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We Need to Talk: Persuasive Communication in Fireproof Ministries'

XXXchurch Anti-Pornography Campaign

Vauna Davis

A thesis submitted to the faculty of
Brigham Young University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

We Need to Talk: Persuasive Communication in Fireproof Ministries' XXXchurch Anti-Pornography Campaign

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The growing evidence of harm caused by pornography calls for interventions to counteract the influence of explicit sexual media. Fireproof Ministries conducts a major Christian anti-pornography campaign called XXXchurch. This case analysis of the campaign evaluated if the messages were appropriately designed in light of what persuasion research has discovered about motivating attitudinal and behavioral change. Theories about agenda setting, attitude accessibility, exemplars, evidence, cognitive dissonance, guilt, reactance, fear appeals, and self-efficacy were the basis of identifying the themes of the campaign, evaluating the credibility of XXXchurch, and assessing the theoretical foundation of the campaign.

The study found three dominant objectives of the campaign: awareness, prevention, and recovery. XXXchurch has set the pornography agenda in many Christian churches, and also brings the issue to a wider public through news media; they have been featured in thousands of media publications and broadcasts. XXXchurch measures their own success by the stories and feedback they hear from their audience, the media attention they receive, and their increased acceptance by churches.

The three main groups of themes in the messages of the campaign are prevention and recovery, the harm of pornography, and how God's purposes for life are impacted by pornography. These themes are essentially persuasive messages encouraging people to consider the negative consequence of using pornography and the benefits of resisting it. The attitudes influenced through these messages are the precursors to taking action to overcome pornography.

The XXXchurch campaign establishes credibility with their audience through six elements: (a) prior experience or perceptions, (b) credentials, competence, and expertise (c) honesty and lack of bias, (d) similarity to the audience, (e) bold, confident delivery, and (f) plausible messages.

Examples of self-efficacy, exemplars, and fear appeals were the most frequently found theories in the campaign messages. Persuasion theories functioned as useful tools for analyzing and understanding the campaign. Although the XXXchurch team did not design the campaign with these theories in mind, the theories strongly explain the foundation of the campaign. Taken as a whole, the campaign clearly demonstrates research-based principles, which suggest a prediction of successfully influencing attitudes and behavior.

Keywords: anti-pornography, information and influence campaigns, persuasive communication, strategic communication

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**We Need to Talk: Persuasive Communication in Fireproof Ministries' XXXchurch
Anti-Pornography Campaign**

In a relatively short time span, a major cultural shift has taken place. Pornography was once kept quietly out of sight of public life. Now a pornographic paradigm informs much of entertainment, advertising, music, and fashion. Sexually explicit content is readily available online in the vast majority of American homes and businesses. The social tolerance of pornography is documented by astounding numbers. According to Ropelato,

Every second 28,258 Internet users are viewing pornography. Every 39 minutes a new pornographic video is being created in the United States. Every day 68 million pornographic requests are searched online. If these statistics don't mean anything to you, let me put it in context . . . the porn industry has larger revenues than Microsoft, Google, Amazon, eBay, Yahoo, Apple and Netflix combined. In 2006, the industry had ballooned to \$97.06 billion dollars. (n.d.)

In regard to this phenomenon, sociologist Gail Dines (2010) called on society to consider the long-term consequences:

What are the consequences of this saturation for our culture, sexuality, gender identity, and relationships? The answer is that we don't know for sure. One thing is certain: we are in the midst of a massive social experiment, only the laboratory here is our world and the effects will be played out on people who never agreed to participate. (p. ix)

Because mass media are the delivery system for pornography, it is important for media scholars to address the uses and effects of this type of content. As more evidence of

harm caused by pornography is reported, the need for interventions to counteract the pervasive influence of graphic sexual media becomes more evident. While there is nearly unanimous social repudiation of child pornography, there is no widespread public outcry against pornography involving adults. However, there are some isolated voices raising concern, documenting effects, and offering interventions to counteract the unwanted damage of pornography. Legislators, educators, health professionals, religious groups, feminists, social scientists, law enforcement, family counselors, and technology experts are all represented in the critical dialogue concerning the risks of pornography. It may seem at times that apathy dominates the nation with a “live and let live” mentality. However, in his discussion about combating pornography, Nordlinger (2001) reminds us,

Those who toil in the anti-pornography field say that a false sense of helplessness is one of the pornographers' best allies. People feel that they can do nothing, that all must submit, that the courts have ruled we have no choice in the matter, that this is the modern world—get used to it. Yet this is untrue. There are many things to be done, on a number of fronts: legal, policy, and social. (p. 44)

There is a precedent for creating social change through persuasive initiatives. Anti-smoking public service campaigns have shown the possibility of powerful social effects through mass communications. Many research studies have examined the effectiveness of anti-smoking campaigns; for example, one study found that a majority of young adults were aware of the Truth anti-smoking campaign, and that about half of their anti-smoking attitudes were associated with awareness of the campaign (Richardson, Green, Xiao, Sokol, & Vallone, 2009). The impact of the anti-smoking public service campaign should serve to

inspire anti-pornography activists to warn the public of the damage of pornography.

The Need for Pornography Prevention and Recovery Campaigns

Values always decay over time. Societies that keep their values alive do so not by escaping the process of decay, but by powerful processes of regeneration (Gardner, 1993, p. 13). Organizations that address socially corrupting forces such as pornography are a primary factor in that renewal.

Public service campaign topics have included smoking dangers, drug abuse, teen suicide, underage drinking, crime prevention, driving while texting, dating violence, teen pregnancy, and safe sex (Manheim, 2011). Many studies have been published evaluating the effectiveness of these kinds of campaigns (Snyder, Hamilton, Mitchell, Kiwanuka-Tondo, & Fleming-Milici, 2004). However, anti-pornography campaigns have been rare. This may be a result of widespread public belief that the First Amendment protects pornography, and that it is a personal activity with no social impact.

Considering the documented harm caused by pornography, the media-using public has the right to be warned, to receive direction for prevention and protection, and to have resources for recovery available. Wolak, Mitchell, & Finkelhor (2007) expressed the need to respond to the extensive use of pornography with open communication about the issue:

Exposure to online pornography might have reached a point where it can be characterized as normative among youth Internet users, especially teenage boys. Medical practitioners, educators, other youth workers, and parents should assume that most boys of high school age who use the Internet have some degree of exposure to online pornography, as do many girls.

One clear implication is that professionals should not shy away from this topic. Frank direct conversations with youth that address the possible influences of pornography on sexual behavior, attitudes about sex, and relationships are needed. (p. 255)

The alternative of *not* creating social awareness of pornography's harms, *not* warning "consenting adults" of the full import of what they are consenting to, and *not* teaching people steps to take to avoid pornography, is to leave society and individuals at risk from a voracious and corrupt sex industry.

Background of Fireproof Ministries and XXXchurch

A major anti-pornography campaign is led by a Christian faith-based organization, Fireproof Ministries. Pastors Craig Gross and Jake Larson founded the organization in 2002. Jake shared his memory of the beginning of it all:

Craig and I, we started speaking to youth a long time ago and so we started speaking at youth conferences and camps and church youth groups, things like that. And so we always kind of heard about kids sharing like their struggle with dysfunction, anything from pornography, homosexuality. Kids started talking about that issue before anybody was really open to discuss it. And so we wrote a talk on pornography and started doing it in different places across the country . . . And we just had tons of kids always share with us . . . So we thought we kind of have to do something more to make sure we can help kids deal with it, and then also the parents who are struggling with it. So that's kind of where the motivation came from, we saw the need . . .

There was nobody else doing anything like this. Nobody else was presenting

any answers or giving any direction. (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011)

Craig and Jake started Fireproof Ministries as a non-profit to support their speaking ministry. In 2002 they were launching their new website, XXXchurch.com, and had the audacious idea to go to an adult industry show in Las Vegas to draw media attention. Jake remembered,

So Craig's idea was, "Hey, maybe we should launch it at a porn show and not outside and picket like all the other Christian organizations. What if we started it inside?" . . . The news has covered porn shows forever but they can't cover a whole lot about them on the news. But two pastors at a porn show? It was like, there's a story. And so that's what was on the news that night. (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011)

That strategy gathered more attention than they expected. Craig recalled their reaction to the media:

The first article that ever came out, like we had no idea how the media worked. We went to Las Vegas to this porn show and it ended up on the front page of the LA Times, and that basically set all this in motion. But I remember getting the article, you know going over to the news stand and buying it that morning . . . then that day, that day January 14 of 2002, fielding calls from around the world, because it went to the Associated Press and then it got picked up. So you couldn't just rewrite that script. That was memorable. (C. Gross, personal communication, January 31, 2012)

The organization includes both an Internet presence and events at churches, colleges, and other venues where team members speak (see Appendix A for a list of strategies). XXXchurch is “designed to bring awareness, openness, and accountability to those affected by pornography” (Gross, 2011). Its outreach extends to both consumers and producers of pornography.

The website attracts 250,000 new hits per month. It offers resources to help a variety of groups affected by pornography, such as men, women, spouses, teens, and parents. There is an abundant offering of blogs, videos, podcasts, Q&A pages, and other resources to serve the needs of the public.

Also available for download on the website is X3Watch software. XXXchurch created the software, which allows people to ask an “accountability partner” to receive a list of the websites viewed on their computer or phone, helping them overcome the secrecy that feeds pornography use. There have been over a million downloads of this software.

Fireproof Ministries drew national attention to their anti-pornography message with an event titled National Porn Sunday (NPS) to coincide with Superbowl Sunday in February 2011. The group distributed a 40-minute video to over 350 churches to share with their congregation that day, reaching over 100,000 people (see Appendices B and C for NPS information). As well, the video is available online, and was watched by over 15,000 visitors in just a few days following Superbowl Sunday. The video included five NFL players speaking out about the challenges of staying free of pornography, as well as Pastor Gross delivering a passionate sermon on the subject.

This effort drew significant national attention. Within a couple of days, 334 news outlets and 100 radio stations reported on the event. The news coverage took a range of

stances; some were supportive or factual, while others were humorous, satirical, or oppositional.

The Purpose of This Study

Research on persuasive communications concentrates on three aspects of messages: 1) the source of the message, 2) the target audience of the message, and 3) the message itself (Salovey, Schneider, & Apanovitch, 2002). This study will conduct a case analysis of XXXchurch with a focus on the persuasive elements in the messages presented by the campaign. The source of the message will be considered for its contributions to the credibility and persuasiveness of the messages. As well, the psychosocial cognitions of the audience are a major focus of all persuasion theories. Therefore, the source, audience, and messages are foundational factors in this study. The goal is to understand if the campaign messages have been appropriately designed in light of what persuasion research has discovered about motivating attitudinal and behavioral change.

Persuasion theories provide a framework for understanding influences in the psychological processes of persuasion. A primary question in this research study asks, "What can persuasion theories explain or predict about the persuasive effect of the messages on the audience?" This case analysis will evaluate whether messages in the campaign are founded on research-based theory and are therefore likely to achieve the campaign's objectives, as well as provide a basis for recommendations for improvement. The scope of the project does not include measuring audience reception, or change in attitudes or behavior. Since there is no current strand of research investigating anti-pornography communications, this study provides an exploratory and descriptive look at the principal organization involved in this social issue, with the hope of encouraging

further research in this area. The goal of this case analysis is to identify research-based principles for designing future anti-pornography communications. Through evaluations of anti-pornography campaigns, we can improve future efforts to protect individuals, families, and society from the risks of pornography use.

Literature Review

Literature in three general areas provides the foundation for this study. First, media effects research focusing on the impact of pornography helps explain the need for persuasive anti-pornography communications. Secondly, a look at strategic communication in information and influence campaigns provides a background for understanding the Fireproof Ministries organization and its objectives. Finally, literature explaining the persuasion theories used to evaluate campaign messages will be reviewed.

The Problems of Pornography

Media effects researchers have been studying the outcomes of pornography for many years; for example, Zillman and Bryant's (1982, 1988) research found connections between pornography and callousness to rape victims and women in general as well as diminished desires to have a family. This section will explain some recent findings of effects, as well as some background on pornography addiction and recovery.

Pornography effects. Pornography is a pervasive problem. The widely quoted Triple-A Engine of affordability, anonymity, and accessibility serves to fuel the expansion of online pornography (Cooper, 1998). "Internet users may access . . . online-pornography, as well as produce, distribute and discuss such material themselves" (Doering, 2009, p. 1090). In the 15 years since online pornography became commonly available, scholarly research has analyzed its production, content, usage, users, and effects (Doering, 2009).

While pornographic media does not have the power to create universal effects on all consumers, it is important to recognize the potential for extremely harmful effects on some people (Doering, 2009). Consumers make active decisions to “selectively access or avoid and interpret specific Internet content” (Doering, 2009, p. 1098), and awareness of potential risks will help them make informed choices.

While opinions vary on the use of pornography by adults, there is widespread consensus that youth should not have access to online pornography. Wolak et al. (2007) found that 42% of young Internet users had encountered online pornography in the previous year. Young people who take up more of the positive opportunities of the Internet are also exposed to more risks, including exposure to pornography. “The strong positive association between opportunities and risks points up the dilemma that parents and regulators face. Increasing opportunities increase the risks. Restricting Internet use so as to reduce the risks is also likely to restrict the opportunities” (Livingstone, 2010). Older boys with more online skills have been found to be at higher risk (Livingstone, 2008).

Research has found that some of the effects on adolescents include more permissive attitudes to casual sex, increased acceptance of rape myths, uncertainty about sexual values, and early sexual activity (Manning, 2006; McGeeney, 2009; Peter & Valkenburg, 2008; Berson & Berson, 2005). Because pornographic Internet content is not a realistic or reliable source of information about real sexual relationships, it is important to understand how it is affecting adolescents’ sexual development. Some teenagers may replace societal values with beliefs drawn from sexual media (Peter & Valkenburg, 2008). The potential for young people to harm others due to the influence of pornography is a concern. An Australian organization reported a large increase in children with sexually aggressive

behavior, and almost all of them accessed Internet pornography (Manning, 2006).

Viewing pornography can lead to risks generally defined as “activities that are harmful to oneself or others” (Doering, 2009, p. 1091). A meta-analysis of pornography research identified effects on adults such as compulsive use; harm to relationships; use of illegal pornography that harms themselves or others (for example, child pornography); sexually aggressive behavior; sexist depiction of women; unrealistic standards of body image and sexual experiences; negative impact on job performance and risk of dismissal if used at work; and weakening of marriage, family, and monogamy values (Doering, 2009). There are also harmful effects to others in the production of pornography, most notably the abuse of children in the making of child pornography (Doering, 2009). In some cases, sexual violence may be triggered by pornography in a small group of susceptible men (Doering, 2009).

In her report to a Senate sub-committee, Manning (2006) listed some problems that pornography brings to relationships. Divorce lawyers indicate that a large percentage of divorces are related to Internet pornography, and pornography users are 3.18 times more likely to have extramarital affairs and 3.7 times more likely to hire a prostitute.

Pornography addiction. Psychology research has documented a list of signs that an online pornography user has become addicted. Warning signs include spending large amounts of time and feeling preoccupied with online sexual pursuits, continually anticipating the next opportunity, engaging in offline sexual activities, hiding their online activities from others, feeling guilty, and becoming less involved with their real-life intimate partners (Young, 2008). Cooper (1998) noted five characteristics that pornography users often exhibit: denial, adverse impacts in their life, continuation of use in

the face of negative consequences, and failed efforts to stop using pornography.

Young (2008) described the process of addiction to pornography:

Discovery → Experimentation → Escalation → Compulsion → Hopelessness

Pornography recovery. Unlike substance addictions, Internet sex addicts usually cannot go “cold turkey” and completely abstain from association with computers. Most jobs entail computer use, and connected technology is integrated into many facets of modern life, including cell phones (sometimes called pocket porn), and web-enabled TV. Internet pornography addiction is similar to a food addiction, where the subject must learn to use the source of addiction in healthy, positive, controlled ways (Young, 2008).

A study of pornography recovery tools used by Christian men identified the most effective treatment factors reported by both recovering men and counselors. Both groups agreed on the top four responses: accountability, recovery curricula and information, group meetings, and vulnerable self-disclosure. Counselors noted that most of these factors draw on the power of interactive fellowship in overcoming compulsive use of pornography (Burford, 2008).

In another study looking at recovery, Cavaglion (2008) conducted a qualitative analysis of messages in an online self-help group of Italian individuals trying to overcome pornography dependency. The research found that group interactions revolved around expressive goals of creating a safe territory, providing empathic brotherhood, encouraging mutual responsibility, and giving opportunities for leadership. These studies indicate the importance of social ties and encouragement in overcoming addiction to pornography.

The pornography effects research explains why organizations such as Fireproof Ministries have formed to combat these risks. In the next section, the literature of strategic

communication explains the nature and focus of such organizations.

Strategic Communication in Information and Influence Campaigns

Defining strategic communication. Strategic communication is the “purposeful use of communication by an organization to fulfill its mission” (Hallahan, Holtzhausen, Ruler, Vercic, & Sriramesh, 2007, p. 3). Organizations deliberately communicate their “vision, values, goals, and intentions” to their publics as they pursue their goals (Steyn, 2007, p. 143). Strategy provides guidelines for the course of action the organization will follow (Manheim, 2011; Steyn, 2007). The “central underlying component that is common to every campaign . . . is the development and application of a campaign *strategy* – an underlying idea of *how* to bring about the desired outcome of the campaign” (Manheim, 2011, p. 21).

Characteristics of information and influence campaigns. Activist and social movement organizations engage in strategic communication to meet their goals just as corporations do, in the context of advocacy and public debate about issues (Hallahan et al., 2007). These types of organizations are identified in the literature by a variety of names; Manheim (2011) uses the general term “information and influence campaign “ to refer to efforts such as:

Public information and educational campaigns, image and product advertising campaigns, social marketing campaigns, public policy and lobbying campaigns, union organizing campaigns, reputation management campaigns, public diplomacy campaigns, propaganda campaigns, nation- or movement-building campaigns, insurgencies, and psychological or information warfare campaigns. (p. 20)

Hallahan et al. (2007) identify information or social marketing campaigns as one of six specialties of communication disciplines. The information/social marketing specialty is characterized by the objective of reducing the practice of risky behavior or promoting social causes. Perloff (2008) defines information and influence campaigns as "systematic, organized efforts to mold health or social attitudes through the use of communication" (p. 443). Their strategic goals are to inform, persuade, and mobilize the public (Devine & Hirt, 1989).

