identification with either the CEO or the parents in the article.

This model reiterates the positive relationship between subjects who indicated that they identified with the CEO and their perceived reputation of the company ($b = .1411, p < .001$), which indicates that someone who identifies more with the CEO will have a more positive perception of the company’s reputation. Model 2 also shows the negative relationship between subjects who indicated they identified with the parents and their perceived reputation of the company ($b = -1.707, p < .001$), which indicates that someone who identifies more with the parents will have a more negative perception of the company’s reputation. This further supports the answer to R1: there is an impact of social identify on reputation.

Demographic Variables

In an effort to control for demographic variables in the overall OLS regression model, Model 1 took all of the interval or ratio-level dependent variables into account including, gender, age, household income, and education. As shown in Table 21, Model 1 indicates that these variables alone account for 12.5 percent of the variance in stakeholder perceived reputation with an R^2 of .125 ($F = 13.804, p < .01$). While Model 1 is significant, only one of the coefficients is independently shown to be a significant predictor of reputation: gender.

The coefficient of gender is significant ($b = -4.235, p < .001$), indicating a negative relationship with perceived reputation. Since the reference group is male, this beta score indicates that that being female makes a subject more likely to have negative perceptions of the company.

The remaining demographic variables in the model, age ($b = -.967, p = \text{n.s.}$), household income ($b = -.521, p = \text{n.s.}$), and education ($b = -.470, p = \text{n.s.}$) were not found to be significant.

Chapter 7: Discussion

There were a number of findings in this study that contribute to the body of knowledge surrounding the role of emotions in crisis communications.

While the stimulus materials were designed to test the effect of framing on stakeholder emotions, they did not successfully induce the desired emotions at a significant level. However, the results did trend in the expected direction and indicate that the use of stronger stimulus materials could be successful in the future. The premise that a positive emotion (happiness), created by stakeholder schadenfreude, has a mitigating effect on negative stakeholder feelings was shown to have some merit while, at the same time, the complexity and difficulty of operationalizing schadenfreude as a concept in crisis communications was also evident.

The presence of a third-person effect, a previously under-studied concept in crisis communications, was found and social identity theory held true, predicting perceived reputation based on identification with one or another party/group. Finally, in an effort to control for demographic variables, gender had a significant effect on reputation.

Framing Effect on Emotions

Anger/sadness.

In this 2x2 design, the first objective was to differentiate the anger and sadness frames by offering two crisis news articles – one framed in a manner to elicit anger and one framed in a manner to elicit sadness. This was not completely successful. When the four conditions were split into two groups (anger and sadness-producing articles) for analysis (see Table 14), the anger-inducing articles did make subjects angrier ($M = 17.51, p < .05$), but the sadness-inducing articles did not significantly make subjects sadder. There are at least three possible explanations for this: 1) framing doesn't have an effect on stakeholder emotion, 2) the articles were not

framed in a manner that adequately triggered feelings of anger or sadness, or 3) there were issues in how the emotions were measured.

I believe the first explanation can be eliminated based on the results of prior studies. In her seminal work on the topic, Nabi (2003) found that emotions (fear and anger) can be used as frames that impact opinions on policy. Although even she noted that, rather than the emotions induced by her stimulus, “(i)t is possible that ... the emotional reactions reported may be based on the accessibility of past emotional experiences.” In other words, her respondents may be reporting emotions based on their prior perceptions and experiences with the issues addressed in the study (drunk driving and gun control) instead of responding to her stimulus. This possibility was addressed, however, by Kim and Cameron (2011), who controlled for previous emotional ties (prior reputation) in their crisis communication study on emotional framing by specifically selecting a fictitious company for their stimulus materials (cell phone battery manufacturer) with no apparent emotional association in their subjects.

Kim and Cameron (2011), in the first study of emotional framing in crisis communications, were also successful with their stimulus materials (the parameters of which were adopted for the current study). As in the current study, their materials¹ consisted of two crisis communication articles – one designed to elicit anger, the other sadness. Similarly, the currently study employed the technique used by Kim and Cameron (2011) to keep the basic facts of the incident consistent in both articles and to “induce either anger or sadness about a corporate crisis situation by emphasizing information related to each emotions’ core relations theme. That is, anger-inducing news emphasized the transgression of a company (i.e. the company’s intentional wrongdoing), whereas sadness-inducing news focused on suffering victims (i.e. crisis

¹ An effort was made to obtain copies of Kim and Cameron’s (2011) stimulus materials with the intention of more closely replicating their study design, but the materials were not available.

victims' personal lives and suffering" (p. 13). They were successful so it would be unreasonable to assume that framing doesn't have an impact on stakeholder emotion.

The second, and probably most likely, option for why the current study's stimulus materials failed to induce the desired emotions (despite a pretest that indicated otherwise) is that the articles were not strong enough and that, in an attempt to ensure that all the facts remained the same in both the anger and sadness-inducing articles, the articles did not differ enough in their content. This idea is supported by the fact that the anger-inducing article did significantly produce anger, indicating that at least one emotion was triggered in the process.

The third option is that the emotions were measured in a manner that was detrimental to the study. In this case, subjects were asked to "Please indicate to what degree each of the following words describes your feelings/emotions after reading the article." and were then provided with the PANAS subscale for hostility (anger), sadness, and joviality (happiness) with each individual subscale item listed individually in alphabetical order. One subject in the pretest noted that they felt uncomfortable reporting feelings of both sadness and happiness in response to the same scenario. Does this indicate that subjects should have been asked to choose among the three emotions instead of ranking their feeling on scales for all of them? Kim and Cameron used a similar measure (albeit not based on the PANAS scale) for their study and encounter the same issues. However, for future projects, it may be worth examining the relationship between anger and sadness, which have been shown to be highly correlated emotions (Sigfusdottir, Farkas & Silver, 2004) and to consider happiness separately.

Happiness/schadenfreude.

The second objective in this 2x2 design was to differentiate the groups in the third and fourth condition by giving providing subjects a scenario in which the company "suffered"

consequences for their intentional wrongdoing (multi-million dollar fine for the company and prison time for the CEO). The intent of this was to trigger a schadenfreude experience – feelings of happiness among subjects who were pleased that the company “got what they deserved.” The addition of company consequences to the crisis situation did not significantly trigger happiness (the presence of schadenfreude) in any of the conditions.

It is interesting to note, however, that the results did trend in the expected direction. Table 15 shows that in the case of anger and sadness, the introduction of consequences decreased the mean, albeit not significantly. The anger index went from an average score of 17.10 with no consequences to 16.23 with consequences, while the sadness index went from an average score of 11.36 to 10.99. Conversely, the happiness index score increased with the introduction of consequences (from 10.15 to 10.79). As this is the first attempt to trigger schadenfreude through framing, the trend suggests that further research and development of more successful stimulus materials may result in more significant findings. In any case, the trend suggests, as do the previous crisis communications studies involving schadenfreude (Coombs & Holladay, 2005; Kim & Cameron, 2011), that schadenfreude could have a role in crisis communication and could be triggered by the initial framing of the situation with stakeholders.

Emotion/Schadenfreude on Reputation

As previously noted, the potentially important role of emotions in crisis communication has been the focus of recent research (e.g. Choi and Lin, 2009; Coombs & Holladay, 2005; Jin, 2010; Jin, Liu & Austin, 2011; Jin, Pang & Cameron, 2007; Kim & Kioussis, 2012; Liu, Austin & Jin, 2011; Moon & Rhee, 2012). Similarly, this study showed that stakeholders’ emotions could have an impact on their perceptions of corporate reputation in a crisis situation.

As noted in situational crisis communications theory (Coombs, 2007), crisis history (was there a history of issues at the company before the current incident) and prior reputation of the company are significant contributing factors to stakeholders' perceived reputation of a company in crisis. The design of this study controlled for those two variables by providing subjects with a fictitious company in a neutral industry (no prior reputation or crisis history). In other words, all subjects, no matter their assigned condition, were provided with the same facts about the company and the crisis situation (albeit the situations were framed differently as discussed above). Therefore, the subjects' emotions just prior to reporting their perceived reputation of the company were one of the few variables that differentiated the subjects and can be attributed for their resulting different perceptions of reputation.

Anger vs. sadness.

The findings regarding the effect of anger and sadness are consistent with Kim and Cameron (2011) who discovered that those exposed to anger-inducing news had more negative attitudes toward the company than those exposed to sadness-inducing news. In this study, while there was a negative correlation between both anger and sadness with perceived reputation, the results indicate that those who are sadder do rate the company's reputation higher than those who are angrier. This may be a reinforcement of the idea that practitioners should work to avoid or diffuse anger in stakeholder groups as soon as possible as it does have a direct impact on the resulting reputation.

Happiness/schadenfreude.

Schadenfreude (deriving pleasure from the pain or failure of others) has not been considered to any large degree in crisis communication research. Coombs and Holladay (2005) included schadenfreude in their exploration of whether different types of crises would elicit

different emotions in stakeholders, but the link between those emotions and the resulting perception of reputation was not considered. In addition, all of the studies that have explored emotions in crisis and their resulting impact on reputation have focused on negative emotions including sadness, anger, fear, anxiety (Jin, 2010; Jin, Pang & Cameron, 2007; Kim & Cameron, 2011).