Rice and Atkin (2001) further defined information and influence campaigns by highlighting their principal elements, explaining that these campaigns are:

(a) purposive attempts; (b) to inform, persuade, or motivate behavior changes; (c) in a relatively well-defined and large audience; (d) generally for noncommercial benefits to the individuals and/or society at large; (e) typically within a given time period; (f) by means of organized communication activities involving mass media; and (g) often complemented by interpersonal support. (p. 427)

Manheim (2011) noted some of the foundational characteristics shared by these campaigns:

An information and influence campaign is a systematic, sequential and multi-faceted effort by one actor to inform, or to influence, the perceptions, preferences or action of some other actor or actors. By definition, then, campaigns are, at their hearts, complex, longitudinal acts of communication – exchanges of information designed to accomplish a specific objective. (p. 18)

Campaigns are founded on organized and logical plans for communication; they

“cannot succeed as collections of random acts of communication” (Manheim, 2011, p. 18). Thus, an understanding of strategic communication is essential for the organization to thrive and accomplish its goals.

Information and influence campaigns serve a unique role in society by interpreting and promoting what they consider to be right. “All social movements are essentially moral strivings for salvation, perfection, and good . . . The movement must raise the consciousness of the people by revealing the moral, intellectual, and coercive bankruptcy of the targeted institution, its actions, and its motives” (Stewart, Smith, & Denton, 2001, p. 15).

A primary strategic goal of information and influence campaigns is to transform the publics’ perceptions, who may:

(1) be unaware of the problem, (2) refuse to believe that it exists, (3) believe the problem is not severe or does not require drastic action, (4) believe the problem does not affect them, [or] (5) believe the problem should be handled by appropriate institutions through normal channels and procedures.

(Stewart et al., 2001 p. 54)

Messages, channels, and audiences in information and influence campaigns.

Many of the strategic decisions of campaigns revolve around how to construct messages, which channels to use to spread the messages, and which audiences to target. Management of strategic communications includes “audience analysis, goal setting, message strategy, channel choice, and program assessment” (Hallahan et al., 2007, p. 5). Prospects for strategic success will be maximized by a “combination of long-term planning, message building, audience building, and environmental sensing” (Manheim, 2011, p. 64). Because the change (or resistance to change) advocated by the campaign is a longitudinal

phenomenon that can only be measured by comparing various time points, campaigns unfold sequentially as “progressions of messages, message effects, and observed changes in the target” (Manheim, 2011, p. 19). Campaigns generally exhibit complex characteristics such as various channels, segmented audiences, short- and long-term objectives, and diverse timing (Manheim, 2011, p. 19).

In every campaign, strategic decisions are made about the content and form of messages. Manheim (2011) declared that “the most effective campaigns are generally built around a relatively unified core message that literally *defines* the terms of debate” (p. 43). While the core message can be tailored to subgroups, the combined effect of the messages should be consistent. The core message identifies the issues and the moral high ground, and allies the protagonist with the audience on this issue. Other “stylistic attributes” of messages need to be strategically planned as well (p. 45). For example, messages may be more or less informative, repetitive, explicit, or emotional, with a long list of other options to consider.

A major element of strategic communication involves which channels to employ to distribute campaign messages. Manheim (2011) notes that mass media channels, social media, interpersonal communication, and so forth each have unique attributes that influence audiences. Some engage the audience more intensely, and some are more easily controlled by the campaign. Channels also differ in terms of vividness, intrusiveness, immediacy, permanence, informativeness, prestige, and entertainment value. Strategic campaign communications are often designed to “maximize the match between the attributes of message content . . . and these diverse channel characteristics” (p. 51).

A crucial element in strategic communication is the ability to identify, isolate, and

reach particular audiences. Audiences can be segmented according to geography, demographics, attitudes/psychological states, behavior, and psychographics (a mix of lifestyle, social class, and personality characteristics). Segmentation allows campaign designers to tailor strategic communications to the shared characteristics of group members (Manheim, 2011).

Understanding information and influence campaigns as a strategic effort to persuade the audience to adopt a desired behavior by delivering messages through communication channels is fundamental to exploring some of the processes that contribute to this objective.

Strategic communication to raise awareness of an issue. All information and influence campaigns have a strategic objective of making the public conscious of the central issue (Manheim, 2011). Getting and keeping the subject top-of-mind among the competing clutter of messages is a primary challenge. The theories of attitude accessibility and agenda setting provide some insight into how the process of “raising awareness” works.

Attitude accessibility theory. Attitude accessibility is simply defined as attitudes that are quickly and easily retrieved from memory (Fazio, Powell, & Williams, 1989; Roskos-Ewoldsen, Arpan-Ralstin, & St. Pierre, 2002). It can be thought of as a continuum from no attitude/no experience with an object to a strong association that is automatically activated from memory upon the mention of an object (Fazio et al., 1989).

Studies by social scientists have found that easily accessible attitudes predict behavior more frequently, demonstrate more stability over time, and are more resistance to change than less accessible attitudes (Clark, Wegener, & Fabrigar, 2006, p. 354; Roskos-Ewoldsen et al., 2002). "In terms of pragmatic outcomes (e.g., changing behaviors, creating

resistant attitudes), increasing attitude accessibility is probably more important than changing someone's evaluative response to an object (Dillard, 1993)" (Roskos-Ewoldsen et al., 2002, p. 39). This could be because keeping an issue top-of-mind results in drawing attention in the clutter of persuasive messages; people pay more attention to objects that are linked to accessible attitudes (Roskos-Ewoldsen & Fazio, 1992). Also, research has found that people expend more cognitive effort interpreting a message when they have an accessible attitude about the issue (Roskos-Ewoldsen et al., 2002). It's possible that accessibility frees cognitive resources from the need to make an evaluation about an unfamiliar object, leaving more resources available for interpreting the message.

Attitude accessibility is described as a "route to strengthening the links among attitude, intention, and behavior . . . Attitudes and intentions, after all, are rarely assessed in the time and place that the behavior of concern will take place. The attitudes and intentions that shape behavior are those that one experiences at the moment of deciding whether or not to enact the behavior (Fazio et al., 1989)" (Slater, 1999, p. 343). In order to increase the accessibility of attitudes at the point of decision, messages can include situational cues related to the behavior (Slater, 1999). Slater provides the example that messages about drinking and driving could show "parties, bar scenes, and parking lots where the drinking and driving decision is actually made" rather than the grisly aftermath of an accident (1999, p. 344).

People with more accessible attitudes to the source of a message were more persuaded by the message, possibly due to engaging likability heuristics to appraise the message (Eagly & Chaiken, 1993; Roskos-Ewoldsen & Fazio, 1992). This suggests a benefit to using a source that is familiar to the audience.

There are methods that can improve accessibility. Studies have shown that direct experience with an object increases its accessibility from memory and predicts behavior better than indirect experience (Roskos-Ewoldsen et al., 2002). A particular example of direct experience is making a short speech expressing attitudes. This tactic has been shown to affect accessibility even four months later (Roskos-Ewoldsen et al., 2002). Additionally, expectation that an attitudinal judgment will be called upon in the future, such as anticipating being asked to express an opinion, has been shown to result in formation of an accessible attitude (Roskos-Ewoldsen et al., 2002).

Accessibility dissipates over time if not reinforced, while frequently activating a concept increases its accessibility (Roskos-Ewoldsen et al., 2002). Because of this condition, campaigns may fail when messages are not repeated often enough to produce an effect (Perloff, 2008).

Agenda setting theory. McCombs and Shaw originated agenda setting in 1972, finding that the more attention media gave a topic, the greater importance the audience assigned to it (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Kosicki, 1993).

People differ in the attention they pay to media. The most involved seek out information on an issue; however, the majority doesn't actively seek information, but receives it as it comes from media sources (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). Mass media draw attention to the topics that are presented most often, encouraging the audience to think about those issues. Media has the ability to raise the importance of an issue in the public's mind through repeated coverage (Tankard & Severin, 2001). Through this process, media sets the agenda for public discussion (McCombs & Shaw, 1972).

Andrews and Carena (2010) note that media attention can affect the public's social

views and raise awareness of societal problems. They emphasize, "organizations that do get noticed gain an important source of potential influence as they seek to bring about social change, while those left out do not" (p. 858).

Research about the connection between cognitive processes and persuasion adds valuable insight into how campaigns can be more effective. The following section will discuss literature of persuasive communication.

The Value of Persuasion Theories in Campaign Design

As Stewart et al. (2001) noted, "Clearly, persuasion permeates the efforts of social movements to promote or resist change and is the primary agency available for satisfying essential requirements" (p. 21). Making decisions regarding persuasion in a campaign requires understanding why the audience holds "the attitudes, perceptions, preferences, beliefs, and expectations that they do, and by what mechanisms these diverse elements can be accessed and influenced" (Manheim, 2011, p. 64). Persuasive elements "take advantage of underlying psychological structures and processes . . . From a purely strategic standpoint, if one understands the psychological dynamics that generate and maintain these states . . . one can shape the content of the campaign communications to exploit these tendencies" (p. 64). Manheim goes on to explain,

We know a great deal more about the behavior of humans and their social creations than we ever have before, and that knowledge base is growing daily. More and more, the fruits of that knowledge have found their way into the development and implementation of campaign strategy. They represent, after all, the most advanced state of human knowledge regarding things of great strategic importance to any campaign – information and its effect,

attitudes and their dynamics, institutional actors and their motivations, and the like. (p. 17)

Perloff (2008) characterizes a significant difference between successful and unproductive campaigns; effective ones “reflect painstaking application of theoretical principles” while ineffective ones “are based on 'seat of the pants' intuitions” (p. 453).

Persuasion research recommends various campaign strategies, appeals, and adaptations to improve campaigns. "In fact, a half-century of research indicates that if practitioners know their stuff, apply theory deftly, and utilize principles of social marketing, they can wage effective campaigns (Noar, 2006)" (Perloff, 2008, p. 458). Devine & Hirt (1989) concur with this position, expressing that:

An understanding of persuasion as a process allows campaign planners to expeditiously design message strategies to achieve desired goals. In the absence of this understanding, campaigners may use inappropriate or inefficient strategies, or strategies needlessly targeted at a secondary rather than a primary goal of most campaigns – namely, human behavior. (p. 230-231)

Cognitive processes govern persuasion. Psychological dynamics are the fundamental target of persuasion, for they are the source of behavioral change (Manheim, 2011). An effective persuasive strategy will be “enlightened and unified by governing theories about . . . psychological states . . . and behavioral propensities of the target audiences and of any likely effects of the campaign itself on them” (Manheim, 2011, p. 21). Because all campaign messages will affect cognitive processing, understanding the possible psychological characteristics that influence persuasive communication is essential to

success.

A variety of persuasion theories. To understand the persuasive effect of any communications effort, one cannot isolate theories; all have some impact on persuasion. The leading theories of persuasion and behavior modification are “complementary and not competing” because they solve different communications problems (Slater, 1999, p. 335). Manheim (2011) noted,

In truth, none of these theories is truly global in either its emphasis or its explanatory power. As a result, the strategist must become adept at drawing more or less extensively from some combination of theories to produce an informed, integrated, and sophisticated plan of attack. (p. 69)

There are many persuasion theories that could be called upon to evaluate messages. To keep the scope of this study within reasonable limits, specific relevant theories have been chosen to evaluate this anti-pornography campaign. While these chosen theories promote understanding the influence of these messages, it should be acknowledged that applying additional persuasion theories to this campaign would provide additional insight. The following section will review the literature of the theories used in this study.

Persuasion Theory Research

The hierarchy of persuasive effects. The hierarchy of effects model provides the structure for the organization of the persuasion literature. This model is a simple, intuitive, and logical model of persuasive effects that has been referenced for 100 years and is still useful for predicting behavior and guiding communications strategies (Barry, 2002). The hierarchy of effects model illustrates that communications can facilitate the audience’s progression from cognitive processes to affective and ultimately behavioral realms

(Severin & Tankard, 2001) (Figure 1). The cognitive and affective dimensions will be used to organize selected persuasion theories that help explain how the messages found in the Fireproof Ministries campaign might influence the audience to avoid pornography. Since this case analysis does not measure behavior, the behavioral dimension is relevant in respect to what theory would suggest about behavioral change motivated by the campaign messages.

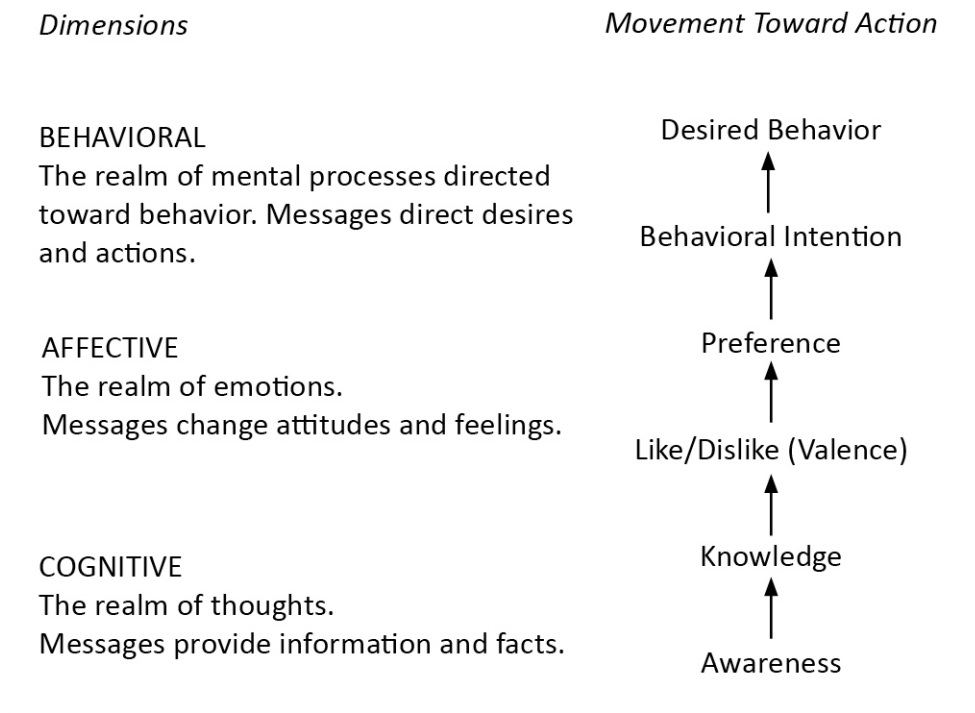


Figure 1. Hierarchical model of communication effects. Adapted from R. Lavidge and G. A. Steiner. (1961). *A Model for Predictive Measurements of Advertising Effectiveness*. *Journal of Marketing*, 25, 61.

The cognitive realm in the hierarchy of effects model. The cognitive dimension is the first step in the hierarchy of persuasive effects. Cognitions are processes of thought such as knowing, learning, understanding, judging, attending, remembering, and problem solving (National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice, 2011). These are conscious functions that allow people to create a mental representation of the world and formulate

their response to their environment (Severin & Tankard, 2001). Bandura (2001) explained that "most external influences affect behavior through cognitive processes rather than directly" (p. 267). The hierarchy of effects model emphasizes the effects of cognitions on awareness and knowledge about a subject (Severin & Tankard, 2001). The theories presented in this section help explain some cognitive processes that shape those outcomes of awareness and knowledge. These theories are source credibility and two types of rhetorical language: evidence and exemplars.

Persuasion through source credibility. Highly credible sources are more persuasive than sources that lack credibility (Reynolds, Koper, & Burgoon, 1982). A primary factor in credibility is the audience member's previous perceptions of the source; a positive prior relationship provides trust (Rhoads & Cialdini, 2002; Slater & Rouner, 1996). When prior experience is lacking, audience members rely on credentials to evaluate a spokesperson's credibility (Slater & Rouner, 1996).

Research has identified a variety of elements that impact credibility. Sources are seen as trustworthy when they embody honesty and a lack of bias (Rhoads & Cialdini, 2002). Credible sources give the impression that they are not trying to serve their own interest, but are informing the audience for their own benefit (Rhoads & Cialdini, 2002). In addition, a source that exhibits competence and expertise in a particular field is seen as more believable (Rhoads & Cialdini, 2002). Perloff (1993) noted that credible sources have both authority in their arena and reliability. Attractiveness and similarity to the audience also promote credibility (Perloff, 2008). Salovey et al. (2002) found that forceful declaration of a message was more convincing than more subtle delivery. Each of these factors contributes to the persuasive power of a particular source.

The message itself helps audience members to determine credibility. A message that is "well presented, plausible, with convincing specifics, examples, or data" will likely have a positive impact on credibility (Slater & Rouner, 1996). Research suggests that "although source credibility is supposed to influence perceptions about the message, in fact, messages also influence perceptions concerning the credibility of the source" (Slater & Rouner, 1996, p. 975).

Persuasive rhetorical language. Research has investigated the impact of the use and form of language on source credibility, message comprehension and recall, and attitudes toward the message (Hosman, 2002). Persuasive communications often contain two types of information. The first is "general statements . . . about the causes, importance, and consequences of problems" and may include evidence such as facts, statistics, or polls. General statements have lower vividness, but higher validity. The second type is exemplars, which serve as a case illustration of the problem (Brosius & Bathelt, 1994). Figurative and imagery-provoking language such as exemplars, as well as language providing evidence supporting an argument, have been found to be valuable tools in persuasive communication.

Exemplars. Exemplification can include anecdotes, images, or sound bites that serve to recount individual experiences for the purpose of describing a societal problem (Brosius & Bathelt, 1994). Brosius & Bathelt (1994) proposed that exemplars "increase vividness and perceived authenticity and . . . evoke a higher level of interest from the recipient" (p. 49). Exemplars are nonsystematic and stress some aspects of the problem while neglecting others. The two types of information presented compete for attention; the audience's limited information processing abilities could lead to greater awareness of exemplars over

general statements. Their research has shown that recipients "tend to form judgments on the basis of vividness instead of validity" (p. 74).

Exemplars are a type of vivid information that is "likely to attract and hold our attention and to excite the imagination to the extent that it is (a) emotionally interesting, (b) concrete and imagery-provoking, and (c) proximate in a sensory, temporal, or spatial way" (Nisbett & Ross, 1980, p. 45).

Evidence. Messages may include facts or opinions presented as proof of a claim. Reynolds & Reynolds (2002) found that when this type of evidence is perceived as legitimate, it promotes the persuasiveness of the message. There is "nearly perfect support in the literature" to show that evaluating evidence leads to evaluating the message and finally to post-message belief in the message assertion (p. 432). Legitimacy of the evidence is demonstrated by citing qualified sources for the evidence; information presented without clear supporting documentation is less persuasive and can reduce the acceptance of a message. Evidence has the added benefit of enhancing the credibility of the source (Reynolds & Reynolds, 2002).

The affective realm in the hierarchy of effects model. The hierarchy of effects model predicts that after cognitive processes produce awareness and knowledge in the audience, the listeners will be receptive to affective (emotional) processes that induce positively or negatively valenced attitudes. Nabi (2009) defines emotions as internal reactions to external stimuli that lead to short-term, intense mental states. The purpose of emotion is to lead one to take action. Emotions have been described as "organizers and motivators of behavior" (Nabi, 2002, p. 290). The genesis of emotion takes place when a person becomes aware of an entity in the environment and evaluates its "relevance for

personal well-being" (p. 290). Discrete emotions have an action readiness associated with them that help one to adapt; for example, fear induces fight or flight tendencies to protect one from danger (Nabi, 2002).

In reality, there is not a distinct line marking cognitive knowledge and fact-based thinking from emotional thinking. Soon after a person becomes aware of any environmental entity, he/she will form an attitude and attach positive or negative affect to it. It is likely that people are continually in some state of emotion (Dillard & Meijnders, 2002, p. 309). Virtually all language is tinged with emotion; persuasive messages consist of varying mixtures of emotion and reason (Miller, 2002). Persuasive communications endeavor to increase the strength, direction, and commitment of attitudes and their underlying emotions; the theories discussed in this section describe affective systems implicated in this process. These theories are associated with attitudes, guilt and shame, cognitive dissonance, reactance, fear appeals, and self-efficacy.

Persuading by influencing attitudes. Perloff (2008) explains that attitudes are "evaluative responses directed toward some object or idea" that influence thought and action (p. 59). They are part of people's worldview that develops through experiences with social objects, and contain elements of belief and affect. Beliefs are specific and cognitive; for example, believing that girls talk more than boys. Beliefs are not facts; they can be false (Perloff, 2008). In contrast to attitudes, values are "more global and abstract " and are "guiding principles in one's life" such as freedom, equality, or beauty (p. 62).

Attitudes are important in persuasion because they are a precursor to behavior. Most researchers write that attitudes are motivational; but they are only stimulating depending on strength or intensity, and that is difficult to measure. The true test of

persuasion is behavior, not attitude (Miller, 2002). However, mental and emotional entities are no less real than behaviors (Perloff, 2008). Ajzen and Fishbein (1977) found that highly specific attitudes toward a particular behavior strongly predict behavior.

Attitudes meet peoples' physical, social, and emotional needs by performing functions such as organizing knowledge, evaluating the utility of an object, expressing social identity, and enhancing self-esteem (Shavitt & Nelson, 2002). Attitudes serve a utilitarian function when they are used to appraise the benefits and penalties of an object (Shavitt & Nelson, 2002). Attitudes also perform social identity functions; people come to view themselves identified with something, and attitudes and behavior flow from it (Devine & Hirt, 1989). People's attitudes link them with ideological groups and express their core values (Shavitt & Nelson, 2002).

Persuasion through managing negative emotions. Cognitive dissonance, guilt, shame, and reactance are gathered together in this section due to their common element of recognizing uncomfortable emotions. The discomfort may arise from awareness of hypocritical behavior and a lack of self-integrity, resentment at being told how to act, or realization of harm or wrong caused by an person's own actions. These theories can be used to provide a path to reduce disturbing feelings, thereby increasing motivation to avoid pornography.

Guilt and shame. While shame and guilt are both self-conscious emotions that reflect a negative self-evaluation, in shame one judges one's entire self negatively, while in guilt one evaluates a specific behavior as detrimental. "Guilt says 'this behavior is bad' while shame says 'I am a bad person'" (Gilliland, South, Carpenter, & Hardy, 2011, p. 3).

"Guilt arises from one's violation of an internalized moral, ethical, or religious code

(Ausubel, 1955; Izard, 1977; Lazarus, 1991; Lindsay-Hartz, De Rivera, & Mascolo, 1995)" (Nabi, 2002, p. 292). Guilt causes a troubling feeling that one has acted in error and motivates a desire to make amends (Nabi, 2002). Because guilt poses a threat to self-integrity, it provokes self-repair processes (O'Keefe, 2002). Guilt appeals draw on this desire for self-integrity by highlighting hypocritical behavior that is inconsistent with the target's standards (O'Keefe, 2002).

More explicit guilt appeals arouse greater guilt, but are also less persuasive than less explicit appeals (O'Keefe, 2002). When high levels of guilt are aroused, recipients may respond with defiance (Nabi, 2002; O'Keefe, 2002). "Attempted guilt arousal involves a challenge to the target's self in ways that other influence mechanisms do not - and for precisely that reason has greater capacity to evoke resentment, anger, or annoyance" (O'Keefe, 2002, p. 338).

Shame is associated with withdrawal, blaming others or circumstances, and resisting change. For these reasons, attempting to induce shame is not a recommended persuasion tool. However, even guilt has limitations, and guilt alone does not seem to be sufficient to influence people to change (Gilliland et al., 2011).

An alternative to guilt appeals is to raise the possibility of guilt in the future. "Anticipated guilt feelings may prove to be as useful a basis of social influence strategies as are actual guilt feelings" (O'Keefe, 2002, p. 335). Focusing on how one will feel if taking certain action has the advantage of not accusing the target of already committing a transgression, and can possibly avoid the negative reactions of high guilt appeals (O'Keefe, 2002).

Cognitive dissonance. Cognitive dissonance is an affective-motivational state caused by cognitions that are inconsistent with other cognitions such as beliefs, attitudes, or values (Festinger, 1957). Dissonance is psychologically uncomfortable and leads to an effort to ease the distress by changing or reinforcing attitudes, beliefs, values, or behaviors. The effort to reduce dissonance will focus on the element least resistant to change (Harmon-Jones, 2002).

Festinger and Carlsmith (1959) found that when people could not find an external source to blame for their dissonant behavior, they would change their belief or attitude to align with their behavior. This phenomenon is called the induced compliance paradigm. Along the same lines, the free choice paradigm (Brehm, 1966) describes the process of *spreading of the alternatives*. When people make a decision, they feel compelled to confirm the correctness of their decision, and may even harbor some regret about the alternative not chosen. People may reduce the resulting dissonance by enhancing the advantages and minimizing the negative consequences of their chosen alternative, and emphasizing the drawbacks and diminishing the benefits of the rejected alternative (Harmon-Jones, 2002). The belief disconfirmation paradigm (Festinger, 1956) further accounts for the reactions people have when they encounter information that is contrary to their beliefs. People occasionally change their beliefs, but frequently people take steps to validate their own beliefs by misinterpreting, rejecting, or refuting the conflicting information, seeking support from like-minded acquaintances, and attempting to convince others to accept their belief (Harmon-Jones, 2002).

Further research centering on the hypocrisy paradigm found that when people were reminded that their personal behavior was not consistent with their public statement

of attitude, they would reduce dissonance either by engaging in more consistent behavior or by altering their attitudes to align with past behavior (Aronson, Fried, & Stone, 1991; Harmon-Jones, 2002). These studies combined illustrate the need people have to display integrity between their beliefs and actions.

Reactance. Freedom to choose how we think and behave is a core human value, which contributes to our survival and progress. When our choices are limited in some way, we naturally respond defensively to reestablish free behaviors in a process called reactance (Burgoon, Alvaro, Grandpre, & Voulodakis, 2002).

Brehm (1966) suggested that any message designed to change someone's attitudes or behavior might be interpreted as a threat to freedom, even when it is given for the benefit of the audience. Reactance often leads to disregarding the message, discrediting the source, displaying hostility toward the source, and possibly even engaging in more of the detrimental behavior to affirm the freedom of choice (Burgoon et al., 2002). The level of reactance increases in relation to the importance of the threatened freedom to the individual (Brehm & Brehm, 1981).

"People do not appreciate being told how they should behave, especially in areas where they feel it is simply no one else's business" (Burgoon et al., 2002, p. 215). Reactance will arise in groups that value self-determination, perceive that their behavior is under attack, and feel confident that they are knowledgeable enough to make their own decisions. Communications that arouse reactance will not be effective at altering most people's attitudes or behaviors (Burgoon et al., 2002).

Research studying the results of alcohol reduction campaigns on college students illustrates a possible process of reactance. These campaigns have sometimes produced

boomerang effects among young people. "Through informing young adults about the dangers of drinking or explicitly advocating reduced alcohol consumption, public health campaigns attempt to limit behaviors and commensurate freedoms. In response, the prohibited behavior is enacted in an attempt to restore the threatened freedom, leading to increased alcohol consumption" (Rains & Turner, 2004, p. 3). The possibility of a similar unintended and counterproductive outcome should be acknowledged and addressed:

We must be careful not to alienate the at-risk audience members by the content of our messages. In a worst-case scenario, we would successfully capture the interest of an at-risk teen only to have that teen turn their full attention to restoring a sense of lost freedom by taking up contra-advocated behaviors. Instead, it may be possible to make intriguing and attention-getting messages that stimulate thought about what it means to be healthy, attractive, accepted, and independent. By allowing adolescents the freedom to actively consider diverse health choices, resultant decisions may be seen as being wholly self-initiated. (Grandpre, Alvaro, Burgoon, Miller, & Hall, 2003, p. 364)

It is important to ask what message factors encourage or discourage reactance in order to design messages that will not induce this response in the target audience (Burgoon et al., 2002). Research suggests that persuasive communications should:

- Avoid explicit threats to freedom (Rains & Turner, 2004).
- Use implicit arguments rather than "specific directives that would limit a receiver's freedom" (Rains & Turner, 2004, p. 15; see also Grandpre et al., 2003).
- Encourage the audience to enact a different freedom, stressing freedom of choice

(Burgoon et al., 2002; Grandpre et al., 2003).

- Use two-sided messages to acknowledge both sides of an issue (Rains & Turner, 2004).
- Acknowledge and refute potential negative thoughts (Rains & Turner, 2004).

Persuading adoption of behavior to avoid a threat. Messages in information and influence campaigns can, and often do, draw attention to negative consequences that can happen if people do not follow the advice offered by the campaign. Creating fear (or apprehension) puts people in a state of receptiveness to suggestions to avoid the risk (Roskos-Ewoldsen et al., 2002). Fear appeals and self-efficacy are combined in this section because fear appeals are successful only to the extent that they invoke sufficient self-efficacy - that is, recommending a behavior to avoid the threat.

Fear appeal theory. Fear appeals are messages that are designed to (a) induce fear by describing a threat and (b) motivate adoption of a recommended behavior to avoid the threat (Witte, 1994; Ordonana, Gonzalez-Javier, Espin-Lopez, & Gomez-Amor, 2009). "Fear appeals have long been used in persuasive messages in an attempt to scare people into performing adaptive behaviors" (Roskos-Ewoldsen et al., 2002, p. 49). A situation that is perceived as both threatening and out of one's control generally arouses fear (Nabi, 2002). How effective the message is will depend on the intensity of the emotion, the individual's vulnerability to the threat, and the level of protection the individual sees in the recommended action (Nabi, 2002; Roskos-Ewoldsen et al., 2002).

Fear appeals have more impact when they include a plan of action to avoid the distressing situation (Salovey et al., 2002; Devine & Hirt, 1989). When an individual perceives a threat, but feels that he can respond and manage the threat, he is likely to

display *danger control processes* involving adaptive, protective behavior. However, if a person lacks confidence in his/her ability to escape the risk, he/she will engage in *fear control processes* such as avoiding the topic or discrediting the information (Roskos-Ewoldsen et al., 2002). Generally, high-threat/high-efficacy message designs have indicated the most persuasive results (Nabi et al., 2008).

Ordonana et al. (2009) suggest that reactions to fear appeals are likely more complex than commonly assumed. They found that heart rate actually decreased in response to a fear appeal, indicating heightened attention, instead of the increased heart rate expected in response to imminent danger. It may be that "threatening information in a common fear appeal would not prompt a fight-or-flight kind of defensive reaction but an attentional response to capture information useful to evaluate the threat" (p. 211). Perhaps it is more constructive to say that these messages intend to appeal to apprehension rather than fear.

Nabi et al. (2008) comment that most fear appeal research assumes that the audience is uninformed about the threat. However, it's often the case that they are already aware of the issue. In this case it might be better to center the messages on the protective action. Their research leads them to suggest that while threat and efficacy are essential features of fear appeals, either one can be contributed by the audience:

For those aware of the health threat, mere mention of it (e.g., mad cow disease, skin cancer) in the context of providing efficacy information may be sufficient to raise perception of threat . . . In other words, we suggest that the study of fear appeals be open to the idea of "implicit" fear appeals, in which the fear is provided by the audience rather than made explicit in the message.

As such, fear is still aroused, albeit a result of previously held knowledge, yet reactance is minimized as the message and its source may be seen as less manipulative. (p. 199)

Self-efficacy. Bandura (1977) advanced the idea that individuals choose to participate in activities that they consider themselves capable of performing well; conversely, they will avoid situations that appear to exceed their coping skills. These expectations of self-efficacy impact the effort people will expend in difficult circumstances.

Bandura (1977) explained that efficacy expectations differ in magnitude, with some individuals perceiving themselves as limited to simple tasks, while others are confident in the most challenging performances. Some experiences produce expectations of generalized self-efficacy that extend to other activities, in contrast to efficacy in limited situations. Efficacy expectations also vary in strength; demanding experiences will overwhelm weak expectations, while strong concepts of efficacy will survive in spite of difficulties.

Four sources of information influence expectations of self-efficacy: performance accomplishments, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and emotional arousal. Performance accomplishments are based on the foundation that successful experiences increase mastery expectations, while repeated failures generate feelings of inadequacy. People do not depend entirely on their own experiences, however; seeing others perform behaviors successfully motivates expectations that if others can accomplish something, they will also be able to improve. This vicarious experience effect is even stronger with a variety of behavioral models (Bandura, 1977).

Verbal persuasion results in weaker efficacy expectations than personal accomplishments, but it is frequently used because it is easier to execute. Social verbal

persuasion may have limitations, but it serves a purpose in contributing to the success of performance accomplishments. It is important to note that raising “persuasion expectations of personal competence without arranging conditions to facilitate effective performance will most likely lead to failures that discredit the persuaders and further undermine the recipients' perceived self-efficacy” (Bandura, 1977, p. 198).

Emotional arousal affects perceptions of self-efficacy. People perceive that their own anxiety and stress in particular circumstances indicates that they are in a situation that is beyond their capabilities, and react aversively. “It is often the case that fears and deficits are interdependent. Avoidance of stressful activities impedes development of coping skills, and the resulting lack of competency provides a realistic basis for fear” (Bandura, 1977, p. 200). Reducing emotional arousal can mitigate evasive behavior.

Bandura (2001) emphasized the central importance of people’s sense of efficacy to exercise control over the experiences in their lives:

This core belief is the foundation of human agency (Bandura, 1997, 2001b).

Unless people believe that they can produce desired effects and forestall undesired ones by their actions, they have little incentive to act. Efficacy beliefs influence whether people think self-enhancingly or self-debilitatingly, optimistically or pessimistically; what courses of action they choose to pursue; the goals they set for themselves and their commitment to them; how much effort they put forth in given endeavors; the outcomes they expect their efforts to produce; how long they persevere in the face of obstacles; their resilience to adversity; how much stress and depression they

experience in coping with taxing environmental demands; and the accomplishments they realize. (p. 270)

The behavioral realm in the hierarchy of effects model. The final dimension in the hierarchy of effects model proposes that the preferences strengthened in the affective realm will create behavioral intentions to enact the desired behavior. Miller (2002) emphasized, "it remains clear that 'being persuaded' is a process grounded in behavioral data" (p. 14). Ultimately, every aspect of a persuasive campaign is designed to encourage a preferred behavior.

Behavioral intention has been shown to be a successful predictor of actual behavior (Ajzen, 2002). Persuasive communications are designed to engage the audience in a process of forming a plan of action, which will be carried out when the opportunity or threat arises. Bandura (2001) noted the goal-oriented characteristic of individual action, saying,

Most human behavior is directed by forethought toward events and outcomes projected into the future. The future time perspective manifests itself in many different ways. People set goals for themselves, anticipate the likely consequences of their prospective actions, and otherwise plan courses of action that are likely to produce desired outcomes and to avoid undesired ones. (p. 268)

The most important targets of persuasive communications are behavioral intentions and behavioral change. While this study does not measure behavior, the discussion section will analyze whether the messages in this campaign are grounded in theory about behavioral intentions and change.

A Persuasion Model for Effective Information & Influence Campaign Messages

Researchers have looked at factors that influence persuasion through thought processes and emotions. Certain circumstances facilitate persuasion and can be arranged, created, and managed to achieve strategic goals. This literature review has discussed studies about attitudes; source credibility; rhetorical language such as evidence and exemplars; negative emotions such as guilt, cognitive dissonance, and reactance; and fear appeals in conjunction with self-efficacy. These theories have been explored to understand how they can answer questions in this case study about the persuasive effect of the campaign. Specifically, these theories will be the basis of identifying the themes of the campaign, evaluating the credibility of XXXchurch, and assessing the theoretical foundation of the campaign.

These theories were used to create a model for the creation of effective campaign messages. This model distills the findings of research into suggestions for designing messages that theoretically should have the most impact and success. This model can be used as a guide for constructing new campaigns, evaluating and improving existing campaigns, and analyzing past campaigns. It will be used to examine the XXXchurch campaign.

Table 1

A Persuasion Model for Effective Information & Influence Campaign Messages	
Persuasion Theory	Optimal Message Design
Source Credibility	Emphasize expertise, prior positive relationships, honesty, unbiased motives, and similarity to the audience to build credibility.
Attitudes	Identify the crucial desired positive and negative attitudes surrounding the issue and develop messages that will direct and intensify those attitudes.
Agenda Setting	Frequently repeat the message over time and through a variety of channels to raise the importance of the issue.
Attitude Accessibility	Include situational cues to increase attitude accessibility at the point of decision.
Exemplars	Make use of the power of exemplars extensively to engage interest and strengthen authenticity.
Evidence	Provide evidence such as statistics strategically to validate the message, citing the source.
Cognitive Dissonance	Motivate behavioral change through messages that elicit uncomfortable feelings such as guilt, hypocrisy, and regret, with a plan to reduce dissonance and reclaim self-integrity.
Guilt and Shame	Design guilt appeals to focus on harmful behavior, not personal deficiencies that will induce shame. Aim to induce low to moderate levels of guilt that will not provoke resentment.
Reactance	Develop implicit messages, avoiding explicit threats to freedom. Balance reactance-provoking messages by stressing freedom to make positive choices. Acknowledge and refute potential negative thoughts.
Fear Appeals	Encourage change by employing fear appeals accompanied by a plan of action to manage the threat.
Self-efficacy	Generate messages that develop a sense of competence and expectation of success. Encourage behavior that is likely to be successful, as this will build self-efficacy. While verbal persuasion is the easiest way to influence self-efficacy, offering vicarious experience through a variety of behavioral models is the most effective strategy.

Research Questions

As the preceding literature review has illustrated, the risk that pornography poses to individuals, families, and societies leads to a pressing need to understand how to persuade people to choose to resist pornography. The literature explaining the value of strategic communication and persuasion theories in information and influence campaigns provides a foundation for the research questions guiding this case analysis. The following primary research questions will direct the investigation.

RQ1 What are the objectives of Fireproof Ministries, and how do they measure successful achievement of their objectives?

RQ2 What are the primary messages of the XXXchurch campaign? How do the messages target attitudes?

RQ3 Is the XXXchurch organization a credible source for persuasive anti-pornography messages?

RQ4 What can persuasion theories explain or predict about the persuasive effect of the messages on the audience?