This study looked at *schadenfreude* as a measure of happiness and, as predicted, there was a substantial difference between those who are experiencing a positive emotion – happiness – and those experiences the negative emotions of sadness and anger. The results indicate, in fact, that happiness has a positive correlation with perceived reputation, as opposed to the negative correlations found between reputation and both anger and sadness.

It does appear, however, that happiness as a measure of *schadenfreude* may not adequately capture the complex concept as the results for this variable were contradictory to those of the second measure of *schadenfreude*.

As noted earlier, the PANAS subscale for “happiness” (happy, joyful, delighted, cheerful, excited, enthusiastic, lively, and energetic) was utilized as the primary measure of *schadenfreude* against “anger” and “sadness” because of its reliability in the field of psychology its similarity to two previous measures of *schadenfreude* (Hareli & Weiner, 2002; Sundie et al., 2009). These previous two *schadenfreude* studies had utilized the emotions of “happy, joyful, satisfied, and glad” and “joy, pleasure happiness and content” on similar scales. The second measure of *schadenfreude* in this study utilized a question adopted from Coombs and Holladay (2005). It was measured on a five-point scale from “completely disagree” to “completely agree” and read, “To what degree do you agree with this statement? I would be happy if something bad happened to the company after this incident – they deserve it.”

While happiness was positively correlated with reputation, this second measure of schadenfreude was actually found to have a negative correlation with reputation. Which one is a true measure of schadenfreude?

As noted before, there have been numerous questions and scales employed to try and measure this concept, with little consistency or consensus (Cikara & Fiske, 2012; Coombs & Holladay, 2005; Feather, 1989; Hareli & Wiener, 2002; Smith, et al., 1996; Sundie et al., 2009; van Dijk et al., 2011 & 2012).

Perhaps the operationalization of schadenfreude may be more complex than simply measuring one emotion (e.g. happiness, pleasure, etc.). If schadenfreude, as suggested by previous research (Feather, 1989; Hareli & Weiner, 2002; Heider, 1958; Smith, et al., 2009; van Dijk, Ouwerkerk, van Koningsbruggen, & Wesseling, 2012; van Dijk, Ouwerkerk, Wesseling, & van Koningsbruggen, 2011; van Dijk, van Koningsbruggen, Ouwerkerk, & Wesseling, 2011), is the result of a variety of difference base causes (e.g. envy, deservedness, low self-esteem, etc.), then might schadenfreude need to be measured differently in various situations? For example, it may be that a stakeholder group who is angry about a crisis situation and then happy because something bad happened to the company experiences that happiness differently than a group who was not angry about the crisis, but felt that the company got what they deserved.

To further explore this complex concept, a bivariate correlation was run, looking at both the “self” and “other” measures of schadenfreude with the emotional indices of “angry,” “sad,” and “happy.” While no significant relationship between these measures of schadenfreude and “sad” was found, the results corroborate that “happiness” is probably not a good measure of schadenfreude. Both “self” ($r = -.175, p < .05$) and “other” ($r = -.226, p < .01$) measures are negatively correlated to a significant degree with the happiness variable. In addition, both “self”

($r = .247, p < .01$) and “other”($r = .152, p < .05$) measures of schadenfreude are positively correlated with anger. This suggests that perhaps anger should be a component of any true operationalization of schadenfreude and is worthy of exploration in future studies.

In any case, it would appear that the role of emotions in crisis communication can have an impact on stakeholder perception on reputation and, despite the challenges in the inherent challenges with operationalizing these concepts, practitioners would do well to consider stakeholder emotions as a potential factor moving forward.

Third-Person Effect on Crisis

Only recently has third-person effect, the belief that “others” are more influenced than “self” by messages in communication, been introduced to the study of crisis communications (Kim, Kim & Cameron, 2012). In that study, researchers found that people believe “others” are more impacted by crises than themselves and that, in fact, this may be one way in which corporate crises become “escalated” (p. 391).

In an effort to explore the impact of third-person effect in another area of crisis, this study applies the concept to emotions, specifically schadenfreude, in a crisis situation. The results, as shown in Figure 3, indicated that, indeed, while subjects said that they would be happy (experience schadenfreude) if something bad happened to the company, they believed that “others” would be even happier. This is yet another indication that schadenfreude may play a vital role in crisis communications as stakeholders acknowledge, not only that it exists, but assume that “others” experience it to a greater degree. Could it affect stakeholder behavior if they believe others have a heightened feeling of schadenfreude and, if so, would it be prudent for crisis communicators to share stakeholder feedback with others to, perhaps, mitigate this?

It is also interesting to note that schadenfreude may have some of its roots in third-person effect, as well. In Portmann's (2000) book, *When Bad Things Happen to Other People*, he suggests that feelings of schadenfreude may occur because we view ourselves so differently than others. He notes that, "We are more likely to view the misfortunes of others as deserved than we are our own" (p. X1).

Social Identity Theory in Crisis

While third-person effect suggests that we see ourselves differently than we see "others," social-identity theory says that we are inherently driven to seek those similar to ourselves in an effort to belong. Once we find those similar to ourselves, we feel part of the group – the "in group" – and we are motivated to view our group more favorably than groups in which we don't identify – "out groups." Historically, this theory is not cited in crisis communication literature, but in a field that relies so heavily on the perceptions and opinions of stakeholder groups, perhaps it has great value.

This study found that some subjects identified to some degree with the CEO and some identified with the parents. It came as somewhat of a surprise that subjects would identify with the CEO as he was portrayed as unethical. Yet, as noted by Ashforth and Mael (1989), these types of social/group identifications can be seen in situations where there is "great loss or suffering" (p. 21) and "acceptance of the category as a definition of self does not necessarily mean acceptance of those values and attitudes" (p. 22). Perhaps many of these subjects were in management positions that put them in situations for which they had to absorb responsibility for their company's actions.

Not as surprising, is the finding that this identification with either party in the crisis situation impacts subjects' perception of the company's reputation. Results show that subjects

more likely to identify with the CEO had a better perceived reputation of the company, while those more likely to identify with the parents did not. This lends support to the emotion in crisis studies that show sadness or sympathy with the victims have a negative relationship with corporate reputation (Coombs & Holladay, 2005; Kim & Cameron, 2011).

Communications practitioners are taught that “analyzing publics” is key to strategic communications (Smith, 2009) and they do extensive research on their “publics” in order to identify issues, set objectives, and develop strategies for success. Perhaps, through social-identity theory, knowing with which groups these “publics” identify in a crisis situation should be a key part of this analysis.

Gender Differences

In an effort to control for demographic variables, the results uncovered a few interesting relationships. For example, the significant effect of gender on reputation suggests that women judge a company more harshly than their male counterparts in a crisis situation (see Table 21).

While there has not been much focus on the impact of stakeholder gender in crisis communications, this finding is consistent with Chi and Hung (2011). They found that females had more empathy toward other stakeholders in the Dell pricing crisis of 2009 and that consumer empathy, in turn, was positively related to the perception of damage to Dell’s corporate reputation. The idea that females may be more sympathetic to victims or other stakeholders in a crisis is interesting and has strong implications for practitioners and future study. Is it true and should practitioners be focused on different communications strategies based on the gender makeup of their primary audiences?

Study Limitations

There are limitations to this study that must be considered when analyzing the results and before making any assumptions as to the application of this information beyond this study.

The first consideration is the sample of subjects who participated in the study. While the sample included subjects from both genders, across age categories, income level, educational attainment, and geographic location, it was not a truly random sample of the population in the United States. Rather, it was a subset of people who have agreed to be part of SurveyMonkey's online survey audience program which recruits people to take surveys in exchange for having SurveyMonkey making a small donation to charity on the participant's behalf (SurveyMonkey, 2012). This leads to the assumption that the "volunteers" have, not only access to the internet on a regular basis, but characteristics in their personalities that make them more willing to take surveys and/or willing to do something that will benefit others, rather than themselves.

As described in the results and seen in Table 1 and Figure 2, the sample population utilized for this study does have some similarities with characteristics of the general population, yet they are also a little older, have a little higher annual household income, and have attained a higher level of education than the general population.

It is interesting to note that the higher income and educational attainment level of the sample is consistent with the differences generally found in internet vs. non-internet users (Bethlehem, 2010). Unlike the general findings of internet vs. non-internet users, however, the sample in this study is older than the general population. This may be due to the fact that people over the age of 60 devote more hours (i.e. survey time) to volunteering than their younger counterparts (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012), but additional research would be needed to

determine why the difference in age between the sample and the population is, in fact, the reverse of what might be expected of internet users.

Another limitation of this study is the experimental design, as is the case with much of the crisis communications research, because it cannot accurately reflect “real life” experiences. Therefore, the results cannot be generalized to “real life” situations. This is a challenge in the field, which relies heavily on experimental and case study methodology, because there are so many situational variables that make it difficult to predict stakeholder responses to specific crises and to develop prescriptive crisis response strategies that fit every situation.

Conclusions and Future Research

Clearly, a lot was learned from this study, but there is such a long way to go before concrete answers can be found regarding the role of emotions in crisis communications and even further before the information can be presented in a manner that would be beneficial to crisis communications practitioners.