Sub-questions relevant to specific theories will be explored in the results section. For example, are fear appeals in the campaign constructed in a way that should motivate action to avoid the threat? Do the messages contain self-efficacy elements to overcome the difficulty that compulsive users have of abstaining from pornography? Most importantly, what do persuasion theories help us learn about the strengths and weaknesses of this campaign that can be used to guide other anti-pornography initiatives? These questions are the basis of this thesis.

Method

The method of choice for this qualitative study is a single embedded case analysis of the Fireproof Ministries anti-pornography campaign. Case analysis is the most appropriate method for investigating this campaign because it allows for in-depth analysis of message design. The goals of this project fit Yin's (2009) definition of a case study as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context" (p. 13). Taking account of the context and being open to any possible variables that impact the persuasive appeal of this campaign helped uncover the most insightful data. The strengths of conducting a case analysis included being able to answer deeper questions about how and why the campaign messages may influence attitudes and behavior.

Yin (2009) states that analysis of a single case, rather than multiple cases, is called for when the subject is a unique case. The XXXchurch campaign qualifies as a unique case because there is no other currently operating anti-pornography effort that is reaching such a large audience through a variety of tactics such as a website, events, and videos. The Christian foundation of the organization is another unique feature of the campaign.

Sources of Data

Data was collected from four sources of evidence: interviews, direct observation at events, the website, and a video.

Interviews with Fireproof Ministries personnel. Interviews with five people involved in the campaign were conducted to understand their objectives and their perceptions of results of the campaign. Jake Larson, Brian McGinness, Shellie Warren, and Kevin Outland were interviewed in person during their trip to conduct weekend events in Eagle River, Alaska in June 2011. Founder Craig Gross was interviewed over the phone in

January 2012. These interviews lasted between 30 – 60 minutes and were audio recorded and transcribed for accuracy. These semi-structured interviews followed an interview guide as time permitted (Appendix D), but the interviews were allowed to adapt and digress, permitting a “more textured set of accounts” (Berg, p. 109).

Observations of presentations. Direct observation of four XXXchurch weekend events provided field notes about the campaign in its natural context. The events were held at Alliance Christian Fellowship in Eagle River, Alaska in June 2011. These meetings were for women (Porn and Pastries), men (Porn and Pancakes), parents (Porn and Parents), and the entire church congregation (Porn Sunday).

Analysis of website documentation. The XXXchurch website provided a rich source of Fireproof Ministries’ messages, target audiences, and strategies. Documentation available on the website was divided into two groups:

1. Blog posts: XXXchurch supports 9 different blogs targeted to parents, teens, men, women, spouses, pastors, the sex industry, single sex attraction, and a blog about the campaign and relevant news written by founder, Craig Gross. This study analyzed 27 blog entries posted from November 1-15, 2011.
2. Other web content: four “Get Help” PDF brochures for men, women, teens, and pastors; the first question on Q&A web pages for men, women, teens, and parents; and content on in sections for men, women, parents, teens, the sex industry, events, and extras.

The website yielded 47 documents for analysis. Not all of the web content available was used; for example, there are 158 podcasts and over 100 videos that are not part of this study. Web pages such as technical information about the X3 watch software, requests for

donations, comments on blogs, and the prayer wall were not included since they are not anti-pornography messages produced by XXXchurch for the public.

During the course of this study, XXXchurch launched a new, updated website interface in November 2011. Content from the previous website was migrated to the new one; the new aspects were primarily organization and design, with some added features.

National Porn Sunday (NPS) video transcript. This 40-minute video, as mentioned earlier, was first shown in over 350 churches on Superbowl Sunday in February 2011 and is available for view on the web. The video was transcribed for analysis.

Data Analysis

All of the sources were uploaded into qualitative analysis software (NVivo). The text of the sources was analyzed, and codes were systematically identified through constant comparative analysis to identify patterns (Charmaz, 1983). The text was coded for two elements: (a) themes in messages to the audience, and (b) persuasion theories that could explain the potential effect of the message on the audience. Themes in the messages were then organized into over-arching categories.

Frequencies for the messages themes were identified for each source and compared to see if the themes were present in each source, and which themes were most common overall. Likewise, frequencies for persuasion theories used were also noted for each source and compared to see which theories were most prevalent in each source, as well as the most frequent theories found overall. These empirically based frequencies of messages and persuasion theories are the foundation of conclusions drawn about the theoretical basis of the XXXchurch campaign. The Persuasion Model for Effective Campaign Messages was used to analyze the messages to see if they were designed effectively according to theory.

Establishing Trustworthiness

In accordance with naturalistic principles advocated by Lincoln and Guba (1985), trustworthiness was established by several methods. Yin (2009) identifies four tests of trustworthiness that should be used in case studies: construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability.

Construct validity. Construct validity relies on “identifying correct operational measures of the concepts being studied” (Yin, 2009, p. 40). This was established by using operational processes recognized to be legitimate and likely to produce credible conclusions.

First, using multiple sources of information, also known as triangulation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), was an important process in this study. Data showed that similar themes emerged from different sources, identifying converging lines of inquiry. Triangulation has the benefit of reducing researcher and participant subjectivity and bias (Yin, 2009). Also, the use of several methods including interviews, textual analysis, and direct observation triangulated methodology. This allowed the researcher to compare and validate information obtained through these methods (Yin, 2009; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Furthermore, analyzing the data in light of 14 different persuasion theories also triangulated the theories. This allowed for a variety of perspectives for evaluating each message, avoiding underdetermination of theory (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Secondly, inviting the interview participants to review and approve the findings of the research will also reinforce construct validity. The results should be credible to those who are involved in the operation of the campaign (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

A third way to confirm construct validity is to maintain a chain of evidence - a clear

trail of the process of evidence leading to theory (Yin, 2009). The researcher maintained a database of the messages and the patterns observed in the data.

Internal validity. This element of trustworthiness involves showing that the study provides valid answers to the research questions (Yin, 2009; Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Pattern matching is one method of increasing internal validity, which is the method used in this study (Yin, 2009). Lincoln and Guba (1985) identify additional research processes that build internal validity. Two of these are prolonged engagement and persistent observation. In this study the researcher was able to spend three days directly observing a weekend of XXXchurch events, as well as over a year researching the public face of the campaign through its website, National Porn Sunday event, and news about the organization.

External validity. A limitation of case studies is that the results are not generalizable to the general population – in this case, to other anti-pornography initiatives. While the results of this study will be specific to the XXXchurch campaign, Lincoln and Guba (1985) explain that qualitative research can be transferable to similar situations when the reader is able to determine, from the thick description in the study, that their own circumstances are comparable. This study contributes an in-depth analysis of one anti-pornography campaign's messages which could be transferable to other anti-pornography efforts.

Yin (2009) explains that external validity in case studies is established through analytical generalization rather than statistical generalization. This involves generalizing “a particular set of results to some broader theory” (p. 37). Instead of generalizing to populations, the findings of case study research seek to “expand and generalize theories” (Yin, 2009, p. 10). This study will generalize the results to persuasion theories.

Reliability. Reliability was ascertained by carefully following a case study protocol and systematically documenting the process in a case study database as outlined by Yin (2009).

Limitations of case study research

While the preceding trustworthiness protocols will provide a high degree of confidence in the findings, there are some unavoidable limitations that should be noted. In qualitative research, the investigator should account for their own potential bias that may impact their frame of reference (Yin, 2009). Therefore, the researcher acknowledges a bias against pornography. Religion is another potential influence on the interpretation of this Christian-based campaign. The researcher discloses membership in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, which maintains belief in Jesus Christ, but is not closely affiliated with the nondenominational Christian base of Fireproof Ministries. This study endeavored to avert potential bias by not seeking to confirm predetermined theories, but rather being open to unexpected explanations (Yin, 2009).

Results

RQ1 What are the objectives of Fireproof Ministries, and how do they measure successful achievement of their objectives?

This study found five major patterns that provide insight into this question. These are XXXchurch's stated objectives, the ways that success is measured, decisions about channels and audiences, the campaign's objective of reaching out to the sex industry, and challenges that the organization faces.

Objectives. The three dominant objectives of the campaign are awareness, prevention, and recovery in relation to the harm of pornography. These three goals of

awareness, prevention, and recovery were repeated by all of the team members in discussions about campaign objectives in interviews, and are clearly present in all of the campaign tactics and messages.

The website offers a full description of the objectives on the 'Our Mission' page (see full statement in Appendix E); the following is an abridged version:

Our Mission: Porn addiction is one of the most difficult addictions to overcome. XXXchurch is your resource online to fight porn addiction. We prevail through awareness, prevention and recovery.

Awareness - We use the web, social media and news media to tell a story often left untold.

Prevention - We are the largest site online and the most recognized voice on the planet on the issue of pornography. Our site offers tools, resources and blogs to help prevent pornography from becoming a destructive force in life. We have created the very best software programs for accountability and filtering online.

Recovery - We are committed to help men and women conquer sexual issues like pornography addiction and sex addiction and regain control of their lives.

Jake Larson, a co-founder of Fireproof Ministries and pastor who speaks at the events, offered a view of what their limitations are, saying that Fireproof Ministries does not directly lobby against or attack the pornography industry. "So we're not like fighting pornography, a 57 billion dollar industry, so that it doesn't produce more. . . . It's never been our mission to stop production because, quite frankly, I think we always felt like, 'We

can't.' But we more so just want to help people deal with it appropriately” (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011).

The messages that support the objectives of prevention and recovery are discussed later in connection with the themes of the messages. Following is a discussion of the goal of raising awareness.

Creating awareness of the dangers of pornography. The theories of agenda setting and attitude accessibility work together to explain how XXXchurch is raising awareness about the dangers of pornography. Results clarified the team’s perceptions of this objective.

The role of agenda setting in raising awareness. Brian described the process of agenda setting in XXXchurch this way:

One of the big things for us is awareness, so I mean we touched millions of people just through the fact that they either saw it at their church, or they heard about it on the news, or somehow, somehow, people saw something on this, and to bring that awareness and hopefully to start those conversations in the households and stuff and just to get the conversation going. (B. McGinness, personal communication, June 18, 2011)

XXXchurch has proactively invited churches to discuss the problems of pornography within their congregations. Jake explained,

I think our message to the church is don't hide. Don't pretend like this isn't something in your world, in the church. We use the elephant in the pew as you've probably seen . . . And dude, we've got to get this out and on the table

and talk about it in order to have healing. (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011)

As churches repeatedly place this topic on their agenda, the issue is expected to become more important to church members. XXXchurch has been a major influence for many churches, providing them with motivation and resources to discuss the issue. For example, over 350 churches simulcast the NPS video on Superbowl Sunday 2011. Brian said that they receive a grateful response for their efforts: "The majority of the time after the events, it's like, thank you for coming. Thank you for bringing awareness and just shining light in an area that's just a dark area that people just aren't willing to talk about" (B. McGinness, personal communication, June 18, 2011).

XXXchurch has not only set the pornography agenda in many Christian churches, but brings that topic to a wider public when news media reports on their activities. The website reports that they have been featured in thousands of media publications and broadcasts over the years. A recurring event that often gets media attention is a debate between XXXchurch founder, Craig Gross, and porn celebrity Ron Jeremy, usually on college campuses. Fox 11 reported,

Porn Star and Pastor Debate at UWO: A pornography star and a pastor may seem an unlikely duo. But the combination drew a sold-out crowd at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh on Wednesday night. As they have done at other venues, the two shared the stage to address a controversial topic with an unconventional approach. More than 1,000 students and faculty attended. "Most people haven't heard that this is destructive, that this can hurt you," Craig Gross, founder of Fireproof Ministries and XXXchurch.com, said.

Adult film star Ron Jeremy has made his living from it. "When you say porn is fantasy, so what? It's junk entertainment," Jeremy said. "It's for people over 18 years of age. By the time you're 18 you can fight and bleed on the battlefield and die for your country. I think you can choose what porn you want to watch." (Veremis, 2009)

XXXchurch is engaging their audience to help set the agenda and spread the word.

The website invites participation:

You are Team X3! Now go and do something crazy! Rules? There are none.

Well one, and that is you have to share your craziness with us. Whatever you do to get the message out about America's Dirty Little Secret tell us about it.

Whether it's an outreach, video, art piece, a porn night at your church, or flyer, we want to hear about it. (Extras, n.d.)

The role of attitude accessibility in raising awareness. Bringing the subject of pornography into churches, getting the campaign mentioned in the news, and expressing a strong anti-pornography stance on their website are some of the ways that the campaign theoretically creates more accessible attitudes in the audience. Research suggests that each time people are exposed to the issue of pornography, the related attitudes are more easily retrieved and the subject gains importance among the clutter of issues vying for people's attention.

Literally everything that XXXchurch says or writes could have an impact on accessibility. However, some specific research findings about how accessibility works can be illustrated by messages in the campaign.

Some messages exhibit the persuasive tactic of providing situational cues that will

increase the accessibility of anti-pornography attitudes later, when a listener is making a behavioral decision. By describing a circumstance when a decision will need to be made, a point of decision cue is planted to guide future actions. A blogger shared this experience:

While playing Angry Birds, checking my Gmail or using other free apps on my iPhone, I noticed that I frequently received popup ads regarding finding singles and connecting with hot girls or hot guys in my area. Although I wasn't tempted to click on any of the ads, their frequency has been enough to persuade me to upgrade to the paid versions of the apps. (Logan, 2011b)

After hearing this advice, a listener who later sees an inappropriate popup ad on his cell phone may be inclined to take the suggestion and pay for the app to avoid similar ads. In similar example, John Kitna describes a habit that would serve as a situational cue for others who travel and find themselves tempted by hotel pornography:

I'll take my phone out when I get to the hotel - and record myself turning off the movies on the TV so [my friends] know that those things are shut off. . . . That's one of the accountability areas or things that we set up for me on the road. (National Porn Sunday, 2011)

Source credibility interacts with attitude accessibility to increase the persuasion factor of messages. The increasing familiarity of the audience with XXXchurch and its representatives is likely strengthening the influence of the campaign. Direct experience is another factor that increases attitude accessibility. XXXchurch provides opportunities for the audience to interact with the organization such as attending events, commenting on the website, or watching a video, thus taking advantage of this benefit.

Messages that create the prospect of interaction with others increase attitude

accessibility. The many messages that call for accountability and communication on the issue function to strengthen accessibility, such as the following from the “Get Help” brochure for spouses:

Your first priority is to find someone to talk with like a close friend, pastor or family member. As you walk toward forgiveness, you need to process things aloud. Talk things out. You will find there is healing in getting everything inside of you out through talking with someone you trust. (Get help for spouses, n.d.)

These processes explain some of the ways that the campaign raises awareness of the impact of pornography in people’s lives.

Measuring success. XXXchurch judges their own impact by the stories and feedback they hear from their audience, the media attention they receive, and their increased acceptance by churches. The organization has not conducted research to quantify the success of their efforts. On the topic of measuring success, Craig accurately stated, “I don’t think there’s been a bigger kind of megaphone or mouthpiece on this topic than us, and you know I think we’ve been quite successful in that” (C. Gross, personal communication, January 31, 2012). Brian McGinness, who speaks at men’s events and manages the website, said,

I don't know exactly . . . how do you measure effectiveness. I mean we deal with so many people throughout the entire world, and it's not like we have a survey box that says how are we doing, check this box, or something like that. I think for myself, a measurement is how the churches have changed to accepting this topic in this issue. For so long everybody wanted to bury their

head in the sand. . . . But yeah, I mean people can go, 'Oh yeah we get 250 thousand new hits on our website every month,' and they think that's a measure. That's really not. It's 'Are we helping people?' You know and we get those feedbacks and emails. 'Hey, thanks. XXXchurch did this for us.' . . . I guess . . . the ultimate goal for us is to run ourselves out of business, run ourselves out of an organization. Nobody needs us anymore. (B. McGinness, personal communication, June 18, 2011)

Jake responded to the question about measuring success with similar sentiments, saying,

That's actually been our hardest measure. When people give us 10 dollars, we can't say that 9 dollars or 10 dollars achieves this. Or it's like some non-profits . . . they're able to say, out of your 20 dollars, 19 dollars of it goes to here and it builds a well for this many people, and so it's very tangible. Well what we do is not as much, you know? So how do we measure our win? So that's been one of the things we struggled with, I think, over a time. So some of the aspects of things we do like software development for our accountability software, we've been able to set like financial and sales goals with those, knowing if we can get it into this many peoples' hands, then that's a win this year. If we can increase the sales of our accountability software that means this many more people are now not living under the secret of pornography because someone knows what they're looking at online. (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011)

As a measurement of impact, the X3 Watch software has been valuable for

XXXchurch. Over 1 million people have downloaded it. Jake said, “We’re having incredible growth with our software right now. So like X3 watch is one of the best things we ever did hands down” (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011). As well, the website gets 250,000 new hits per month, another indication that the campaign draws attention.

However, the team members prefer to evaluate their influence through the feedback they get from those who have come in contact with the ministry. About recognizing success, Jake said, “Yes, I think stories. If we cease to have stories of people's lives changing, then maybe we're not doing something right. But if we have an abundance of stories of people that are not falling in but getting pulled out, then I think we're winning” (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011).

Being in demand and able to meet the needs of churches is one aspect of determining success. Craig shared the memory of first getting a church to invite them to speak”

In '05, Marcelle church in January, in the middle of a snowstorm, was the first church to ever invite us on a Sunday morning and, you know, 3 services, 12,000 people, hearing this message, that was that first day where it became ok to talk about this in church. We knew a number of other churches would do it after somebody did it first that they kind of looked to. So at the time . . . that opened up . . . floodgates with churches calling, saying I want to do this in my church. (C. Gross, personal communication, January 31, 2012)

The National Porn Sunday event on Super Bowl Sunday 2010 reflected a growing alliance with the Christian church community. Jake reported,

Porn Sunday this year was by far the most successful church partnership that we've ever done, with over 300 churches participating across - not just in this country - but around the world. We figured we were able to reach, on that one day, more than a million people, and that doesn't include the millions of people that watch CNN and NBC and news pieces all around the country and the world. So it was our biggest partnership with churches ever, and so it was huge for us. (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011)

Channels and audiences. XXXchurch takes advantage of a variety of channels to meet different needs and different groups. This allows a multi-faceted message delivery. Their channels have included the website, videos, meetings, books, visits to adult industry shows, and news spots on TV. However, XXXchurch.com is their primary channel for sharing their message; as Jake noted, "We are a web-based organization, so I mean it is who we are. We do our website. Our website is us" (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011).