These results indicate that the framing of news stories can impact stakeholders emotions and that those emotions, in turn can have an impact on stakeholder’s perception of a company’s reputation during and after a crisis. However, while the criteria cited in previous research for differentiating the news articles in a manner that elicited the desired emotions was followed and was successful in inducing anger, the materials were not strong enough to elicit all of the desired emotions. Experimentation with stimulus materials is needed to better refine them, building on the existing criteria, and will be a focus of my research in the future.

The study also indicates that schadenfreude has the potential to impact stakeholder’s perception of a company’s reputation in a crisis and is worth consideration in future crisis communication studies, especially as they relate to the role of emotions in crisis. These results

imply that, as subjects reported being more “happy,” they had a better perception of the company’s reputation. However, there were some questions raised when the second measure of schadenfreude (as part of the measurement for third-person effect) had a negatively correlated relationship with perceived reputation, indicating that the more schadenfreude one felt, the lower their perceptions of the company’s reputation. Further research will attempt to clarify these finding and to further explore the relationship between the subject’s “happiness” during or after a company’s crisis and the concept of schadenfreude, as well as the role schadenfreude plays in stakeholder perceptions of reputation in crisis situations.

Findings that showed a third-person effect in this study are interesting because, as was also the case with the concept of schadenfreude, third-person effect hasn’t been extensively explored in the area of crisis communications. Yet, in the one study other study cited related to third-person effect and crisis communications, (Kim, Kim & Cameron, 2012) found that people felt “others” were more impacted by the effects of a crisis than themselves. In this case, the findings indicate that people believe others people are more likely to feel schadenfreude when bad things happen to a company in crisis (assuming that the company is responsible for the crisis). Moving forward, this concept could be further explored by looking at how the assumption that other people are feeling schadenfreude toward a company in crisis may or may not have an impact on the subject’s own perceptions or behaviors.

In addition, the differences in subjects’ responses related to their identification with either the CEO or the parents in this crisis situation are interesting. As social identity theory indicates, people are more likely to empathize and be supportive of people or groups for whom they can identify. The results of this study illustrate that this holds true in crisis situations and could be further explored as a potential predictor of stakeholder behavior in crisis situations.

This study is only one small step in understanding the role stakeholder emotions, as well as other stakeholder differences and tendencies, have on a company's reputation during and after a crisis. While it offers some suggestions, it offers even more questions that provide fodder for research for years to come. Stay tuned.

Tables

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and Census Comparison

Variable	Sample Demographics	2010 Census Demographics	% Difference
Respondents (N)	173	308,745,539	
Gender (%)			
Male	48.6	49.2	-0.6
Female	51.4	50.8	0.6
Age (%)			
18-29	14.9	21.9	-7
30-44	15.4	25.8	-10.4
45-60	37.1	29.1	8
>60	32.6	23.2	9.4
Annual Household Income (%)			
\$0-\$24,999	23.9	25	-1.1
\$25,000-\$49,999	15.5	24.9	-9.4
\$50,000-\$99,999	33.5	29.1	4.4
\$100,000-\$149,999	15.5	11.9	3.6
>\$150,000	11.6	9.1	2.5
Education (%)**			
Less than High School	1.7	13	-11.3
High School Diploma	9.1	30	-20.9
Some College	25.1	19	6.1
Associate or Bachelor Degree	32.6	28	4.6
Graduate Degree	31.4	10	21.4
Location (%)			
Northeast	21.1	17.9	3.2
New England (8.2)			
Middle Atlantic (12.9)			
Midwest	28	21.7	6.3
East North Central (21.6)			
West North Central (6.4)			
South	27.5	37.1	-9.6
South Atlantic (15.2)			
East South Central (4.7)			
West South Central (7.6)			
West	23.4	23.3	.1
Mountain (10.5)			
Pacific (12.9)			

*Educational attainment numbers reported in census are for civilian/non-institutionalized citizens only.
N = 234,719,000

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for PANAS Adapted Emotion Indices

Index	# Items	Mean	SD	Range	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach's Alpha
Anger	6	16.65	5.81	6-30	.121	-.557	.865
Sadness	5	11.17	4.08	5-21	.281	-.700	.750
Happy	8	10.48	5.99	8-38	2.85	7.62	.969

Table 3

Pearson Correlation Coefficients for Anger Index

Variables ^a (N = 180)	Angry	Disgusted	Hostile	Irritable	Loathing	Scornful
Angry	--	.747**	.468**	.445**	.451**	.447**
Disgusted		--	.425**	.442**	.478**	.389**
Hostile			--	.652**	.547**	.580**
Irritable				--	.510**	.558**
Loathing					--	.611**
Scornful						--

^aResponses were coded from 1 (Slightly/Not at All) to 5 (Extremely)

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 4

Pearson Correlation Coefficients for Sadness Index

Variables ^a (N = 180)	Alone	Blue	Downhearted	Lonely	Sad
Alone	--	.234**	.248**	.650**	.195**
Blue		--	.663**	.209**	.448**
Downhearted			--	.266**	.560**
Lonely				--	.272**
Sad					--

^aResponses were coded from 1 (Slightly/Not at All) to 5 (Extremely)

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 5

Pearson Correlation Coefficients for Happiness Index

Variables ^a (N = 180)	Cheerful	Delighted	Energetic	Enthusiastic	Excited	Happy	Joyful	Lively
Cheerful	--	.717**	.724**	.732**	.741**	.815**	.850**	.846**
Delighted		--	.651**	.720**	.777**	.843**	.811**	.801**
Energetic			--	.795**	.810**	.731**	.813**	.787**
Enthusiastic				--	.8040**	.779**	.820**	.788**
Excited					--	.838**	.828**	.810**
Happy						--	.907**	.891**
Joyful							--	.922**
Lively								--

^aResponses were coded from 1 (Slightly/Not at All) to 5 (Extremely)

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics on Transformation of Happiness Subscale Variable

Variable	Mean	SD	Range	Skewness	Kurtosis
Happy	10.48	5.98	8-38	2.85	7.62
Happy Revised	8.77	1.93	8-16	2.86	7.3
Happy Square Root	2.95	.29	2.83-4.0	2.72	6.53
Happy Logarithm	.936	.076	.90-1.20	2.58	5.78

Table 7

Contribution to Cronbach's Alpha: Item by Item Analysis of Emotion Indices

Variable (N = 180)	Alpha if Item Deleted
Scale – Anger ($\alpha = .865$)	
Angry	.844
Disgusted	.847
Hostile	.837
Irritable	.841
Loathing	.841
Scornful	.842
Scale – Sadness ($\alpha = .750$)	
Alone	.739
Blue	.679
Downhearted	.643
Lonely	.729
Sad	.703
Scale – Happiness ($\alpha = .969$)	
Cheerful	.966
Delighted	.968
Energetic	.968
Enthusiastic	.966
Excited	.965
Happy	.963
Joyful	.961
Lively	.962

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for Reputation Index and Subscales

Variable	# Items	Mean	SD	Range	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach's Alpha
Reputation	7	12.65	6.72	7-37	1.485	1.532	.916
Attribution	1	1.95	1.23	1-7	1.345	1.484	-- ^a
Attitude	3	6.12	3.29	3-20	1.082	.906	.873
Buying Intentions	3	4.54	3.23	3-21	2.595	7.638	.964

^a Attribution measure only had one item so Cronbach's alpha was not appropriate.

Table 9

Pearson Correlation Coefficients for Attitude Subscale

Variables ^a (N = 173)	Bad/Good	Unfavorable/Favorable	Unpleasant/Pleasant
Bad/Good	--	.620**	.691**
Unfavorable/Favorable		--	.775**
Unpleasant/Pleasant			--

^aResponses were coded from 1 (Very Bad/Unfavorable/Unpleasant) to 7 (Very Good/Favorable/Pleasant)

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 10

Pearson Correlation Coefficients for Buying Intentions Subscale

Variables ^a (N = 173)	Purchase	Invest	Recommend
Purchase	--	.889**	.900**
Invest		--	.910**
Recommend			--

^aResponses were coded from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree)

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 11

Descriptive Statistics on Transformation of Buying Subscale Variable

Variable	Mean	SD	Range	Skewness	Kurtosis
Buying Subscale	4.54	3.23	3-21	2.60	7.64
Buying Revised	3.43	1.10	3-8	2.78	7.30
Buying Square Root	1.83	.25	1.73-2.83	2.56	5.77
Buying Logarithm	.52	.10	.48-.9	2.38	4.60

Table 12

Contribution to Cronbach's Alpha: Item by Item Analysis of Reputation Index

Variables ^a ($N = 173$)	Alpha if Deleted
Reputation ($\alpha = .916$)	
<i>Attribution</i>	
The blame for the incident lies with the company.	.915
<i>Attitude Subscale</i>	
How bad or good do feel about the company after reading the article?	.911
How unfavorable or favorable do you feel about the company after reading the article?	.899
How unpleasant or pleasant do you feel about the company after reading the article?	.895
<i>Buying Intentions Subscale</i>	
I would purchase the products of Brightly if I have the opportunity in the future.	.893
I would invest in Brightly if I have the opportunity in the future.	.894
I would recommend Brightly's products to a friend if I have the opportunity in the future.	.892

Table 13

Analysis of Variance for Framed Articles on Emotional Indices

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Main Effect on Anger			1.702	3	ns
Anger-Inducing Frame	18.02	6.41			
Sadness-Inducing Frame	15.95	5.81			
Anger-Inducing Frame with Consequences	16.96	4.89			
Sadness-Inducing Frame with Consequences	15.57	5.84			
Main Effect on Sadness			.220	3	ns
Anger-Inducing Frame	11.17	4.49			
Sadness-Inducing Frame	11.61	1.14			
Anger-Inducing Frame with Consequences	11.09	3.67			
Sadness-Inducing Frame with Consequences	10.90	4.07			
Main Effect on Happiness			.313	3	ns
Anger-Inducing Frame	10.46	5.80			
Sadness-Inducing Frame	9.76	4.97			
Anger-Inducing Frame with Consequences	10.53	6.06			
Sadness-Inducing Frame with Consequences	11.02	6.88			

Table 14

Analysis of Variance for Anger-Inducing and Sadness-Inducing Articles on Emotional Indices

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Main Effect on Anger			4.252	1	<.05
Anger-Inducing Articles	17.51	5.71			
Sadness-Inducing Articles	15.94	5.80			
Main Effect on Sadness			.016	1	ns
Anger-Inducing Articles	11.13	4.09			
Sadness-Inducing Articles	11.21	4.09			
Main Effect on Happiness			.001	1	ns
Anger-Inducing Articles	10.49	5.89			
Sadness-Inducing Articles	10.47	6.12			

Table 15

Analysis of Variance for No-Consequences and Consequences Articles on Emotional Indices

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Main Effect on Anger			1.010	1	ns
Articles with No Consequences	17.10	6.20			
Articles with Consequences	16.23	5.42			
Main Effect on Sadness			.371	1	ns
Articles with No Consequences	11.36	4.32			
Articles with Consequences	10.99	3.86			
Main Effect on Happiness			.506	1	ns
Articles with No Consequences	10.15	5.43			
Articles with Consequences	10.79	6.47			

Table 16

Analysis of Variance for Anger-Inducing and Sadness-Inducing Articles on Individual Emotional Variables

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Main Effect on Alone			.242	1	ns
Anger-Inducing Articles	1.51	.96			
Sadness-Inducing Articles	1.59	.95			
Main Effect on Angry			6.111	1	<.05
Anger-Inducing Articles	3.78	1.23			
Sadness-Inducing Articles	3.33	1.22			
Main Effect on Blue			.013	1	ns
Anger-Inducing Articles	2.30	1.32			
Sadness-Inducing Articles	2.32	1.08			
Main Effect on Cheerful			.063	1	ns
Anger-Inducing Articles	1.27	.78			
Sadness-Inducing Articles	1.30	.82			
Main Effect on Delighted			.032	1	ns
Anger-Inducing Articles	1.33	.93			
Sadness-Inducing Articles	1.31	.80			
Main Effect on Disgusted			4.560	1	<.05
Anger-Inducing Articles	3.88	1.21			
Sadness-Inducing Articles	3.50	1.22			
Main Effect on Downhearted			.010	1	ns
Anger-Inducing Articles	2.76	1.28			
Sadness-Inducing Articles	2.78	1.20			
Main Effect on Energetic			.001	1	ns
Anger-Inducing Articles	1.38	.83			
Sadness-Inducing Articles	1.38	.82			
Main Effect on Enthusiastic			.206	1	ns
Anger-Inducing Articles	1.27	.74			
Sadness-Inducing Articles	1.32	.83			
Main Effect on Excited			.628	1	ns
Anger-Inducing Articles	1.37	.93			
Sadness-Inducing Articles	1.26	.77			

Main Effect on Happy			.026	1	ns
Anger-Inducing Articles	1.31	.86			
Sadness-Inducing Articles	1.32	.88			
Main Effect on Hostile			.915	1	ns
Anger-Inducing Articles	2.37	1.20			
Sadness-Inducing Articles	2.20	1.18			
Main Effect on Irritable			1.600	1	ns
Anger-Inducing Articles	2.52	1.28			
Sadness-Inducing Articles	2.28	1.26			
Main Effect on Joyful			.041	1	ns
Anger-Inducing Articles	1.31	.81			
Sadness-Inducing Articles	1.29	.82			
Main Effect on Lively			.025	1	ns
Anger-Inducing Articles	1.27	.75			
Sadness-Inducing Articles	1.29	.83			
Main Effect on Loathing			1.784	1	ns
Anger-Inducing Articles	2.39	1.33			
Sadness-Inducing Articles	2.14	1.17			
Main Effect on Lonely			.054	1	ns
Anger-Inducing Articles	1.44	.85			
Sadness-Inducing Articles	1.47	.90			
Main Effect on Sad			.084	1	ns
Anger-Inducing Articles	3.11	1.45			
Sadness-Inducing Articles	3.05	1.41			
Main Effect on Scornful			1.902	1	ns
Anger-Inducing Articles	2.57	1.39			
Sadness-Inducing Articles	2.30	1.23			

Table 17

Analysis of Variance for No Consequences for Company and Consequences for Company on Individual Emotional Variables

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Main Effect on Alone			3.402	1	ns
No Consequences	1.69	1.0			
Consequences	1.43	.90			
Main Effect on Angry			.399	1	ns
No Consequences	3.63	1.30			
Consequences	3.51	1.20			
Main Effect on Blue			.697	1	ns
No Consequences	2.23	1.20			
Consequences	2.38	1.21			
Main Effect on Cheerful			.393	1	ns
No Consequences	1.24	.72			
Consequences	1.32	.87			
Main Effect on Delighted			2.285	1	ns
No Consequences	1.22	.73			
Consequences	1.41	.97			
Main Effect on Disgusted			.076	1	ns
No Consequences	3.72	1.27			
Consequences	3.68	1.19			
Main Effect on Downhearted			.005	1	ns
No Consequences	2.78	1.29			
Consequences	2.77	1.20			
Main Effect on Energetic			.072	1	ns
No Consequences	1.36	.82			
Consequences	1.39	.83			
Main Effect on Enthusiastic			.679	1	ns
No Consequences	1.24	.68			
Consequences	1.34	.86			
Main Effect on Excited			.002	1	ns
No Consequences	1.31	.86			
Consequences	1.32	.86			

Main Effect on Happy			.669	1	ns
No Consequences	1.26	.80			
Consequences	1.36	.93			
Main Effect on Hostile			1.168	1	ns
No Consequences	2.38	1.22			
Consequences	2.19	1.17			
Main Effect on Irritable			2.187	1	ns
No Consequences	2.55	1.34			
Consequences	2.27	1.20			
Main Effect on Joyful			.264	1	ns
No Consequences	1.27	.77			
Consequences	1.33	.85			
Main Effect on Lively			.296	1	ns
No Consequences	1.24	.73			
Consequences	1.31	.84			
Main Effect on Loathing			.060	1	ns
No Consequences	2.29	1.33			
Consequences	2.24	1.19			
Main Effect on Lonely			1.360	1	ns
No Consequences	1.53	.93			
Consequences	1.38	.82			
Main Effect on Sad			.203	1	ns
No Consequences	3.13	1.52			
Consequences	3.03	1.34			
Main Effect on Scornful			.869	1	ns
No Consequences	2.53	1.37			
Consequences	2.35	1.28			

Table 18

Pearson Correlation Coefficients for Angry and Reputation

Variables	Angry	Reputation
Angry	--	-.403**
Reputation		--

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 19

Pearson Correlation Coefficients for Sad and Reputation

Variables	Sad	Reputation
Sad	--	-.174**
Reputation		--

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 20

Pearson Correlation Coefficients for Happy and Reputation

Variables	Happy	Reputation
Happy	--	.448**
Reputation		--

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 21

Hierarchical Regression Results: Reputation (N = 152)

Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	<i>b</i>	β	<i>b</i>	β	<i>b</i>	β
Demographics						
Gender ^a	-4.235*** (1.062)	-.310	-3.018** (.949)	-.221	-2.500** (.872)	-.183
Age	-.967 (.519)	-.146	-.286 (.467)	-.043	-.254 (.424)	-.038
Household Income	-.521 (.418)	-.097	-.388 (.367)	-.072	-.388 (.341)	-.072
Education	-.470 (.525)	-.070	-.753 (.463)	-1.628	-.866 (.430)	-.129
Social Identity						
Identify with CEO			1.411*** (.366)	.268	.901* (.345)	.171
Identify with Parents			-1.707*** (.286)	-.413	-1.039*** (.286)	-.251
Emotion						
Angry					-.312** (.102)	-.261
Sad					-.068 (.145)	-.041
Happy					.335*** (.081)	.283
Intercept	26.138*** (3.355)	0	28.696*** (3.283)	0	28.017*** (3.429)	0
F	5.263**		12.298***		13.804***	
R ²	.125		.337		.467	
R ² Δ	.125		.212		.129	
Adjusted R ²	.101		.310		.433	

Note: Standard errors are shown in parentheses.

^a Reference group is male.