Engaging in interpersonal communication adds a more direct element to the campaign when the opportunity arises. Craig talked about the benefit of including live events in the campaign:

We're an online organization, but there's real people, and so we try in a sense to go back and forth . . . we're not just limited to online, this is real people and we're gonna visit real places . . . For the church that's the best thing we can offer, because for most churches Sunday morning still happens live for them. So bring us in on a Sunday morning or bring us to your church, we can help you navigate this kind of conversation, and then you can send people back to

us later. . . . Face-to-face is still the best way, I think, that we have for getting in front of people just on a more personal basis. (C. Gross, personal communication, January 31, 2012)

Kevin Outland, who specializes in the parents and technology aspect of the campaign, agrees. When asked to compare the effectiveness of face-to-face communication to the web interface with people, Kevin said,

Way better face-to-face . . . I mean the Web is powerful because it can be everywhere, and it's a great tool. But I think there's nothing like getting together with a group of guys or gals or parents and really sitting and learning and listening and absorbing . . . in that scenario you can build bonds with people. (K. Outland, personal communication, June 18, 2011)

Along with a variety of channels, XXXchurch tailors their content to specific audiences. Events, blogs, and sections on the website are geared to groups such as men, women, parents, teens, spouses, pastors, and the sex industry. Brian said,

I think the thing is we're trying to reach everybody and which is, again, it's a difficult task because everybody comes with different demographics, different backgrounds, different understanding. The teens are different than the married couples, and the women are different than the girl teens, and then there's the parent section. We want to try to make sure that we try to reach everybody wherever they're at. (B. McGinness, personal communication, June 18, 2011)

Sex industry outreach. From its inception, Fireproof Ministries has extended help to producers as well as consumers of pornography. The website explains,

We are a team here to assist those working in the sex industry who want to leave that line of work by providing them with encouragement, resources and rehabilitation. We have spent 10 years working with people in the sex industry and have been to 50 plus porn conventions across the world. . . . We don't judge or criticize people for choosing this type of work. If you are in the sex industry and have found your way to this page, we want you to know that we are willing to journey with you if you want to leave the industry or chase after some other dreams and goals in your life. (The industry, n.d.).

Fireproof Ministries has established The Esther Fund to assist women who want to leave the porn industry behind. To show that they mean what they say, the website shares brief updates of 16 people they have helped (The industry, n.d.).

When XXXchurch goes to adult conventions, they hand out free Bibles with a custom "Jesus Loves Porn Stars" cover. "The Bible outreach was covered by Time Magazine, LA Times, ABC World News Tonight, and it was one of the top stories of 2006, says the Associated Press. . . . We have given out roughly 20k bibles each year since 2008" (The industry, n.d.).

Jake said they first launched XXXchurch at AVN [Adult Video Network convention] in Las Vegas. That evening they were featured on the news – two pastors at a porn show. They told people, "There's something better than porn, and it's Jesus" as they handed out Jesus Loves Porn Stars Bibles. When XXXchurch hands out the Bibles, the receivers ask, "Is it really a Bible?" They show doubt, then surprise. Some actually read it; most industry workers have a religious background. People would say, "Is this for real? Are there pictures?" Now they put pictures of people whose lives have changed in the Bibles. (J.

Larson, Porn Sunday event, June 19, 2011).

Jake shared a story about being at a porn show and noticing a girl come by hiding in her jacket. It turned out she was a porn star, and the pastor of her youth church was in the XXXchurch booth. As she talked, she cried, and “the girl came out”; they offered her a way out (through the Esther fund) but she ran away. She wouldn’t take the offer. Three years later (just recently) she emailed for help and said she wants out. “I am so ready to be done with this draining industry. I’m ready to change everything. I just need some help” (J. Larson, Porn Sunday event, June 19, 2011).

Volunteers accompany XXXchurch to the adult shows to reach out and share the message. The website shares stories of these volunteers, such as Kelly, who wrote,

Wow, where do I start? My life has been permanently changed by this amazing opportunity of serving at EXXXotica NJ. . . . We have the opportunity to connect with people on a human level, look them in the eye and tell them they are of value and have purpose. . . . My heart has been broken and inspired during this time and I am overwhelmed by God’s love. The Gospel of Christ works! God has called us to be a light in the darkness not to run from it. . . . People are drawn to us, taking the bibles, wearing the stickers and asking all kinds of questions. . . . It is rewarding to be part of the solution and not the problem. I am so thankful for Fireproof Ministries and the bold stand they are taking and that they allowed me to come along for the ride. (Russell, 2011)

Craig views their acceptance at porn shows as a mark of their success:

We just finished our tenth year at the adult show in Las Vegas . . . and just the fact the not only have we been allowed to go into Vegas but allowed to go into 60 plus porn shows over the last ten years, and I kind of look at that and I go, "That's a success," because prior to us, and still even to this day, there's a lot of Christian groups that would never be allowed inside those doors. So for us to be accepted, but yet not have watered down our message, that's a big deal. Its not about the amount of people that we've helped out of the industry or how many Bibles we've quote unquote given out, it's the relationships that have been established that have trusted us to kind of step foot into their world. (C. Gross, personal communication, January 31, 2012)

Challenges for XXXchurch. As with all information and influence campaigns, XXXchurch faces challenges, many of them unique to the issue of pornography. Craig noted that the ultimate goal of the campaign, the avoidance of pornography, is really left in the hands of the audience:

I think the hard part, too, is some of those other things, prevention or recovery, a lot of that's left up to the people we're trying to help, where easily you could be discouraged. You know for every 10 people you talk to, if you want it more than they want it as far as help, you know its never going to work. (C. Gross, personal communication, January 31, 2012)

Ability of accountability partners. Accountability and open communication is the dominant theme in the campaign. Are friends and family of users prepared to respond to a call for help and be supportive over time? Jake talked about a friend who was in "total shock" when a pastor at his church confided that he was struggling with pornography. "He

called me and said, 'I have zero idea what to do. I don't know how to help him. Can you call him and do you know what to do?'" Jake continued,

So yes, I think people maybe aren't prepared to deal with it. They don't know how to help people or what to say, how stern to be, how bold and honest to be, how compassionate to be. And so people might even seek out accountability and they're like, "It's empty." (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011)

Craig commented on this challenge as well:

We've pushed accountability - we think it works, but yeah, it doesn't always work with who you've set it up to work with. . . . And a lot of times we deal with people that are accountability partners that have asked us, "Well, what do I do if I get a report with porn on it?" They've given you permission to talk to them, that's why you signed up. Yeah, it's a tough conversation still, but it's a lot easier than catching them, because they've invited you in on that. (C. Gross, personal communication, January 31, 2012)

Pornography recovery literature supports the value of disclosure and social ties in overcoming compulsive use. Chua (2009) conducted a pilot recovery program that included accountability elements, finding that:

Respondents in the project agree to the high effectiveness of this preventive measure, while admitting the difficulties of sustaining such accountability relationships. . . . A person is more likely to overcome pornography's temptation if he submits himself to constant accountability checks. (p. 193)

The XXXchurch campaign offers or encourages four effective treatment factors that

Burford (2008) identified: accountability, recovery curricula and information, group meetings, and vulnerable self-disclosure. Yet, it is important to recognize that the accountability partners may not have the confidence, patience, language, knowledge, or emotional stability to be as helpful as they would like to be. The organization may want to consider either adding information, or suggesting outside resources, to train people to perform this important role well.

Shadow support. Because of the social stigma associated with pornography, even supporters of the campaign often keep quiet. Craig observed,

We're not gonna get the Tweets and the Facebook likes like Charity Water and Invisible Children because, you might use us, but you don't want to like it on Facebook . . . its very hard to get people to interact . . . so there are certain levels where I feel like it would be ok for people to acknowledge the fact that they have benefited from some of our things, or go to our website, instead of just, "Oh, I can't let anyone know I go there because there must be something wrong with me". Okay, but that's the nature of the shame of this whole issue.

(C. Gross, personal communication, January 31, 2012)

Keeping up with communication technology. The campaign relies on constantly changing communications technology. Maintenance and improvement of the website and X3Watch software can be demanding. Craig recognized,

You've got to kind of adapt, and that's the challenging part, I think, from a technology standpoint of, just when you think you're there, something else is out and its expensive - our software is expensive. It's like, PC was fine back in the day, but then it was Mac, and now its Android and iPhone and Windows

phone maybe, or Blackberry, and it's just that its never ending. It is hard to keep up and to know what's next. It's not like, "Oh, I love all those things," but I think there's definitely benefit from each of them, because I think it allows you to kind of spread out in a sense. (C. Gross, personal communication, January 31, 2012)

Recognizing these challenges allows the XXXchurch team to focus on the issues that can be improved, while accepting realities that are beyond the control of the campaign.

RQ2 What Are the Primary Messages of the XXXchurch Campaign? What Attitudes Do the Messages Target?

The clearest way to understand the attitudes that XXXchurch endeavors to influence is to identify the recurring themes that their messages present. These themes all have the goal of changing or reinforcing the attitudes that the audience has relating to the issue of pornography. The data revealed three main groups of themes in the messages: prevention and recovery from pornography consumption, the harm of pornography, and how God's purposes for life are impacted by pornography (Table 2).

Table 2

Comparison of Overall Themes in Source Types – Number of coding references

Theme	Interviews	Presentations	Web content	Blog Posts	NPS Video	Total of all sources
Total: Prevention & recovery	43	44	52	38	37	214
Total: Harm of pornography	13	27	8	20	12	80
Total: God's purpose for life	13	17	11	34	5	80

Harm of pornography. "I think the message for probably for XXXchurch itself would be just that porn is harmful and it hurts" (B. McGinness, personal communication, June 18, 2011). Messages warning of the harm of pornography justify the need for the campaign, and set the stage for the most prevalent theme, prevention and recovery. Three

main patterns of harmful effects were found; these are negative social effects, addiction, and desensitization and distortion effects (Table 3). In order to better compare the extent of the themes in each source, Table 4 translates the frequencies of Table 3 into percentages.

Table 3
Comparison of Harms of Pornography Sub-themes in Source Types – Number of coding references

Theme	Interviews	Presentations	Web content	Blog Posts	NPS Video	Total of all sources
Negative social effects	3	16	4	12	15	40
Desensitization/distortion	9	5	1	3	4	22
Addiction	1	4	3	3	3	14
Total: Harm of pornography	13	25	8	18	12	76

Table 4
Comparison of Harms of Pornography Sub-themes in Source Types - Percentage of coding references

Theme	Interviews	Presentations	Web content	Blog Posts	NPS Video
Negative social effects	23%	64%	50%	66%	41%
Desensitization/distortion	69%	20%	12%	17%	34%
Addiction	8%	16%	38%	17%	25%
Total: Harm of pornography	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Negative social effects. The damage that viewing pornography can do to relationships is the most dominant subtheme in the harms of pornography category. Parents are cautioned, “As parents, are you compromising your kids for the sake of your own compromises? If you’re a parent that’s looking at pornography, recognize that your habit isn’t just between you and your screen. You’re likely losing sleep, productivity, time with your kids and your emotional, spiritual and sexual connection with your spouse, and you’re also placing your children at risk of early exposure” (Logan, 2011a).

Marriage. Marriage is the primary relationship that XXXchurch is concerned about. Jake warned, “When you view porn you bring someone else into that union. We look God in the eyes and say what you created for me isn’t good enough” (J. Larson, Porn Sunday event,

June 19, 2011). Shellie told the women that if they were watching porn with husband they were not having sex with each other, but sex at each other, and encouraged them to stop (S. Warren, Porn & Pastries event, June 17, 2011). The selfish nature of pornography is damaging in marriages: “You’re gonna retreat to pornography because its easier. It’s selfish, it just involves you, instead of pursuing your spouse” (National Porn Sunday, 2011).

The campaign addresses the pain of spouses who suffer from their partner’s pornography use; Craig said in the NPS video,

If you’re a spouse, I talk to spouses almost every day, they say you know what, it’s my fault. Let me tell you, it’s not your fault. There’s nothing wrong with how you look . . . this is something your partner’s been dealing with for years probably even before you were married. And don’t take the blame, but don’t, don’t just sit there. Don’t just sit in silence. Confront the matter.

(National Porn Sunday, 2011)

When an audience member asked how to avoid entering a relationship with a porn problem, Jake said, “Guys should be willing to be honest before marriage,” and Shellie added, “If there is a problem, take a few steps back, support as a friend. No settling!” (S. Warren, Porn & Pastries event, June 17, 2011).

Isolation. The nature of pornography use causes people to detach from their family and friends. An XXXchurch brochure reads, “At the core of consuming porn is selfishness. I will get my fix. No one will know. It is my secret. It is what I do in private” (Get help for men, n.d.). Jake commented that one of the results of pornography is that “you’ll be alone, like isolation. You’ll remove yourself from the people that love you and the places you get life from” (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011). A blog post teaches, “There’s

more to sex than mere skin on skin. Sex is as much spiritual mystery as physical fact. As written in Scripture, 'The two become one.' Since we want to become spiritually one with the Master, we must not pursue the kind of sex that avoids commitment and intimacy, leaving us more lonely than ever—the kind of sex that can never 'become one'" (Larson, 2011).

Desensitization and distortion effects. Messages in the campaign warn that pornography changes thought processes, desensitizing viewers and distorting their perception of sex. Jake said one of the dangers of pornography is that "you'll consume your mind with images and thoughts that turn people into objects and things instead of beings that should be loved" (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011). Pornography does not present an authentic version of people's real experiences: "And what pornography does is it distorts your view of sex. Because what you're watching in porn is fantasy, not reality. It's not gonna be what your going to find in a normal healthy sexual experience with your spouse. It's a cheap substitute" (National Porn Sunday, 2011).

Objectification affects self-perception as well as views about others. Shellie told women in the audience that shame comes from comparisons – sex with others created that. Men were not supposed to see other women's bodies to compare. Husbands actually aren't as critical as women are; women compare themselves to other women. Women victimize themselves by watching porn (S. Warren, Porn & Pastries event, June 17, 2011).

Illusion. The false version of sex that porn displays is a concern in the campaign. Jake told the audience that a real man builds relationships with family instead of with porn. Porn is not real. None of the women they have met in the industry actually likes it (J. Larson, Porn & Pancakes event, June 18, 2011).

Kevin expressed concern for the young people who are exposed to pornography: “I mean if that's what they've been watching since they were 9, 10, 11, and they think, ‘That's how it is and that's what you're supposed to do.’ They have no sense of what's reality. It's completely a fabricated fantasy but they don't understand or know that” (K. Outland, personal communication, June 18, 2011).

Habituation. Habituation, or desensitization to sexual material and the need for more intense media or experiences, was a concern mentioned in the interviews that did get a lot of attention in the NPS video, but is rarely mentioned in the other sources. An example is quarterback Josh McCown's experience related in the NPS video:

I wanted to take steps to help clean this up because it was leading me down a road where I didn't want to go, and I felt myself straying away, and you know, I didn't want to take it from online to offline, and out in the street where now you're no longer looking at somebody on the Internet, but as a married man your going out and seeking women from a different avenue, and so I didn't want to go down that road and I knew I needed to stop it right there.

(National Porn Sunday, 2011)

Losing Control to Addiction. Speakers warned that consuming pornography would eventually take control of their life. “No other sin affects the body like this. Why are we doing this event? Because no other sins are like this. The same reason why you haven't gotten help. The same reason why you're still stuck in this situation. You got out of bankruptcy, you saved your job, you quit smoking, you lost fifty pounds, but this problem, you can't beat. Because the Bible says nothing else is like it” (National Porn Sunday, 2011).

Jake offered the audience a scale to consider if their own pornography use may be compulsive:

Stages:

0 Curiosity, no action

1 Curiosity, plus pursuit

2 Curiosity, plus contact

3 Interested

4 Arrange your life around when you can get it

5 Day not complete without it

(J. Larson, Porn & Pancakes event, June 18, 2011).

A blogger lamented his experience with pornography: “What an easy slide it was into an addiction to pornography, I wish my natural inclination was to chase purity just as hard as it chased destruction” (Baird, 2011).

Pornography prevention and recovery. The most dominant theme of the XXXchurch campaign targets the attitudes and behavior necessary for the prevention of, or recovery from, the problems associated with pornography. Table 5 lists the sub-themes that were associated with prevention and recovery, while table 6 shows the percentages of each sub-theme. Open communication is clearly the strongest sub-theme in every source, and outnumbers all the other sub-themes significantly.

Table 5

Comparison of Prevention and Recovery Sub-themes in Source Types - Number of coding references

Themes	Interviews	Presentations	Web content	Blog Posts	NPS Video	Totals of all sources
Open communication	20	22	22	13	19	96
Protect children	6	13	6	12	0	37
Start recovery	12	2	12	5	6	37
Tech protections	4	2	10	5	2	23
Everyone at risk	1	5	2	3	10	21
Total: Prevention & recovery	43	44	52	38	37	214

Table 6

Comparison of Prevention and Recovery Sub-themes in Source Types – Percentage of coding references

Themes	Interviews	Presentations	Web content	Blog Posts	NPS Video
Open communication	47%	50%	42%	34%	51%
Protect children	14%	30%	12%	32%	0%
Start recovery	28%	5%	23%	13%	16%
Tech protections	9%	5%	19%	13%	5%
Everyone at risk	2%	11%	4%	8%	27%
Total: Prevention & recovery	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Some observations from the data comparing sources show that the focus of the NPS video was on self-repair, not protecting others. The main messages in this video were telling someone and that everyone is at risk. In contrast, the presentations had prevailing themes of communicating about the issue in families and protecting children. Web content emphasized using tech protections, due to the promotion of X3 watch software.

Open communication. The open communication subtheme includes messages about being honest with yourself about your problem, confessing to God, telling someone who will help you be accountable, and encouraging family communication. All of these actions have a common purpose of getting the secret out in the open. XXXchurch asks, “The question is simply will you live a life that is transparent?” (Get help for men, n.d.).

Confess to God. A primary step XXXchurch recommends is to confess your problem to God. As Miles McPherson, former San Diego Chargers player and now a pastor in San Diego, said in the NPS video,

Tell God, just admit to God, I'm in sin and God send me help. Tell God, ask God to send you help and be open to whoever he sends. And at some point he's going to send someone into your life to be honest with. I can encourage you to be completely honest with them. Let God deal with the consequences" (National Porn Sunday, 2011).

The Get Help brochure advises men, "Go before God with everything. Confess your struggles through prayer. He already knows it all anyway, right? You have to put all your junk out on the table and acknowledge that you can't handle it anymore - you need God" (Get help for men, n.d.)

Tell someone else. Talking to someone else about your issue with pornography is a very strong message in the campaign. Craig elaborated on this idea, saying,

Second step, confess to somebody else. Forget it. I, I, I, can't talk to anybody, I mean I'm an elder, I'm a professional athlete, I, I'm a schoolteacher, I, I'm on the honor roll, I mean I've heard every reason In the book why you can't tell somebody. I, I don't care who you are, you've got to find somebody in your life that cares enough about you that you can talk about the junk in your life with. . . . We all need people in our lives that we can say hey, look what's really going on in my life. I'm not proud of it, I'm embarrassed actually, I never told anybody, but I need your help. . . . The Bible says confess your sins, you will prosper. This conversation as difficult as it can be with your

spouse, with your mom, with your parents, with your wife, with your husband, with your pastor, with your employer . . . they're so much easier to make now than if you wait 'til you get caught. (National Porn Sunday, 2011)

The "Get Help" brochure encourages men to "Get accountable. Find someone in your life that you trust and let him or her in on your struggles. Such as a close friend, pastor or family member. You are not alone. You are not supposed to deal and carry this on your own. God has placed people around you that will walk with you as you move toward freedom. As men we naturally want to keep it all to ourselves. It is time to own up to those closest to you" (Get help for men, n.d.).