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Table 22

Paired-Sample t Test for “Self” and “Other” Measures of Schadenfreude

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t value</i>	<i>df</i>
YOU would be happy if something happened to the company.	2.93	1.32		
OTHERS would be happy if something happened to the company.	3.61	1.02	-8.422***	172

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Table 23

Pearson Correlation Coefficients for Second Schadenfreude Measure and Reputation

Variables	Schadenfreude	Reputation
Schadenfreude	--	-.316***
Reputation		--

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Table 24

Pearson Correlation Coefficients for Identify with CEO and Reputation

Variables	Identify with CEO	Reputation
Identify with CEO	--	.274**
Reputation		--

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Table 25

Pearson Correlation Coefficients for Identify with Parents and Reputation

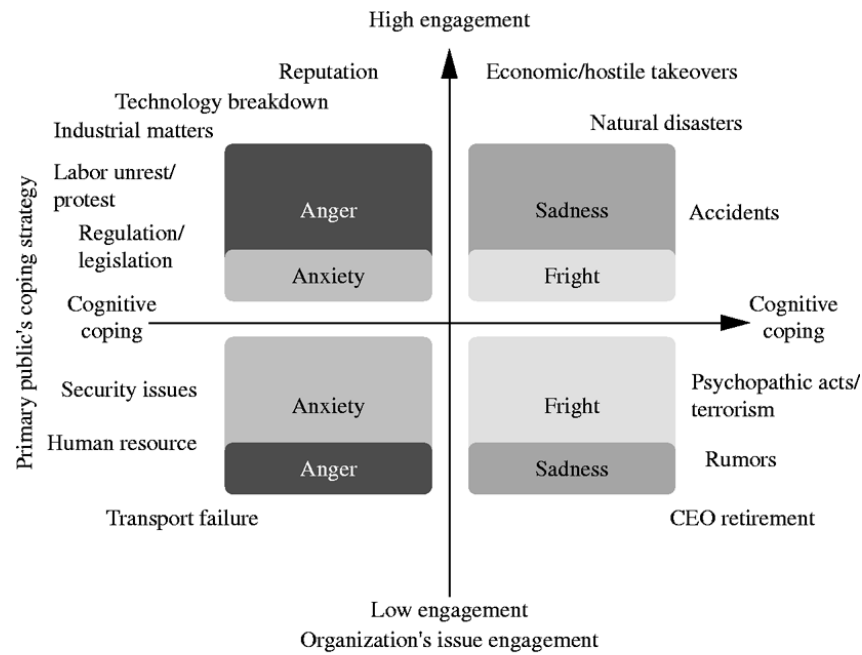
Variables	Identify with Parents	Reputation
Identify with Parents	--	-.442**
Reputation		--

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$

Figures

Figure 1

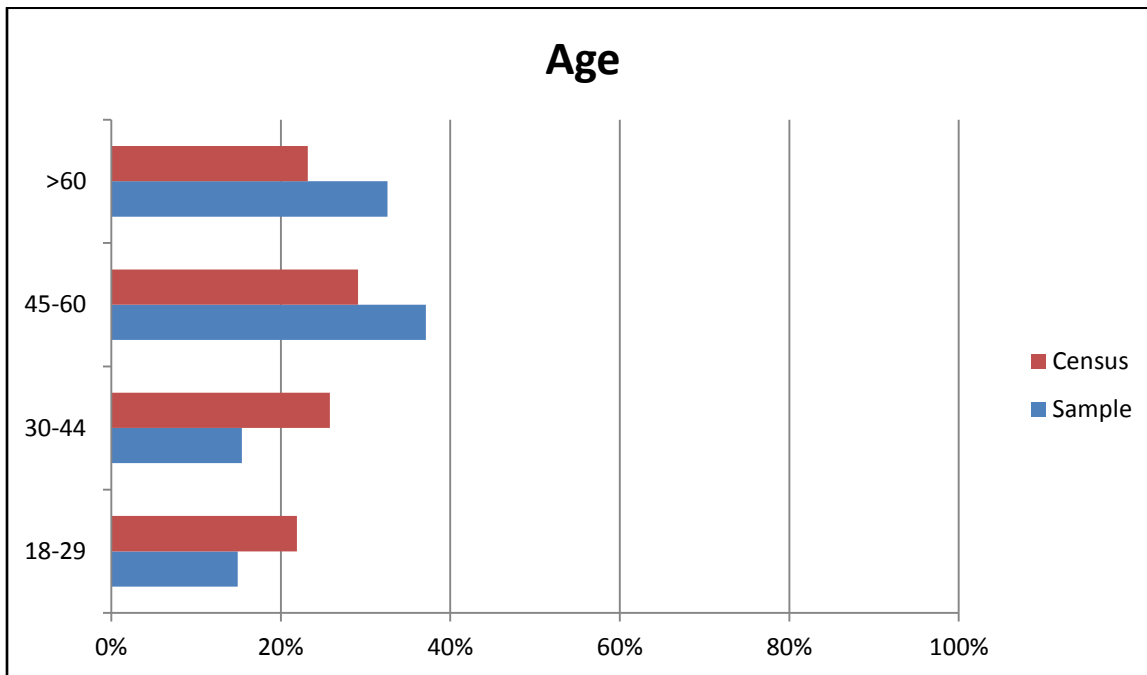
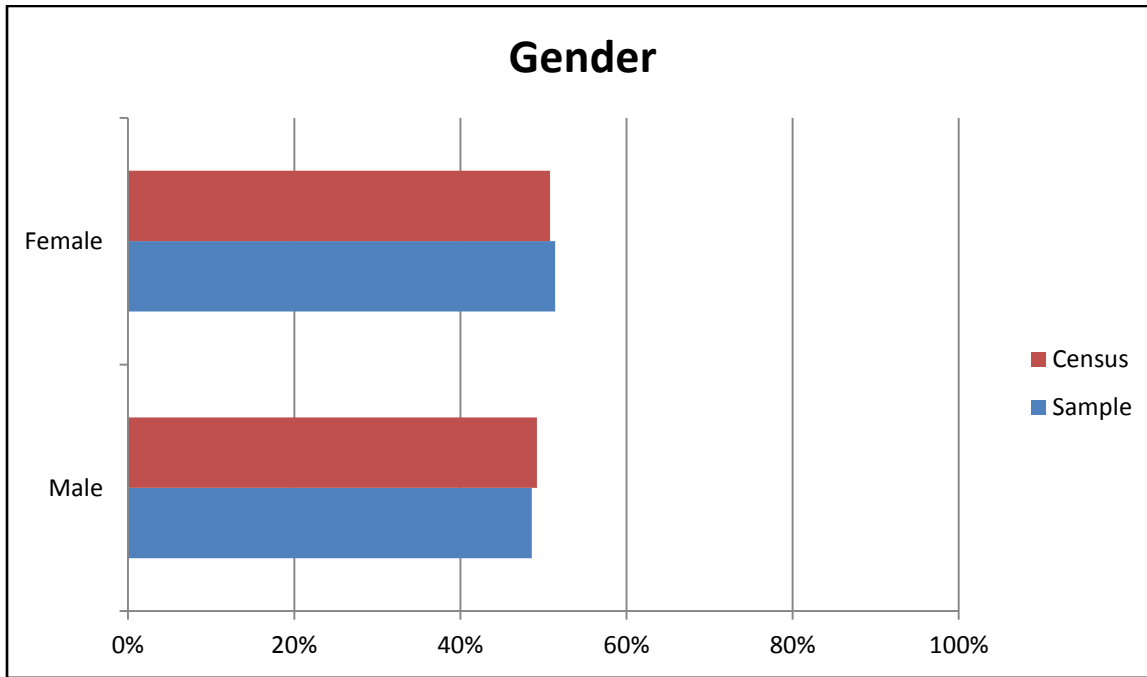
Jin, Pang and Cameron's ICM Model

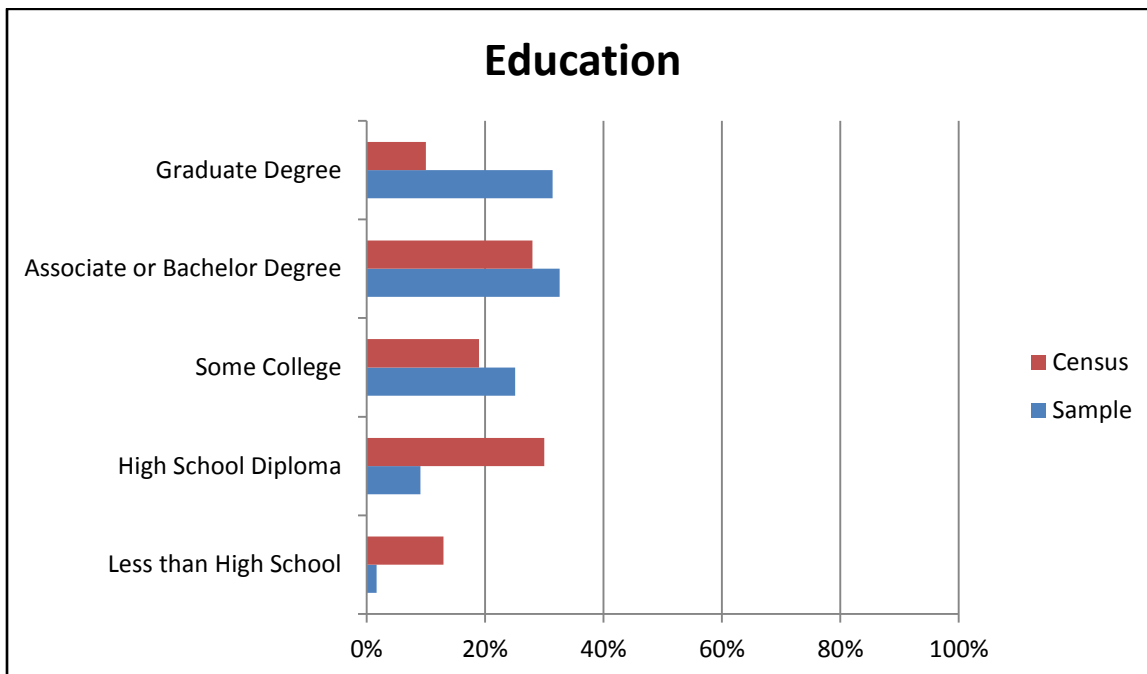
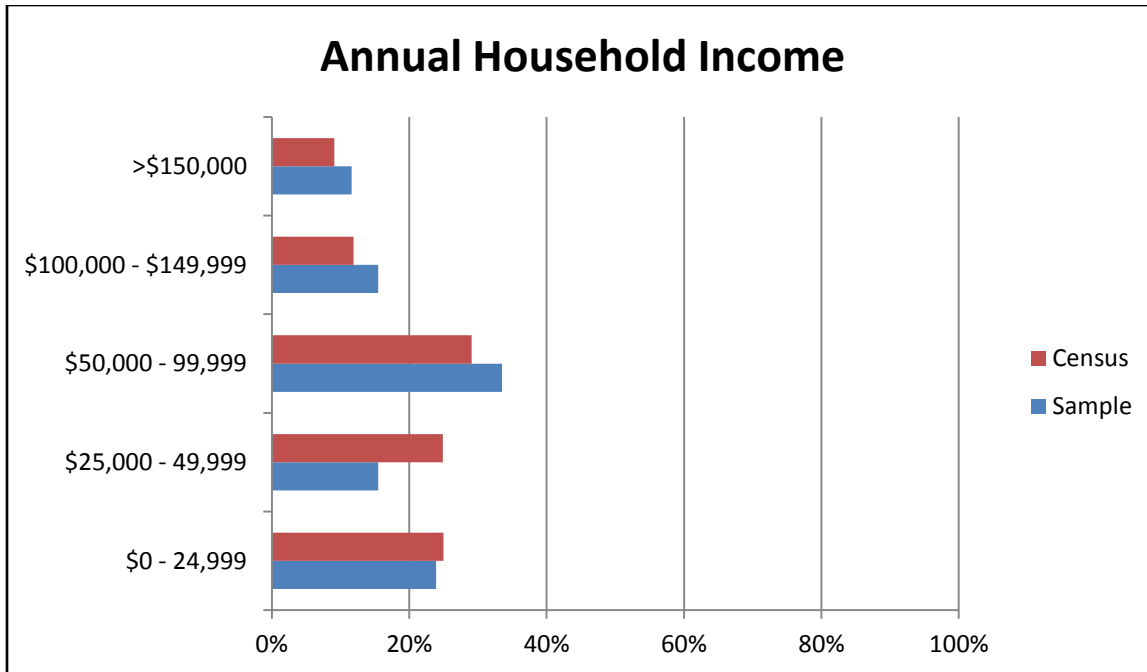


Source: Jin *et al.* (2007)

Figure 2

Demographic Comparisons between Sample and 2010 Census Data





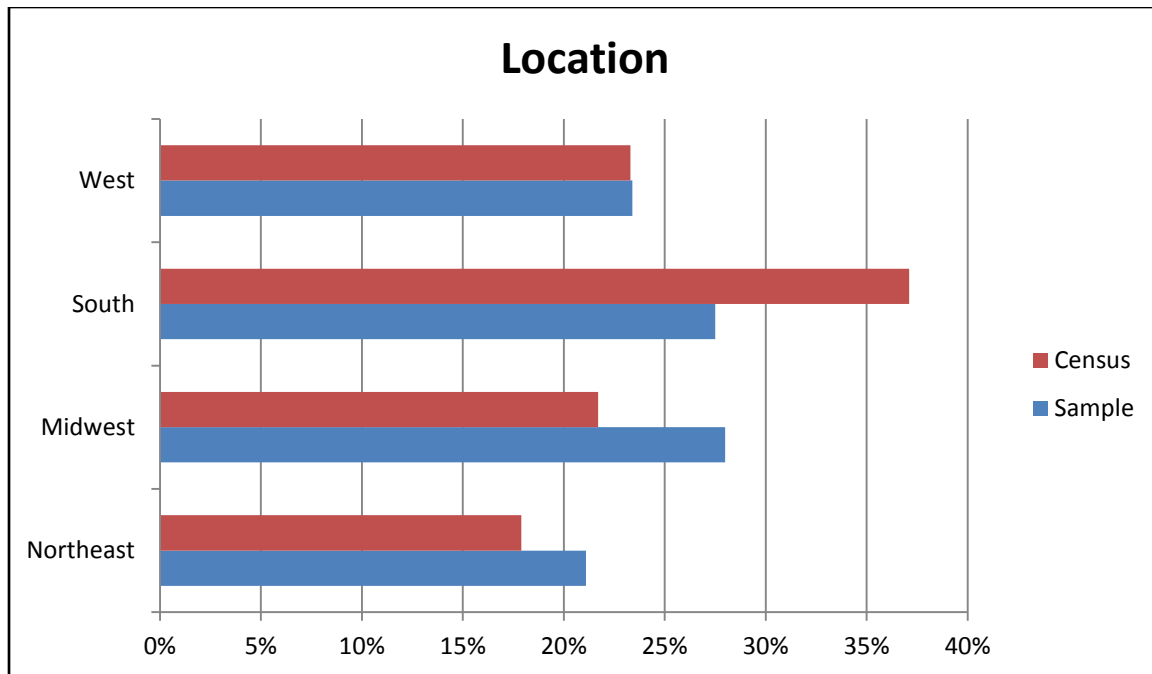
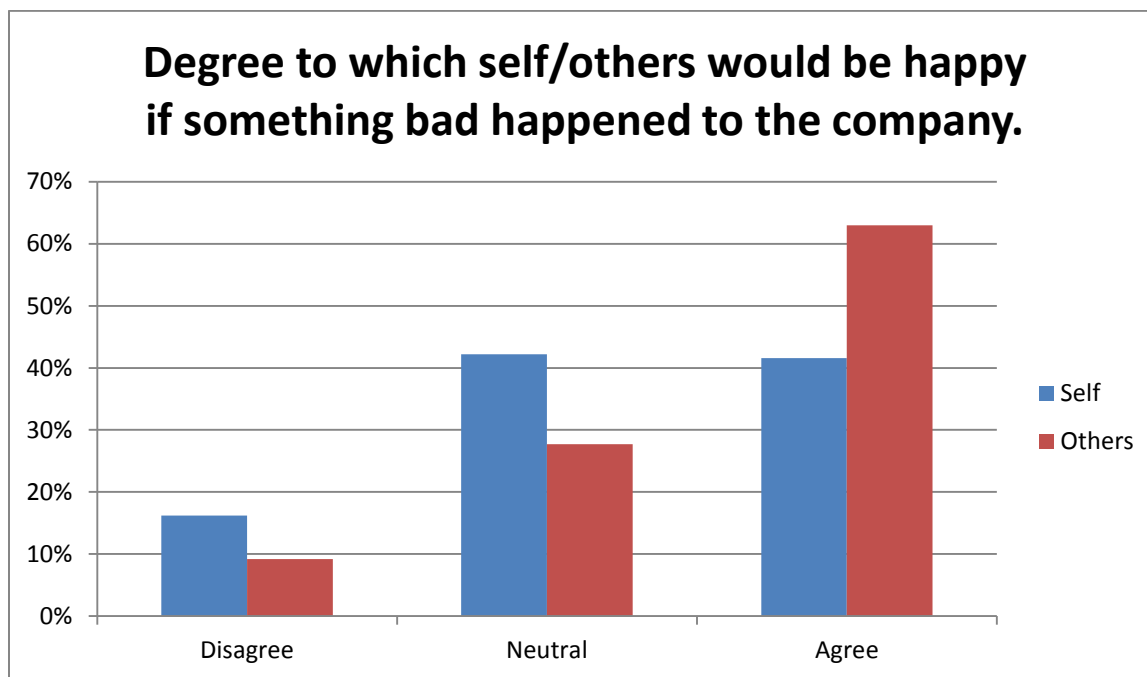
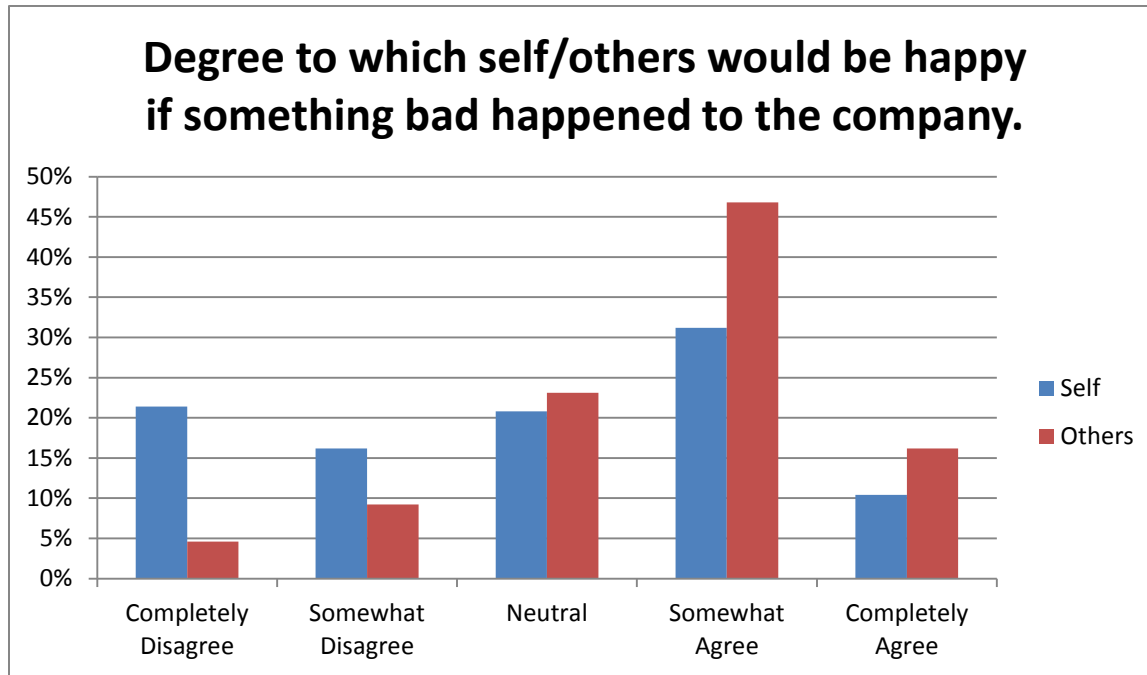