Eric Boles, former New York Jets player, emphasized, "I can't win this battle for myself. It's a set-up, you know as much as I tried, as much as I wanted to keep that image going, the only way I can get through this is I was gonna need help. Now not just from above but also alongside of me" (National Porn Sunday, 2011).

While the prospect of admitting their problem to someone else can be daunting, Matt Hasselbeck, quarterback of the Seattle Seahawks, offered some positive personal experience to encourage others to take this step: "If I look at anything that's at all inappropriate or questionable, and it's kinda cool what it's done with me and my relationship with my friend, like me and my teammate, like our relationship has really grown because of it, just conversations go places that otherwise they wouldn't go" (National Porn Sunday, 2011).

Accountability in small groups and community support networks. The campaign emphasizes the importance of creating a supportive community of friends that will keep you accountable. A blogger wrote,

I needed help so I started to build an army, friends who knew my addiction, a pastor who asked the hard questions, a wife who continued to pull out of me healthy connections, computer programs that kept me away from those sites . . . Discipline is definitely in the answer to our addiction but you will need an army to help you as if we could do it ourselves we would have long before now. (Baird, 2011)

Another blogger shared how having a supportive group helped:

I finally got to a point, where I knew for a fact, I needed someone's help. . . . I found myself in a support group with women who were much older than me but had once been in the same situations that I had been and was still in.

Their stories told of pain and struggle, failed marriages, broken hearts and relationships, insecurities, and the ache in their hearts because God seemed too far away. Take the lesson I learned from them: don't stuff your problems in a closet and think they will get better in time, or when A, B, and C happen.

(Amber M., 2011)

The pastor of ACF, the church that sponsored the XXXchurch weekend events, announced the church's determination to continue to provide support on the issue by creating small groups. Pastor Rob told the congregation that he could tell by hands continuing to raise up that this is an issue. He declared, "This is not the end, this is the beginning." He announced they would be setting up small groups and had the group leaders stand. The leaders would be prepared XXXchurch training (S. Warren, Porn & Pastries event, June 17, 2011).

The website shares links to help people needing to find a local group or start a new

group. A new program in the works is online small groups for men, women, pastors and teens through XXXchurch.com.

Family communication. Part of open communication is bringing the problem of pornography up for discussion in families, both between spouses and with children. Brian said that they frequently hear from their audience, "Hey, you started the conversation in our household between me and my husband" (B. McGinness, personal communication, June 18, 2011). The parent's "Get Help" brochure says, "It's time for you to get involved in their life. Ask the tough questions. Talk about the dangers. We realize talking about porn is as hard as talking about sex. Get out of your comfort zone. Your children are worth it" (Get help for parents, n.d.).

Protect children. The theme of protecting children from pornography is second only to the overall open communication theme, although it was discussed less than half as often as open communication. Kevin pointed out how widespread the desire to keep children untouched by pornography is: "It doesn't matter what your religion or your race or your background or I mean it's kind of a universal . . . most parents want to keep their kids away from porn" (K. Outland, personal communication, June 18, 2011). He said that after parents' meetings, the most common parent response is "I was so naïve. I had no idea" (K. Outland, Porn & Parents event, June 18, 2011). A blogger wrote,

So many parents just assume that their kids are smart enough or good enough to stay away from risky behaviors, ignoring the fact that our children are growing up in a culture where hooking up, viewing pornography and engaging in cybersex is no big deal. Unfortunately, when you combine the power of the Internet with teenage hormones, sense of invincibility and

curiosity about sex, it can result in a risky cocktail of behaviors, which is why parents must be involved. (Logan, 2011b)

The “Get Help” brochure for parents reinforces the pivotal role of parents: Parents are the most effective guard against children becoming involved in pornography. . . We love our kids and think they are the best. Often when a child gets into inappropriate material we dismiss it as ‘kids being kids’. Well, parents should be parents. It is our responsibility to monitor and control the content that comes into our homes. (Get help for parents, n.d.)

Parents are responsible to manage the risks children face outside of the home as well. The website admonishes,

Engage with other parents. So often, even when parents have set up appropriate restrictions and parental controls at their home, their children encounter pornography at a friend's home. Find out what safeguards other parents have established before allowing your son or daughter to spend the night or hang out at someone else's home. Debrief with them when they come home and watch for warning signs that they are encountering pornography or using pornography. (Parents - Questions, n.d.)

Using technical safety nets. The use of software to filter and monitor sexual content is a recurring theme. The campaign not only encourages the diligent use of these technical tools, but has created their own version. This free accountability software, X3watch, “monitors what is accessed online and sends a report of any questionable websites to your accountability partners email addresses” (XXXchurch, 2011). Promotions for this software appear on the website, in the NPS video, and in the presentations at

meetings. Jake said, "Let's set up safety nets in our own lives so that we can't just stumble upon it secretly" (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011).

Technology is continually changing and can be difficult to keep up with and mediate in homes. The parent's blog teaches current skills, such as how to protect kids from inappropriate material on their iPhone, iPad or iTouch. A blogger explained,

My 13-year-old daughter just won an iPad2 at school last week (lucky dog).

These devices can all access the Internet and there are zillions of apps that can be downloaded for them. So with the proliferation of "i" devices in our homes it's a good idea to know how to set them up so they're kid friendly.

Here's the step-by-step process I took to do just that on my daughter's new iPad2. (Outland, 2011)

Everyone is at risk. "You're an idiot, like the rest of us" (J. Larson, Porn Sunday event, June 19, 2011). This good-natured banter expresses the view that no one is immune to the lure of pornography. Jake said that one of XXXchurch's messages is that "no matter who you are, like pornography's knocking on your door already in some realm. It's like you don't have to find pornography, it will find you" (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011).

Messages mention celebrities who have been publicly involved in sexual transgressions, such as Jim Baker, 700 Club founder, who "committed adultery and crumbled. Everyone is capable of fatal errors; we've seen it over and over" (J. Larson, Porn & Pancakes event, June 18, 2011).

Football player Matt Hasselbeck described the ubiquity of pornography: "I grew up in America, and it just was, it was there. You know your friends, back of the bus, your

neighbor or locker room, or calendars, you know you're just very aware of it and you know as a kid you're just very curious" (National Porn Sunday, 2011). The men's "Get Help" brochure expanded this concept, stressing,

The reality is that as men we all struggle. And for some it's an overwhelming struggle with pornography. Women are beautiful. We know that this beauty attracts us. We know where to find porn and we know how to keep it hidden. In our culture the line has been blurred on what is porn. The magazines, TV and the Internet put it right in front of us every day of our lives. (Get help for men, n.d.)

Encouragement to start recovery. XXXchurch proposes some ideas to help users to begin the path to recovery: be willing to change, make a fresh start, recognize emotional needs, "clean it up", and get professional help if needed.

No change will occur without recognizing the need for change. "Admitting to the fact that you have an addiction to this is one of the first steps" (Men - Questions, n.d.). Brian related his own experience to the audience, saying that he heard some guys confessing at a small group meeting and realized, "If those guys are porn addicts, so am I." His wife realized it too (B. McGinness, Porn & Pancakes event, June 18, 2011).

No one else can make a user take the needed steps to change. Jake said, "So those are the key steps I tell everybody, and I'd say until you want to do any of those things, I don't need to talk to you anymore. If you don't want to set up safety nets, then whatever, I can't help you unless you're willing to do something about it" (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011). The "Get Help" brochure asks, "It is time to make some decisions. What are we doing with all the junk that is coming at us? Consume it, get in way

over our heads or are we going to live for things that are greater?" (Get help for men, n.d.).

Jake told the audience that he hoped this weekend would be the beginning of something fresh and new, telling them that when you are at the end of your rope, you are open to God; through a relationship with Jesus you can move forward (J. Larson, Porn Sunday event, June 19, 2011). A blog entreats users to "Be real, be hurt, and be ready for healing, wholeness and a new lease on life" (Baird, 2011).

Recognize emotional needs. Jake wants people to ask themselves, "Why are you running to this? Why is this a place to find comfort? And find that at -the core of your being, why it is that you've chosen to make this something in your life when it's not helping?" (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011). A blogger confessed the impact of emotions on his own challenges:

Implementing physical boundaries concerning access to the Internet seems like an easy discipline but when you are tired, depressed or just alone it is amazing what you will do to get your fix. I couldn't do it on my own, the disciplines I needed in my life required accountability, open communication and a huge amount of effort and self control, which if I had already possessed I wouldn't be in this mess. (Baird, 2011)

Spouses also need to recognize the role of emotions in helping their partner on the path to recovery. The website encourages spouses to avoid anger and show some love even when "love may be the last thing you feel like showing your spouse right now" (Get help for spouses, n.d.).

“Clean it up”. The phrase “clean it up” is widely used in the campaign. This concept as expressed by the team members is a way to say that users must physically abandon the harmful content that is the problem:

Throw away the porn stash. Delete it. Literally get rid of the things that are tripping you up. It is time to break that pattern of the things that make you stumble, the things you go right back to. Maybe you need to cancel your cable or internet altogether, move the computer out of the basement to the kitchen or get a filter on your computer. Take solid action steps toward moving away from your places of struggle. (Get help for pastors n.d.)

Counseling. On occasion, messages encourage users to seek professional help. In the NPS video, Craig advised, “Some of you, you need to see a counselor, your marriage is just in shambles”, while Miles McPherson encouraged users to “find someone that they can share with and then get professional help someplace that can really help them walk through the steps of complete recovery” (National Porn Sunday, 2011).

Spiritual foundations: God’s purpose for life. The final major theme found centered on God’s purposes for life. This included sub-themes of spiritual dimensions such as recognizing God’s love and plan for each person, His desire for each person to live a life of purpose and meaning, and His intentions for sexual expression. These sub-themes are categorized in tables 7 and 8.

Table 7
Comparison of Purpose in Life Sub-themes in Source Types - Number of coding references

Themes	Interviews	Presentations	Web content	Blog Posts	NPS Video	Totals of all sources
God's plan	6	11	7	11	3	38
God's love	7	4	3	11	1	26
Sexual integrity & wellness	0	2	1	12	1	16
Total: Purpose of life	13	17	11	34	5	80

Table 8

Comparison of Purpose in Life Sub-themes in Source Types - Percentage of coding references

Themes	Interviews	Presentations	Web		
			content	Blog Posts	NPS Video
God's plan	46%	65%	64%	32%	60%
God's love	54%	24%	27%	32%	20%
Sexual integrity & wellness	0%	12%	9%	35%	20%
Total: Purpose of life	100%	101%	100%	99%	100%

God has a plan for everyone. A reason for resisting pornography is that it takes people away from the happy, fulfilling life God intended for them. “God has a better plan” (J. Larson, Porn Sunday event, June 19, 2011). The website encourages, “Dive into the word daily. Spend time with God and find out what you have been missing and He will show you things you may not have before” (Men - Questions, n.d.).

Jake counseled the men in the audience that pornography would rob them of their potential to live a worthwhile and fulfilling life. He said that porn grabs people when they are young and sticks with them through life. “Lives are less than what God intended; what could have been? You can shoot for average or below or everything God wants for you. I want you to be the Godly man – don’t settle. . . . Some spend their whole life blaming others for what they are not” (J. Larson, Porn & Pancakes event, June 18, 2011). He expressed his concern about this downgrade in achievement, saying users experience “fear of losing their jobs and their careers, and they’re less than what they can be in their gifts and talents because they’re so consumed by pornography. They’re up late, too late looking at it, they’re looking at it at work, they’re misusing their time” (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011). In contrast, when people leave pornography behind, they begin living up to their potential:

When you get out, like all those dreams and ambitions you had, they all of a sudden can become reality again. Like I love to see people to live to their fullest potential. Porn locks people, like puts the bars up. Their potential is on the other side, they cannot get there. And when people kind of break free of the shackles, it's like all those things get back. (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011)

Craig ended the NPS video with a call to live as God intended, saying, When you start walking that stuff out of the room, and clearing the way, you start to see God's plan for your life. You start to see and hear God's voice more clear. And something starts to happen - hold on tight. Because you realize that God want to use you. That God is capable of using you. That God through you can do more than you could ever ask or imagine. Because he's given you gifts. He's given you a talent he hasn't given me. He's given you a voice he hasn't given the person next to you. . . . That's what God wants for you. To have life, and to have it to it's fullest. (National Porn Sunday, 2011)

God's love never fails. The XXXchurch campaign is built on the concept of God's love for every person, regardless of their situation. Jake said one of their messages is, Hey, like we don't care who you are, where you've been, and we care about where you go and what's next for you and I think God, he loves you even in the midst of whatever you've done . . . I mean, I spoke to a 147 sex offenders a few months ago. It's like, I mean, not the most popular segment of our society. And it's strange to be there at times. . . . even though there's

consequences, reaction, there's a God that loves you. There's hope for everybody. (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011)

Craig reinforced this message in the NPS video, saying, "It's ok, there's nothing you could do that would make God love you any less. He's not going to be shocked, he's not going to be blown away. In fact, he already knows it; he's just waiting for you to go to him and to ask for help" (National Porn Sunday, 2011). Jake emphasized, "We'd say run after Jesus, like go for it. Pursue a deeper relationship with him, because ultimately . . . that's what we want to fill the void, when you remove the pornography. What are you going to put there? We'd say you've got to put Jesus there" (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011). While the emphasis is on love for users, spouses who are hurt by their partner's consumption of porn are also assured, "You are loved by the God more than your husband could ever love you" (Get help for spouses, n.d.).

Spiritual disconnection. While God's love never fails, a pornography user distances himself from God through his behavior. Shellie warned, "God's love does not leave, His Spirit will leave you, and that's the truth, and we should teach that more" (S. Warren, personal communication, June 18, 2011). Jake recognized,

From a spiritual background, I think the scripture says like when you live in the midst of sin, you lose your connection with God, not that he runs from you, but you've like chosen to kind of walk in disobedience and I think when you choose to continue you're in habitual disobedience to God. I think God let's you go your way. (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011)

Sexual integrity. These messages underscore God's purposes for sex; that it is good when used as He intended. God created sex to bind husbands and wives together;

pornography is an abuse of that gift. Shellie said people need “to realize that what porn is selling you is not what God's design for sex was” (S. Warren, personal communication, June 18, 2011). She told the women’s audience that we don’t have sex just with our body, and described a triangle of mind, body, and spirit; the purpose of sex is being one, connecting. Sex binds together regardless of circumstances (S. Warren, Porn & Pastries event, June 17, 2011).

XXXchurch does not limit its messages to pornography use only, but advocates for healthy sexual relationships in marriage and warns about threats such as adultery, premarital sex, and masturbation. A blogger cautioned,

You should at least heed my “warning”. You never know what you are capable of when placed in the right circumstances. So be smart in your relationships outside your marriage. My husband and I have ministered to more couples than we can remember about infidelity. And you wanna know how many of the men and women thought they would cheat on their spouse? None. Notta. Zero. Not a single, solitary person ever said, *“Yep, around year three of our marriage I figured I’d go ahead sleep with another person and subsequently break the heart of my spouse, my God, and my children.”* (Cindy B., 2011)

Another blogger, newlywed, wrote about waiting for marriage for a sexual relationship:

To abstain from that constant megaphone of a voice that screams “do whatever feels good” is a rarity and, as Brandi and I abstained from sexual intimacy before our marriage, a difficult task, indeed. . . . I praise Jesus with

my whole heart that he kept us from sin during our courtship, and I pray that he would give many the grace (and that you would be stubbornly devoted to it) to save yourself for joyfully designed, Godly intimacy, within the context of marriage. (Levi & Brandi M, 2011)

XXXchurch does not shy away from subjects that impact people's sexual integrity, even when the issue may be uncomfortable. They share their view on masturbation, a behavior frequently associated with viewing pornography:

"Our stance is simply this: you want to live a life that is honoring to God then start pleasing him and stop pleasing yourself. Stop making excuses and get some control over your life. Yes, it is tough. Yes, we know hormones are raging. However, God is calling us to holiness. Live an extraordinary life. Masturbation will leave you hanging every time! It is a selfish act that pleases no one but YOU. God created sex to be between a man and his wife. Not a man and his girlfriend and not a man or woman with himself or herself".
(Extras, n.d.).

Summary of themes. The overarching themes found were prevention and recovery from pornography use, the harm of pornography, and God's purposes for life. These themes are essentially persuasive messages encouraging people to consider the negative consequence of using pornography and the benefits of resisting it. The attitudes reinforced, created, and strengthened through these messages are the precursors to taking action to overcome pornography. As well, these attitudes serve to link people to the campaign and the church, as attitudes are a basis of social identity and expression of core values. The

stronger the anti-pornography attitudes are, the more likely that they will influence behavior in the desired direction.

RQ3 Is the XXXchurch Organization a Credible Source for Persuasive Anti-Pornography Messages?

The XXXchurch campaign establishes credibility with their audience through six elements that research has shown can increase source credibility. These elements build trust through (a) prior experience or perceptions, (b) credentials, competence, and expertise (c) honesty and lack of bias, (d) similarity to the audience, (e) bold, confident delivery, and (f) plausible messages.

Prior experience or perceptions. Over time, the reputation of XXXchurch has grown, so that more of the audience is aware of the organization. Jake said that trust has grown because of their longevity; XXXchurch has now been out there for 10 years. After five years they started to be taken seriously because they were still around (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011). The attention they have gained in the press has helped create more awareness. XXXchurch has been featured in thousands of publications, news broadcasts, and newspapers (Extras, n.d.).

Credentials, competence, and expertise. Craig and Jake are pastors, which lends authority in the Christian audience. Furthermore, most people, even those who are concerned about pornography, do not want to spend time delving into this shady subject; therefore they may value the expertise of those who do the research. Kevin talked about being conversant about the dark side of the Internet so that he could teach parents how to protect children:

I don't like letting that stuff in but it's kind of part of . . . being out in the front line and willing to dive into the slop to be able to have enough knowledge to warn parents about what's going on. I have parents all the time say to me, "Thanks for being on the front lines." And that can be tough. (K. Outland, personal communication, June 18, 2011)

Being recognized as the experts in the Christian anti-pornography arena has encouraged more churches and individuals to turn to the organization as they become conscious of a need for help.

Honesty and lack of bias. Many of the speakers at the events shared their own struggles with pornography. Their personal experiences lend credibility that they understand the challenges that others face, as well as the path to successful recovery. Brian shared his own story of using pornography for almost two decades, then hearing the XXXchurch message at a Porn and Pancakes Event, after which he "made a commitment to burn his stash of pornography, come clean with his wife, get accountability and walk in purity with God" (XXXchurch.com).

Shellie opened her meeting saying, "I talk mostly about sexual brokenness. I've had four abortions, was molested from 3-15." Her story is a transformation from "sex girl to covenant woman" (S. Warren, Porn & Pastries event, June 17, 2011).

Shellie noted, "I don't know if any of us gets shocked by anything at this point" (S. Warren, personal communication, June 18, 2011). This ability to accept and advise those who struggle with sexual issues is a contributor to the ministry's credibility.

Similarity to the audience. At the weekend events in Alaska, the XXXchurch team dressed, spoke, and acted in the same casual, comfortable manner as the audience. Jeans

ruled rather than button-down shirts and ties. Language was conversational and laced with Biblical references. They are genuinely down-to-earth, approachable, and authentic.

Recognizing that people relate best to others who are like them, Jake talked about the changes that age is bringing to the organization:

We're not youth anymore. We started out really focused on youth and now we're not. We are people who are mid-30's or whatever. So how are we going to reach the younger kid, 16, 17, 18 or younger, and even the 19, 20, the 25 range? So right now we're trying to bring people around us that are able to do that better than us. (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011)

The website offers blogs, videos, and other resources that are geared toward this younger demographic.

Bold, confident delivery. XXXchurch messages are candid about difficult issues. Across all channels, the speakers and writers are not hesitant, but boldly declare their messages with assurance. One example is Shellie's blog post:

"Being that disciples (John 8:31) are to be healthy and whole---mind, body and spirit, being that sex was introduced to us *in the Garden of Eden*, in *the first book of the Bible* as a *gift* (James 1:17) from God, why wouldn't being sexually healthy be *just as much of a priority* as being spiritually, financially, relationally, (whew!) mentally and yes, emotionally in the Church? After all, it's not just "the world" getting pregnant before marriage, contracting STDs, being addicted to porn, cheating on their spouses, being heartbroken from fornication . . . the pews are filled with these kinds of people every weekend. (Warren, 2012)

Plausible messages. The XXXchurch message is based on a religious foundation that will be credible to the Christian audience that the ministry is directed to. Other message characteristics, such as evidence, will theoretically elevate the credibility of XXXchurch and its representatives as the audience evaluates the value of the anti-pornography communication.

Controversial tactics. The XXXchurch strategy of using titles that some people consider irreverent gathers attention, both favorable and oppositional. "When you're dealing with an issue like this, it's a subject that you have to take right to the threshold. . . . So does it draw a lot of attention? Yeah, it does. 'How dare you put 3 X's in front of church!'" (B. McGinness, personal communication, June 18, 2011).

Jake said, "When we started it was like, we started the hate mail [section] on our website because of criticism from the church" (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011). Here is a typical example of the hate mail XXXchurch has received: "You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. James 4:4" (XXXchurch.com, 2011).

"Church is less comfortable talking about it than the world, and so the church had all sorts of reasons that they thought we shouldn't do what we do. 'Oh you shouldn't mix the seedy and the sacred'" (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011). He continued, saying that some churches seem inclined to "insulate and die, and we just never want to do that."

There was controversy brewing at the weekend events attended by the researcher in Eagle River, AK. Alliance Christian Fellowship received a cease and desist for the

XXXchurch banner they were displaying. “We love that!” was Jake’s response (J. Larson, Porn & Pancakes event, June 18, 2011). Brian shared that during the event, two men walking through the church parking lot saw the Porn Weekend sign on the church, and asked the pastor what kind of porn they were showing. The pastor explained that the event was to talk about the dangers of porn; the men responded, “That sucks!” The pastor told them they needed to have a talk. Apparently the “seedy and sacred” titles that XXXchurch uses get literally misunderstood at times.



A local Alaskan blogger expressed her disagreement with the XXXchurch approach. After showing this photo of the sign announcing the weekend events, she wrote, Now, let me say for the record that: 1) I am not repressed, 2) I am not squeamish, and 3) I DO think it's important to talk about porn~~even in church. So kudos to ACF for bringing it up and making sure people are talking

about it. But seeing this sign when I get off the highway each day, juxtaposed with the Cross of my Savior, deeply . . . irritates me. In fact, I am disturbed and rather angered, for several reasons. Thus far, everyone I have asked has agreed that it is extremely inappropriate. . . . This light-hearted approach is gravely inappropriate for such serious subject matter. Imagine if it said 'Pedophilia Weekend!' (Mindyleigh, 2011)

Kevin acknowledged this type of reaction, saying, "I give a lot of credit to pastors like Rod that are willing to step out and do that because that's a risk. And they get a lot of backlash from the community and different things and that's tough - man! - to say, 'I'm gonna tackle this' - because that's gutsy for a pastor" (K. Outland, personal communication, June 18, 2011). Referring to drawing criticism, Craig said, "I actually don't pay attention to it, but I mean its best to not engage them . . . I've now seen it where someone could hate me one day, but then two weeks from now their kid's looking at porn and they've nowhere else to turn and they'll say, 'Hey, sorry I blasted you, but now can you help me?'" (C. Gross, personal communication, January 31, 2012).

Shellie wondered, "Sometimes I'm curious about why people asked us to come but they don't want us to come. Meaning, you invited the porn ministry to come but then you want to call these rules and regulations about what we can talk about" (S. Warren, personal communication, June 18, 2011).

Brian said that XXXchurch does deliberately capitalize on deception when it works to their advantage, such as hoping to engage and help people coming to the website expecting porn. "If the sex industry can do it, so can we," he explained (B. McGinness, personal communication, June 18, 2011).

The effect of these controversial tactics on credibility could only be definitively determined by measurable attitude research. However, it is clear that these tactics strengthen credibility for some audiences and weaken it for others, depending on the characteristics of the individual and the similarity they perceive between their own worldview and XXXchurch. Stewart et al. (2001) offer support for these tactics on one hand, saying "an organizer must be irreverent" (p. 108); on the other hand, they suggest, "Persuaders reflect the audience's values, beliefs, and attitudes by identifying with the moral symbols and revered documents of society rather than attacking or disparaging them" (p. 158). Some people feel that linking concepts of church with pornography disparages sacred symbols.

The primary benefit of these tactics has been to draw attention to the campaign both from media, churches, and individuals, and that benefit may overrule concern about initially provoking negative reactions. In fact, it could be said that these outraged reactions help fuel the attention. Furthermore, the actual message of the campaign seems to be well received by the intended audience, and the controversy is primarily a reaction to the titles used for events and the like.

RQ4 What Can Persuasion Theories Explain or Predict About the Persuasive Effect of the Messages on the Audience?

Examples of self-efficacy and exemplars were the most frequently found theories in the XXXchurch campaign. This finding was consistent across sources. Fear appeals were the next most highly used theory; only the non-blog Web content showed low use of fear appeals (7th out of 9). Tables 9 and 10 summarize the extent of each theory in the data.

Table 9

Comparison of Persuasion Theories in Source Types. Count of number of coding references.

Theories	Interviews	Presentations	Web content	Blog Posts	NPS Video	Total of all sources
Self-efficacy	11	28	32	12	17	100
Exemplars	1	29	13	17	11	71
Fear Appeals	5	31	2	10	6	54
Cognitive Dissonance	6	24	2	9	4	45
Shame and Guilt	11	17	6	7	4	45
Evidence	2	6	10	5	2	25
Reactance	2	5	3	0	6	16
Total: Persuasion theories	38	140	68	60	50	356

Table 10

Comparison of Persuasion Theories in Source Types. Percentage of coding references referring to each theory in each source type.

Theories	Interviews	Presentations	Web content	Blog Posts	NPS Video
Self-efficacy	28.95%	20.00%	47.06%	20.00%	34.00%
Exemplars	2.63%	20.71%	19.12%	28.33%	22.00%
Fear Appeals	13.16%	22.14%	2.94%	16.67%	12.00%
Cognitive Dissonance	15.79%	17.14%	2.94%	15.00%	8.00%
Shame and Guilt	28.95%	12.14%	8.82%	11.67%	8.00%
Evidence	5.26%	4.29%	14.71%	8.33%	4.00%
Reactance	5.26%	3.57%	4.41%	0.00%	12.00%
Total: Persuasion theories	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Learn from this: How the campaign is designed to draw attention to the anti-pornography message through rhetorical language. Exemplars and evidence are rhetorical elements that are included in the messages to attract attention, aid memory, and increase its persuasive power.

Exemplars. Exemplars were frequently used in all of the sources directed to the public, and were the second most commonly found of all the persuasion theories. Analysis found four types of exemplars: (a) personal experiences of the speaker or writer, (b) stories of acquaintances, (c) stories from the news, including celebrities, and (d) exemplars provided by the audience such as web confessions, blog comments, or experiences shared

in meetings.

Personal experiences. First person stories intend to draw attention to the message. Brian shared his own story at the men's event. He met XXXchurch at an event when he needed help. Describing his path to recovery, he learned to think, "That is a beautiful girl God created, but not for me. God created my wife for me" (B. McGinness, Porn & Pancakes event, June 18, 2011). In the NPS video, Miles McPherson told about the first time he saw a porn film:

I was on 42nd Street, I was a teenager in Times Square, New York. And I remember sitting there and looking at it going, I'm not supposed to be here. And I almost felt like we all knew we weren't supposed to be there and we weren't really enjoying it, but it was like we were kids and so this is, we got to at least do it. And I remember the images like it was yesterday. (National Porn Sunday, 2011)

A blogger wrote about her difficult experience with sexual addiction:

I was sexually abused as a young girl, which led to masturbation at a young age; not much later down the road, I was led to pornography, and it progressed from there. All these new and unknown emotions that were not supposed to be awakened until I was married had been awakened in me well before the age of ten. . . . I was a prisoner to a sexual addiction, but I never had a choice or a voice in the matter. I was a slave. Now, I do not look to marriage for an escape, because I have looked to God, and after years of bondage, I have been rescued! God saves us from our destructive behavior and addictions. (Amber M., 2011)

Stories of acquaintances. In a video, Craig talked with a former law officer, now in prison for possession of child pornography. The prisoner's advice: talk to someone and get help. He is losing 63 months of life (J. Larson, Porn & Pancakes event, June 18, 2011).

Jake related an experience when Jimmy Dee (a porn film maker) came to XXXchurch to make an anti-porn commercial. Dee said, "Sometimes I wish I could get some of these images out of my mind". Jake also mentioned a woman with two children whose husband discovered that she was addicted to cybersex during the day; a young girl who asked for help because she couldn't sleep and had to take sleeping pills because of porn use; and a wife discovering her husband's sexual messaging after they had been married just 6 months. Another man lied to his accountability group every Friday, up until police seized his computer for child pornography (J. Larson, Porn Sunday event, June 19, 2011).

Stories from the news. The downfall of men such as Ted Bundy, Jim Baker, and Jerry Sandusky were used as warning examples. Kevin showed an article in the news about a predator sting, which caught some child predators who set up a PayPal account to pay a 9 year old to perform sex acts on webcam (K. Outland, Porn & Parents event, June 18, 2011).

Audience exemplars. Confessions and experiences shared by the public online or at meetings are a source of persuasion that XXXchurch invites, although they do not control what the audience may say. At the Porn and Pastries event, a woman volunteered a message of hope based on her personal experience in two marriages affected by pornography. Her first marriage ended in divorce, but in her second marriage, they are working together to beat the challenge. She said that God has been able to use the pain of her first marriage to heal her second marriage.

A parent who asked for advice on the website served as an exemplar of the pain that parents feel when their children are exposed to sexually explicit material:

Hi, We have a 10-year-old who I bought an ipod touch for (BIG mistake) and who I caught looking at hard core porn about a year ago. So we had a talk with him and disconnected it from our wifi network. . . . He recently got back on the internet on the ipod and looked at more. So we had to get rid of the ipod. I am horrified about him seeing the things he has seen at such a young age. Is there anything else I can do to keep him off the porn? (Parents - Questions, n.d.)

All of these types of exemplars act as case studies of the problem of pornography, offering illustrations of both positive and negative behavior and the consequences.

Evidence. All of the sources use evidence in the form of statistics that quantify the use of pornography in a persuasive way. Statistics are a larger part of non-blog web content than any of the other sources; there are several web pages that contain long lists of pornography facts specifically relating to groups such as men, parents, and teens. The pastor's resource page provided this data:

According to pastors, the 8 top sexual issues damaging to their congregation are: 57% pornography addiction, 34% sexually active never-married adults, 30% adultery of married adults, 28% sexually active teenagers, 16% sexual dissatisfaction, 14% unwed pregnancy, 13% sexually active previously married adults, and 9% sexual abuse. [From] *More Sex, Please*. Christianity Today International, Winter 2005 (Men, n.d.)

In the NPS video, Craig used statistics to support his message that pornography is

growing and everyone is at risk:

Now porn finds you. . . . It's staggering . . . there's 420 million porn sites and growing on the Internet. . . . It's not just men . . . now one in three that look at porn online are women. The average age someone sees porn is 11. . . . It's one of the fastest growing addictions, even amongst senior citizens. So, get this, no body is exempt. Pastors are struggling with this. Over 50% percent of pastors have said, 'You know what? This is a struggle for me. (National Porn Sunday, 2011)

A blog post reported data to describe the extent of the problem: "Take porn for example: a 97 billion dollar per year industry that's got 80% of men and 35% of women in our churches ensnared. Americans spend so much on porn each year that it breaks down to \$50 per person . . . and we only account for only 14% of the global porn share" (Gross, 2011a).

The evidence stated to support the messages theoretically lends persuasive power by legitimizing the claims of widespread pornography consumption. Numbers allow the audience to evaluate, compare, and form a mental image of the scope of this societal issue. Offering evidence also builds the credibility of the source, suggesting that the source is well informed on the subject (Slater & Rouner, 1996).

Listen to your conscience: How the campaign is designed to motivate change through negative emotions. The nature of pornography invites a great deal of negative response, and managing these emotions is critical for the campaign. Evidence of cognitive dissonance and guilt/shame theories were well represented - each had 45 coding references; while reactance was found less often, with 16 references.

Cognitive dissonance. The campaign offered many statements designed to induce cognitive dissonance by highlighting the conflicts between pornography and moral/religious beliefs and values. Craig illustrated this dilemma by turning to scripture, quoting that Jesus Christ “acted to set things right in this life of contradictions where I want to serve God with all my heart and mind, but am pulled by the influence of sin to do something totally different” (National Porn Sunday, 2011). Jake specifically called out the behavior of church members: “The problem wasn’t just in *those* people. The problem is in *us*”. He asserted that if the church would just stop consuming it would dent the sex industry, noting that the industry targets the Christian market (J. Larson, Porn Sunday event, June 19, 2011).

Sharing his own struggle, Brian said that he realized he was contributing to the destruction of girls; being the father of a daughter scared him. He further described the contrast between love and destruction in relationships: “Some say [pornography] is a marital tool – it’s a sledgehammer wreaking destruction. Very selfish” (B. McGinness, Porn & Pancakes event, June 18, 2011).

Jake exposed the inconsistency between the illusions and reality of pornography, saying that what you don’t see in porn is what happens when the camera stops; girls who throw up, curl up in fetal position, or are in the emergency room from injuries (J. Larson, Porn Sunday event, June 19, 2011). Shellie reinforced the contradiction, explaining, “Women victimize themselves by watching porn” (S. Warren, Porn & Pastries event, June 17, 2011).

Guilt and shame. The team mentioned shame and guilt in their interviews much more than this is actually used in content created for the audience. Jake talked about how

the fear of shame and guilt can be the motivation to hide pornography use:

I don't care what religion per se you're a part of, like our default mode is don't tell the truth, I think, when it comes to this issue. Protect yourself. Be quiet. Deal with it yourself. Don't shame yourself. Yes, and it's empty. Yes, I mean I think we know what's right. Like ultimately, I think if we didn't know what's right, we'd never know what was wrong. Inside of all of us is a compass that points us in the right direction and we ignore it or we walk there. And so yes, I think people definitely know that what they're doing is wrong. (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011)

Brian also expressed how guilt and shame contribute to secrecy: "You feel ashamed and you feel guilty, and you feel horrible, and rotten from it, and I think it's something that Satan . . . uses those tools and just pries on them" (B. McGinness, personal communication, June 18, 2011).

Shellie told the women's audience, "I love James 5:16, 'I confess that you may be healed.' So it would make sense to me that the devil would not want us to confess because there's healing in it. So that [users] shouldn't feel ashamed about where they are. They should just be uncomfortable about where they are and want to change it" (S. Warren, personal communication, June 18, 2011). Kevin repeated this idea, saying that people live locked in a secret mess if they can't tell anybody. "But if we raise the awareness, we can win and get people out and then get them free, because they feel like, 'Man! There's other people that have the same issue as I do.' They're not alone anymore" (K. Outland, personal communication, June 18, 2011). The campaign's efforts to reduce shame will help people be more open to asking for help.

Guilt appeals focused on harmful behavior more often than personal deficiencies. Jake told the men's group: "You go dig stuff out of the trash – you and 4 million other men. You get rid of it and pick it back up" (J. Larson, Porn & Pancakes event, June 18, 2011). A "Get Help" brochure stated, "There is a point in which we have to acknowledge that what we keep hidden from our wives, girlfriends and children we are not proud of" (Get help for men, n.d.). Statements such as these invite the audience to consider their hypocritical behavior and set things right.

Only one message seemed designed to directly produce shame by making the audience judge themselves as unworthy if they don't take action to resist pornography. John Kitna delivered this challenge:

If you don't want to put this on your computer, you're just a coward. You're not, you, you don't really want to walk with God. You're not a real man in this area of pornography. You want to just leave that door open, you want to have that there for your, for your moments of weakness (National Porn Sunday, 2011).

This type of overt shame appeal is more likely to arouse resentment in some people because it attacks the self-integrity of the listener.

One example of introducing anticipated guilt for potential behavior is when Jake warned, "Porn will take you places you thought you'd never go" (J. Larson, Porn & Pancakes event, June 18, 2011).

It should be recognized that the audience may experience guilt and shame feelings not only from intentional messages but simply from discussing a topic that highlights their own violation of personal moral or religious codes.

Reactance. To identify messages that could be explained by reactance theory, references were coded if they acknowledged potential reactance, could possibly induce reactance, or could be perceived to reduce reactance. Even with these wide parameters, reactance was not a frequently found theory, being second to last. Of course, since reactance is an individual response to threatened freedom, any number of messages might produce reactance in one person but not another. In contrast, any of the positive messages in the campaign may serve to reduce reactance. The examples here provide a way to think about the influence of reactance in campaign messages.

Jake brought reactance out in the open by telling the audience, “Talk to someone. This is normally where people stop listening because they don’t want to do it” (J. Larson, Porn Sunday event, June 19, 2011). This tactic is likely to be successful at helping the audience recognize their own negative thoughts and refute them.

Kevin warned parents about a dynamic that often keeps children from telling parents about suspect online experiences: “Kids don’t tell parents because they don’t want to lose computer privileges” (K. Outland, Porn & Parents event, June 18, 2011), acknowledging the effect of threatening to limit a child’s freedom to use their beloved technology. This warning comes with an injunction to react calmly to children’s confessions in order to invite trust.