Figure 3

Third-Person Effect of Schadenfreude in Crisis (Uncollapsed and Collapsed Categories)



Appendices

Appendix A

A. ANGER

The following news story appeared in this morning's paper...

Brightly Bulbs Determined to be Cause of Fire

By Ronald Potter

Officials at Brightly knew a month ago of a potential design error that turned their 60-watt into a fire hazard.

Company officials ignored the error and chose to continue production of the flawed lightbulbs, citing the cost to the company.

The company's lightbulbs have since been labeled as the cause of a deadly house fire that killed a family of four earlier this month. Today, the company announced that it was recalling more than a million of its lightbulbs.

The company is recalling 1.2 million of its 60-watt, 130-volt A17 household bulbs, which are prone to overheating and are a potential fire hazard.

Almost immediately after the bulbs hit store shelves a month ago, the company began receiving complaints that the lights overheated with some regularity. Brightly CEO Dewayne Arnold said that the company was in the process of investigating these claims. He also said that it was company policy to continue production until the problem could be confirmed.

"Stopping the production line costs money, and I've got shareholders to consider," Arnold said.

That business decision turned tragic last week in North Hampton, when Ted and Catherine Douglas and their two small children, Jacob and Kaitlyn, died after a bulb overheated and flames spread rapidly to the family Christmas tree. Mr. and Mrs. Douglas, ages 34 and 32, respectively, both died of smoke inhalation while trying to save their son (age 5) and daughter (age 3). Catherine Douglas was an ovarian cancer survivor, and her husband had recently been laid off from his job at a local bank.

"This is truly heartbreaking because this family had overcome so much," said Joanne Buckley, one of the Douglas' neighbors and close friends. "The family was looking forward to a truly, joyful Christmas together and now they are all gone."

The recall is expected to cost Brightly \$15 million. This is not the first trouble the lighting company has run into this year. Three months ago, the company's factory was investigated by federal officials after workers filed complaints about working conditions.

"We could find no documentation of the equipment at the plant being maintained on a regular basis," according to Robert Bryant, a spokesperson for the Occupational and Safety Hazards

Administration (OSHA), which cited the plant in September. “The response we got from the management at Brightly noncommittal. It seems as though they were unwilling to make the adjustments for the safety of their workers and, ultimately, their customers.”

B. SADNESS

The following news story appeared in this morning's paper...

Local Family Killed in Tragic House Fire

By Ronald Potter

It had been a rough year for the Douglas family.

Ted Douglas, 34, had been laid off from his job at Northern Bank after 15 years, a victim of the continued recession. Catherine, 32, was diagnosed with ovarian cancer in January.

But as 2012 came to a close, things were starting to look up. Family friends said Catherine was in remission, Ted had a job lead, and the couple was looking forward to spending Christmas with their son Jacob, 5, and daughter, Kaitlyn, 3.

But last week, the entire Douglas family died in a house fire when a Brightly lightbulb overheated, and flames spread rapidly to the family's Christmas tree. Ted and Catherine Douglas both died of smoke inhalation trying to save their children.

“This is truly heartbreaking because this family had overcome so much,” said Joanne Buckley, one of the Douglas' neighbors and close friends. “I had looked after Jacob and Kaitlyn quite a bit over the past few months because Catherine had gone through a bout with ovarian cancer and Ted was looking for a job after being laid-off last year. Finally, just last week, Catherine had received a piece of good news from her doctor and Ted thought he had a good lead on a position downtown. The family was looking forward to a truly joyful Christmas together and now they are all gone.”

On Tuesday, Brightly announced that it was recalling 1.2 million of its 60-watt, 130-volt A17 household bulbs because they are prone to overheat and can become a fire hazard to customers.

The faulty bulbs were the result of a technical error at their plant, which Brightly officials knew about but did nothing to fix.

Brightly CEO Dewayne Arnold said that he was aware of the reported error and that the company was in the process of investigating the claim, but that the policy was to continue production until a problem could be confirmed. “Stopping the production line costs money and I've got shareholders to consider,” he said.

Douglas' father and father-in-law have declined interview requests but did confirm that they are pondering legal action against Brightly, which was cited by the Occupational and Safety Hazards Administration (OSHA) in September.

“We could find no documentation of the equipment at the plant being maintained on a regular basis,” according to Robert Bryant, a spokesperson for OSHA, “The response we got from the management at Brightly was noncommittal. It seems as though they were unwilling to make the adjustments for the safety of their workers and, ultimately, their customers.”

C. and D. Consequence added: “***Story Update: In the weeks following this incident, OSHA referred the Brightly case to the Department of Justice for criminal prosecution. The DOJ charged both the company and Brightly CEO Dewayne Arnold with willfully violating OSHA safety standards. This morning, the company was fined \$147 million and Arnold was found guilty and sentenced to seven years in federal prison.

Appendix B

This scale consists of a number of words and phrases that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and indicate to what extent you feel this way after reading the article.

Use the following scale to record your answers:

1	2	3	4	5
very slightly or not at all	a little	moderately	quite a bit	extremely

___ alone

___ energetic

___ lively

___ angry

___ enthusiastic

___ loathing

___ blue

___ excited

___ lonely

___ cheerful

___ happy

___ sad

___ delighted

___ hostile

___ scornful

___ disgusted

___ irritable

___ downhearted

___ joyful

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Kristi S. Gilmore, APR

Curriculum Vitae

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SUMMARY

- Public relations professional with 20 years of experience in corporate communications, strategic public relations, nonprofit communications, and crisis communications.
- Assistant professor with experience developing and teaching public relations courses at the undergraduate and graduate levels.
- Ph.D. candidate (ABD) with research focus on crisis communications and corporate reputation.

EDUCATION

S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, Syracuse University, Syracuse, N.Y.

Ph.D., Mass Communications, May 2013

Dissertation: The Impact of Schadenfreude as an Emotional Frame in Crisis Communications on Perception of Corporate Reputation

Advisor: Dennis F. Kinsey, Ph.D.

University of West Florida, Pensacola, Fla.

M.A., Communications, August 2009

Birmingham-Southern College, Birmingham, Ala.

B.A., Psychology, May 1987

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Texas Tech University, College of Media and Communication

Assistant Professor, *Beginning July 2013*

PR 3312 **PR Writing**, Summer 2013 (Scheduled)

PR 4301 **Crisis Communications – Special Topics**, Fall 2013 (Scheduled)

PR 3312 **PR Writing**, Fall 2013 (Scheduled)

Syracuse University, S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications

Adjunct Professor, *August 2010 – May 2013*

Graduate Classes

PRL 530 **Media Relations for Public Relations Professionals**, Summer 2013 (Scheduled)

Co-developed and taught special topics course to provide public relations graduate students with an advanced knowledge of how to build relationships and work with the media through a variety traditional and digital platforms.

PRL 614 **Advanced Public Relations Writing for Digital Platforms**, Fall 2011

Co-developed syllabus and materials for new course designed to introduce graduate students to the unique challenges in delivering salient messages through digital platforms. *Student Eval: 4.59/5.0 Newhouse Avg. 4.36/5.0*

PRL 604 Public Relations Writing, Fall 2010

Introduced students to varied communication tools used in public relations and provided opportunity for students to practice delivering messages to specific audiences using these tools. *Student Eval: 4.94/5.0 Newhouse Avg. 4.35/5.0*

Undergraduate Classes

PRL 215 Advanced Public Relations Writing for a Digital World, Spring 2012

Re-designed syllabus and materials for new course designed to introduce undergraduate students to the unique challenges in delivering salient messages through digital platforms. *Student Eval: 4.52/5.0 Newhouse Avg. 4.39/5.0*

PRL 300 Public Relations Campaigns, Spring 2011

Taught students to prepare a strategic public relations plan and provided them with an opportunity to work with local charitable organization to develop and implement a campaign from beginning to end. *Student Eval: 4.6/5.0 Newhouse Avg. 4.38/5.0*

University of Alabama at Birmingham

Co-Instructor, 2008

MC 300 Special Topics in Public Relations, Fall 2008

Worked with public relations seniors on how to best apply the skills they had learned in the classroom to “real world” situations.

GUEST LECTURES

S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, Syracuse University

- ***Media Pitching***, PRL 214: Writing for News and Public Relations, 2012
- ***The Art of the Press Release***, PRL 600: Public Relations Writing for Public Diplomacy, 2011
- ***Transition to Public Relations Practitioners***, PRL 497: Public Relations Management, 2010
- ***Public Relations Boot Camp***, COM 107: Communications and Society, 2010
- ***PR Management: The Good, Bad and Ugly***, COM 107: Communications and Society, 2010
- ***PR Management: The Good, Bad and Ugly***, PRL497: Communications and Society, 2010

Samford University, Birmingham Alabama

- ***The FBI is Downstairs and We Don't Have a Plan!***, JMC492: PR for Nonprofits, 2009

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

Waters, R. & **Gilmore, K. S.** (*Accepted for Publication*). Stewardship and the political process: Improving the political party-constituent relationship through public relations. In *Handbook of Public Diplomacy*. G. Golan, S. Yang, and D. Kinsey (Eds.). Wiley-Blackwell.

PEER-REVIEWED CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Gilmore, K. S. & Kinsey, D. F. (March 2013). “*New media: Reshaping future communicators’ self-perceived role in crisis.*” Paper presented at the 16th Annual International Public Relations Research Conference, Miami, Fla.

Chen, G. M., Schweisberger, V. N., & **Gilmore, K. S.** (May 2012). “*Conductor effect*”: *Violent video game play extends anger, leading to triggered displaced aggression among women players.* Paper presented at the International Communication Association Annual Conference, Games Studies Division, Phoenix, Ariz.

Gilmore, K. S. (March 2012). *Corporate reputation: Is Fortune a factor?* Paper presented at the 15th Annual International Public Relations Research Conference, Miami, Fla.
***University of Miami School of Communication Top Student Paper Award**

Gilmore, K. and Dolan, E. (March 2011). *Social networking sites: Taking care of business.* Paper presented at the AEJMC Midwinter Conference, Communication Technology Division, Norman, Okla.

RESEARCH APPOINTMENTS & EDITORIAL REVIEW

Research Assistant, Department of Public Relations, Syracuse University, 2012
 Principal Investigator: Guy Golan, Ph.D.

- Research related to public relations in public diplomacy.

Research Assistant, Department of Public Relations, Syracuse University, 2011
 Principal Investigator: Sung-Un Yang, Ph.D., Associate Professor

- Research related to social media effects on corporate reputation.

Research Assistant, Department of Public Relations, Syracuse University, 2011
 Principal Investigator: Shannon A. Bowen, Ph.D., Associate Professor

- Research related to Dr. Bowen’s book on Strategic Communication Management

Book Proposal and Chapter Reviewer, Bedford/St. Martin, 2011

- Reviewed book proposal and chapters for proposed public relations writing textbook.

SERVICE TO THE SCHOOL

S.I. Newhouse School of Communications Tenure Committee: *Member, 2011-2012*

Public Relations MA Program Comprehensive Exam Ad-Hoc Committee: *Member, 2012*

Newhouse Doctoral Student Organization: *President, 2011-2012, Member, 2010-Present*
Newhouse Student Representatives Committee: *Member, 2011-2012*

AWARDS & DISTINCTIONS

S.I. Newhouse School of Communications Ph.D. Fellowship: *2012-2013*
Certificate in University Teaching, Future Professoriate Program: Syracuse University, *2012*
University of Miami School of Communication Top Student Paper Award: *15th Annual International Public Relations Research Conference, 2012*
Reviewer, *Practical Public Relations Writing, First Edition*: Bedford/St. Martins, *2011*
The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi: *Member, 2011-Present*
Grunig Prime Research Fellowship: *Finalist, 2011*
Earned Accreditation in Public Relations (APR): *2002*
Named "Top 40 Under 40" by the *Birmingham Business Journal, 1996*
Graduate Student of the Year: *Communications Dept., University of West Florida, 1991*

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

International Communications Association: *Member, 2012-Present*
Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication: *Member, 2011-Present*
Public Relations Society of America: *Member, 2001-Present*
Alabama Chapter of Public Relations Society of America: *President-Elect, 2008; Board Member/Ethics Officer, 2006-2007; National Delegate, 2006; Member, 2001-Present*

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

The Gilmore Group

Strategic Communications Consultant, 2008-Present

Develop and implement strategic communication activities for clients with a focus on public relations, communications planning, media relations, marketing, crisis communications, and project management. Clients: the Southeastern (Athletic) Conference, the University of Alabama at Birmingham, Samford University, HealthSouth Corporation, Surgical Care Affiliates, Diagnostic Health Corporation, the Alabama Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America, and GTS Strategies.

HealthSouth Corporation (NYSE:HLS)

Vice President, Corporate Communications, 2000-2008

Director of Communications, 1996-2000

Public Relations Manager, HealthSouth Medical Center, 1994-1996

Top communications executive for a publicly-traded healthcare provider that owned and operated nearly 2,000 healthcare facilities with 50,000 employees across the country and abroad.

- Developed and implemented five-year **strategic crisis communication plan** to successfully navigate the company through a \$3.6 billion corporate fraud crisis and subsequent turnaround. Issues addressed included potential bankruptcy, company layoffs, multiple executives pleading guilty, congressional hearings, charges filed by SEC and DOJ, company restructuring and rebuilding. Received “survivor bonus” from the board of directors in recognition for work done during the crisis.
- Developed and implemented ongoing **corporate communications strategy** for “New HealthSouth” including a repositioning strategy for communications when board of directors voted to reposition the company, selling three of four operating divisions to focus on core business. Success of open communication plan is demonstrated by decrease in employee turnover during this transition period.
- Developed and effectively utilized **multi-media platforms**, including patient and employee magazines, in-house television network, and relevant Internet applications. Created, developed and implemented **nation-wide marketing strategies** which included program rollouts and volume building. Strategies involved internal media, external media, advertising, training, and public relations and were developed as “turn-key” opportunities for implementation across the country.
- Implemented **corporate social responsibility** efforts to give back to the community. Developed employee payroll deduction plan and coordinated numerous charitable activities resulting in hundreds of thousands of dollars raised for United Way, the Alabama Sports Foundation, the national Arthritis Foundation, UCP, Grammys in the Schools, NBA, the Red Cross, and others.

Birmingham Area Chamber of Commerce – 4,000-member business organization.
Sports and Media Director, 1991-1994, Birmingham, Ala.

U.S. Olympic Committee – National Governing Body for all U.S. Olympic activities.
Intern/Coordinator, Media and Public Information, 1991, Colorado Springs, Colo.

Triad Systems – Computer hardware and software provider for automotive aftermarket.
Sales Representative, 1987-1989, Tampa, Fla. and Columbia, S.C.

Juvenile Alternative Services Programs – Prevention program for first-time offenders.
Counselor, 1987, Pensacola, Fla.

PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS

PRSSA Summit: *PR Interviewing Skills, February 2009*

Southeastern (Athletic) Conference: *Public Relations Boot Camp, May 2009*

APR Joint Accreditation Workshop: *PR Law & Ethics, October 2008*

PRSSA, UAB Chapter: *Crisis Communications, 2008*

Public Relations Council of Alabama State Conference: *Surviving the HealthSouth Crisis, 2004*

PRSA, Alabama Chapter: *Multi-Media Marketing & PR Strategies, 2002*

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Gateway Social Service Agency: *Advisory Board Member, 2010-present; Board Member, 2007-2010; Development Chairman, 2009-2010; Secretary, 2008; Junior Board Member, 2000-2010; Junior Board President, 2005*

American Red Cross: Birmingham Chapter *Disaster Volunteer, 2009*

Medical Mission Trips to South Africa: *Team Trainer, 2010; Volunteer, 2009*

First Light Women's Shelter: *Volunteer, 2008-2010; Volunteer of the Month, January 2009*

UCP of Greater Birmingham: *Board of Directors, 2002-2006; Development Chairman, 2005-2006*

Bruno's Memorial Classic (Senior PGA Event): *Media Committee/Chairman, 1994-2002*

SEC Baseball Tournament: *VIP Committee Co-Chairman, 1996-1998*

Multiple Sclerosis Society: *Home Tour Media Chairman, 1998; MS Society Class of '97*

1996 Olympic Games Soccer Semi Finals: *Assistant to the Birmingham Chairman, 1995-1996*