Suggestions of life-changing steps to take could invite reactance as people resist the loss of perceived freedom. Craig asked users to:

Clean it up. Decide today, if you’re doing what you really don’t want to do . . .

If you struggle late at night, you’ve got to go to bed early. If you’re struggling at work with a relationship that’s inappropriate that’s going on, you need to

end that relationship. The Bible says runs away from sexual sin. Flee. You can't run away from something if you're staring right at it. . . . if it's Showtime, HBO, if its on cable, call your cable provider. If it's on your iPhone, go get the Nokia 50. It only does text messaging, and it only calls. You don't need the Internet on there. Downgrade. (National Porn Sunday, 2011)

This message is an excellent example of providing clear advice to increase self-efficacy. At the same time, explicit messages like this can arouse reactance; wisely, the video included messages that could reduce reactance by emphasizing new freedoms as a moderating influence. For example, quarterback Josh McCown said that using the X3Watch software "enabled me to have some accountability, and it was a great moment of freedom for me because what I saw was . . . from the onset my first few weeks there in the hotel was very different from where I was going" (National Porn Sunday, 2011). He also described the positive side of sharing your challenge with your wife:

It's a lot easier telling your wife than having her walk in on you looking at porn in an awkward situation, and I think you're putting yourself in a better situation just letting her know up front, and I think there's something very freeing with that too. That it's just another step in the right direction of helping you to um, with that struggle. (National Porn Sunday, 2011)

Including moderating, freedom-enhancing messages such as these are valuable to limit the reactance felt by the audience.

This is serious: How the campaign is designed to generate fear to inspire action. Fear appeals that warn of the harm of pornography are prevalent in the campaign, being the fourth most frequently found theory. Jake identified one of the strategic messages

they want to communicate, which is essentially a fear appeal:

It is like a drug and it will cause addictive behavior and it will ruin you. It will ruin your life. And even though you feel like it's harmless maybe at your point of contact with it, that pornography is progressive, and that it will take you to do things that you said you would never do. (J. Larson, personal communication, June 18, 2011)

Fear appeals. Any content that warned of harm was coded as a fear appeal.

Whether it would be a successful appeal was determined by how clearly a protective behavior was linked to the threat. The recommended behavior did not have to immediately follow the threat, but should be a salient part of that particular message.

The opening video at the men's event was a famous interview of Ted Bundy. His message was that he was a normal guy, until he slowly became addicted to violent pornography. Jake told the audience how that video was a scare tactic in high school, but he didn't relate to it: "But that guy is crazy!" Jake shared many other exemplars and warnings in this talk that would serve as fear appeals, including a list of six ways men can ruin their life:

- Fight temptation with willpower alone.
- Just a little porn is ok.
- Spend more time with TV than in the scriptures.
- Wing it with integrity.
- Go solo.
- If you fail just give up.

These threats would likely raise the audience's level of concern and their attentiveness to suggestions for preventing these negative results. Over the course of the presentation, Jake offered many suggestions for efficacy. Each of the six harmful behaviors was an introduction to a discussion of how to overcome that challenge. This meeting was an excellent example of theory-based use of fear appeals and self-efficacy, which would encourage danger control processes to respond to the threat (J. Larson, Porn & Pancakes event, June 18, 2011).

Some of the damaging results of pornography and sexual misconduct are in the individual's thought processes; affirming healthier moral beliefs can neutralize these threats. Shellie warned of the painful results of sexual misconduct, writing,

That a lot of times, *just like in the Garden of Eden*, the "forbidden fruit" may *seem* like a good idea, and even *initially* be a pleasurable experience (just as the fruit in the Garden *was*-Genesis 3:6) . . . but there is always a price to pay. Often one that leaves an *extreme debt* to pay?

She offered a counteracting paradigm to protect people from such pain:

We shouldn't let the world trick us with their "natural-minded philosophies" (I Corinthians 2:14). As the Message Version of Luke 6:26 tells us, "Our task is to be *true*, not *popular*" and more and more, we see the *intense attack* on God's design and intention for covenant marriage. (Warren, 2011)

Craig told of the misery of facing the discovery of pornography use: "When you get caught and confronted with this, those are awful conversations. Oftentimes you lose your relationships, you lose your job, you lose the things that are most important to you". To

avoid this consequence, the main theme in the video is open communication - to confess and get help (National Porn Sunday, 2011).

The audience provides some of the fear appeals by sharing their anguish on the website. One woman wrote, "Is there a way out? I'm so sick of taking part in these behaviours and feeling so isolated and condemned because I'm doing it. I don't want to be apart of it but it has consumed me. I'm scared I'll never get out!" XXXchurch answered her question with specific steps to take to recover, such as getting an accountability partner, recognizing triggers, and using software to manage the technology (Women - Questions, n.d.).

In the parent's session Kevin capitalized on creating anxiety in the audience by giving a long list of online threats that children may find, and showing edited results of some online searches, including:

- Faces of Death - shows actual dead people
- Porn napping – when porn sites take an expired website
- P2P file sharing - no history, almost impossible to avoid porn videos
- Anime, hentai – Japanese animated pornography
- Myspace and Facebook pages with porn images
- Showed an unsolicited IM message he received: jenngirl430: Hey whats up;.)
Here's a link to my webcam I told you about.
- Cyberbullying – story of a 13 year old who hung herself after being harrassed
- Mobile porn, cell phones, sexting
- Porn for Playstation portable gaming units (K. Outland, Porn & Parents event, June 18, 2011).

In this parents' meeting, the fear appeal seemed to loom large, while the efficacy recommendations came across as a smaller part of the actual presentation. The parents were able to take home a handout of 15 ways to protect families, a valuable way to provide complex information, as long as the parents left the meeting sufficiently motivated to take the recommended action. In this case, the efficacy did not appear to balance the fear appeal, and the parents gave the impression of being discouraged. The local pastor acknowledged this at the close of the meeting, saying, "Today could have been heavy, and there's some fear there. But we walk this road together."

Self-efficacy. Self-efficacy theory was the most frequently found of all the persuasion theories. Messages coded for efficacy taught skills or provided encouragement that would help people increase their confidence and capability in addressing pornography issues. Two of the four sources of information that Bandura (1977) identified that influence expectations of self-efficacy provide a useful way to categorize these results. These sources are verbal persuasion and vicarious learning.

Verbal persuasion. The primary method the campaign uses to build self-efficacy is verbal persuasion. Jake entreats men, if they have a problem, to talk to someone before they leave the building, because 90% won't talk once they leave the doors (J. Larson, Porn & Pastries event, June 17, 2011). By giving a directive on place and time for taking action, he increases the chance that some men in the audience will decide they are capable of taking that step, before they return home where the prospect of confession exceeds their coping skills.

There are many instances in the campaign where specific behavior is encouraged. Craig organized his NPS presentation around three action steps, each of which was fully

explained in the video:

How do we avoid it? How do we start to move that stuff out of our lives? I'm gonna give you three steps to take. These sound really easy, but they're gonna be the most difficult things for some of you that you have ever had to do. This first, it starts here, is to confess to God. . . Second step, confess to somebody else. . . The third step: clean it up. (National Porn Sunday, 2011)

A blogger shared his guide for overcoming a pornography compulsion, writing, "Everyone is different but, a few things that I have found that worked in my recovery and from other I want to share with you." He counseled users to "dive into the word daily", to identify when you are most likely to view porn and develop a plan to "counter attack these temptations", to discover your triggers, and to talk to others (Men - Questions, n.d.).

Similarly, another blogger offered advice on how to confess to your partner:

You think you have it under control but you don't. You need help. One of the first things you need to do is talk to your wife/girlfriend/fiancé. Sit her down and tell her about your struggle. I have 4 simple steps you can follow to help make the confession process easier.

He then described how to do this:

- Make time to talk: "Do not lay this on her just before a dinner date or church . . ."
- Be open and honest: "Tell her your story of how you got to this point . . ."
- Answer questions: "Once you open up she will be filled with tons of questions."
- Listen: "She may say things to you out of anger but you need to listen and take it . . ." (Steve-Oh, 2011)

Vicarious learning. A behavioral model can "transmit new ways of thinking and

behaving” through the process of vicarious learning (Bandura, 2001). Jake provided an entertaining, yet meaningful, list of his own rules of conduct that provided a model for avoiding pornography and sexual misconduct:

1. Looking once means that I’m alive, looking twice means that I’m a guy, looking three times means I’ve dissed my wife.
2. I don’t do breakfast, lunch, or dinner appointments with women unless they are my wife, my mother, my daughter, or my mother-in-law and that’s only sometimes.
3. Pleasantly rude: when a female comes up and shows any interest in me I simply say, "Be gone from me you harlot, you prostitute of evil, flee from me you spirit of Jezebel!"
4. I do not watch cable or satellite TV once my wife has gone to sleep.
5. I don’t go to bachelor parties, strip clubs, or NC-17 movies.
6. I don’t touch attractive women; though occasionally I will shake the hands of ugly women.
7. I will be accountable to Vanessa, Dave, and Craig and will be transparent and open with struggles. (J. Larson, Porn & Pancakes event, June 18, 2011)

People often learn to emulate desirable behavior by observing the positive consequences of other’s actions. By functioning as an example of someone who is successfully taking steps to be sexually pure, Jake encouraged the audience to formulate their own similar boundaries for appropriate behavior. A female blogger offered a similar list of personal rules for communicating appropriately with men, such as “I almost always mention my husband when I’m talking with another man. It shows we are united front. And

I try to build up my husband to the other man to show where my allegiance lies” (Cindy B., 2011).

Another example of a vicarious model was Matt Hasselbeck, who shared the steps he is taking in his life to avoid pornography. He explained that early in an NFL career you have a roommate when you travel, but later you get your own room. However, he requests a roommate despite his seniority. “There are chances in a hotel room with that remote, they’re just asking you to slip, but there’s zero chance of that happening with a roommate there” (National Porn Sunday, 2011).

Summary of Results for All Research Questions

What do the objectives and credibility of XXXchurch, the themes in the messages, and the understanding offered by persuasion theories tell us about this campaign? Patterns that stand out among the overall results are interconnected. The strategic objectives of awareness, prevention, and recovery are woven throughout the messages directed to the public, as well as through the organizational decisions made behind the scenes. The objective of awareness is closely tied to the major pattern of agenda setting – getting the issue into churches, into the news, and into interpersonal relationships. Awareness and agenda setting are supported by the principal theme of open communication; being open, honest, and candid about pornography is essential to achieving the objectives. As it raises awareness, open communication increases the capacity of the audience to consider and discuss the subject, paving the way for suggestions for prevention and recovery; therefore, open communication is closely related to these objectives as well. Results of this case study revealed that the core message of the campaign is that open communication is critical to achieving the objectives of awareness, prevention, and recovery.

The Persuasion Model and the XXXchurch Campaign

How well does the XXXchurch campaign fit the Persuasion Model for Effective Campaign Messages? The Persuasion Model served as a benchmark for the assessment of the campaign's design.

Establishing Source Credibility

As explained in results for RQ3 (Is the XXXchurch organization a credible source for persuasive anti-pornography messages?), the campaign exhibits verbal and nonverbal elements that demonstrate each of the Persuasion Model's expectations for optimal source credibility: expertise, prior positive relationships, honesty, unbiased motives, similarity to the audience, confident delivery, and plausible messages. Each of these factors contributes to Fireproof Ministries' credibility. Based on this information, XXXchurch demonstrates characteristics that make it a theoretically highly credible and persuasive source for Christian anti-pornography messages, with a possible moderating effect from the campaign's more controversial tactics.

Intensifying Anti-Pornography Attitudes

The three overarching themes of prevention and recovery, the harms of pornography, and God's purpose for life represent the attitudes the campaign hopes to influence. XXXchurch met the Persuasion Model's requirement to identify crucial desired positive and negative desired attitudes and develop messages that will theoretically direct and intensify those attitudes. Taking the core theme of open communication as an example, all of the sources presented a unified pattern of encouraging transparency with God, family, church, and an accountability partner. Compelling arguments were made both for the negative consequences of secrecy and the positive results of open communication. This

effort is theoretically anticipated to strengthen specific attitudes to open communication with corresponding behavioral intentions and actions following it. This pattern of persuasive communication targeting specific attitudes can be seen in all of the themes identified in this study.

The limitation of attitude creation is that although it is expected to influence behavior, the addictive nature of pornography may override attitudes. For this reason, a valuable aspect of the campaign is the emphasis on building pro-transparency attitudes that could motivate users to seek help when even their own negative evaluation of pornography is not enough to change behavior.

Raising Awareness Through Agenda Setting and Attitude Accessibility

These theories provided a useful perspective for evaluating how XXXchurch is bringing about awareness of the problem of pornography. The Persuasion Model calls for campaigns to frequently repeat the message over time and through a variety of channels to raise the importance of the issue through agenda setting. Based on these theories the campaign is very strong in achieving these two suggestions. For ten years they have continually delivered their message through the website, presentations, videos, media interviews, books, and sex industry ministries. It appears that XXXchurch is steadily raising awareness of the societal problem of pornography, primarily within the Christian church, but in the larger community as well. The limitation to awareness is the size of the audience that is exposed to the campaign, which is increasing with time and reputation.

The campaign includes a few messages that provide situational cues to increase attitude accessibility at the point of decision, as the Persuasion Model suggests for effective message design. This feature could be used more often to advantage.

It is theoretically probable that people who interface with XXXchurch will have increased attitude accessibility on the subject of pornography, with the benefits of more stable, less changeable attitudes and more predictable behavior regarding resisting pornography.

Engaging Interest with Exemplars and Evidence

The campaign made use of both exemplars and evidence. Using both of these elements likely balances the overall message of the campaign by providing both vividness and validity. The campaign wisely uses vivid information such as exemplars more generously, while using evidence strategically to validate the message.

The Persuasion Model recommends use of exemplars extensively to engage interest and strengthen authenticity. The generous use of exemplars in the campaign is theoretically likely to be successful in continually re-engaging the audience's attention on the anti-pornography message of the campaign and making the message memorable. It is theoretically probable that the vivid and authentic nature of the stories used as exemplars will persuade the audience to form judgments and behavioral intentions to resist pornography. XXXchurch's strategic use of exemplars is founded on research-based principles of effectiveness.

The amount of evidence offered in different sources appears to be appropriate for supporting anti-pornography assertions; in most audience-directed content, evidence is used sparingly to emphasize points without being overwhelmingly data-intensive and risking losing the audience. The website offers extensive data as a resource, allowing the public to access it as needed. The Persuasion Model advises using evidence such as statistics strategically to validate the message, citing the source. The one caution with the

campaign's use of evidence is that the source of much of the data quoted is not cited. The notable exception is the statistics page on the "Extras" section of the website, which does provide the source of all the data. Since research has shown that citing qualified sources improves the persuasiveness of the information, it would be beneficial for the campaign to refer to the origin of the evidence as often as possible. Citing the source of statistics, using the most recent and credible sources available, will use the power of evidence most advantageously.

Making the Most of Cognitive Dissonance, Guilt, And Reactance

Pornography is an issue that naturally invites the inducement of uncomfortable feelings such as guilt and remorse to motivate change. Because people have a desire to manifest integrity between their beliefs and actions, research suggests that reinforcing these uneasy feelings will encourage many in the audience to adopt the anti-pornography attitudes and behavior advocated by the campaign to overcome the negative feelings. The Persuasion Model suggests the creation of messages that are likely to motivate behavioral change by eliciting uncomfortable feelings such as guilt, hypocrisy, and regret, with a plan to reduce dissonance and reclaim self-integrity. The many messages calling attention to the conflicts between pornography and values such as respect, love, and integrity are constructed according to this model, in conjunction with messages about recovery and the hope and help God offers to overcome these negative feelings.

The Persuasion Model recommends that guilt appeals be designed to focus on harmful behavior, not personal deficiencies that will induce shame, with the goal of inducing low to moderate levels of guilt that will not provoke resentment. The guilt appeals in the XXXchurch campaign are primarily, and appropriately, brief and implicit. Guilt is

implied in arguments about the harm of pornography. A direct appeal to shame, which can create resistance or withdrawal, was observed only once. The guilt appeals are theoretically likely to motivate a desire to make amends. As the campaign offers many efficacy messages and resources to help, listeners are guided in the direction to take to change their behavior and overcome guilt.

To avoid reactance, the Persuasion Model recommends developing implicit messages and avoiding explicit threats to freedom, as well as balancing reactance-provoking messages by stressing freedom to make positive choices. There were a few excellent examples of recognizing and addressing potential reactance. One way to evaluate the role of reactance in the campaign is to note the balance between messages that could induce defensive reactions and messages that could reduce reactance. In all the sources, there was an emphasis on positive, hopeful themes to counterbalance the warnings of harm. Themes relating to prevention and recovery and the purpose of life were more than three times as frequent as themes on the harm of pornography. Another way to look at the balance shows that messages offering suggestions for self-efficacy were the most frequent, while more negative messages such as fear appeals, guilt, and cognitive dissonance each had only half as many references as self-efficacy. This suggests that taken as a whole, the campaign exhibits a satisfactory management of the potential for reactance in the audience.

Also in connection with reactance, the Persuasion Model proposes that messages acknowledge and refute potential negative thoughts. One good example of this was found in the campaign; this concept could be used more often to theoretically increase the persuasive power of the messages. As far as promoting freedom to make new and better choices, all of the recovery and self-efficacy messages offer alternative choices to

continuing to consume pornography.

The theories of cognitive dissonance, guilt appeals, and reactance all describe the process of managing uneasy emotions to inspire change. XXXchurch uses this approach to good advantage by pointing out harmful and hypocritical behavior and offering a solution to resolve the distress caused by lack of integrity between belief and action. Yet, in some cases, users may find it easier to reject the campaign messages and modify their attitudes to justify their pornography use.

Capitalizing on Fear Appeals and Self-Efficacy

Most of the fear appeals were followed with suggested protective action, as suggested in the Persuasion Model. This pattern can be seen on a larger scale in the overall campaign by comparing the references of the themes: the fearful theme of the harm of pornography was referred to 80 times, while more positive and instructive themes of prevention, recovery, and God's purpose for life were referred to 294 times. The parents' meeting was the one instance of allowing fear appeals to dominate without adequate information to help manage the fear, with the effect of seemingly discouraging the audience. Based on fear appeal research, it would benefit the campaign to assess messages that are designed to induce fear and verify that they are sufficiently linked with suggested action to avoid the threat.

The literature suggests another way to look at fear appeals that the campaign could consider. Nabi et al. (2008) proposed that when the audience is already aware of the threat, messages may not need to explicitly describe the threat, but can spend more time offering advice for protective action. This method minimizes both reactance and the perception of manipulation by the source. In instances where the audience is already apprehensive of the

harm of pornography, they may not need to be told more about the danger, but offered help to overcome it.

The Persuasion Model makes two suggestions for successfully using self-efficacy messages according to research. First, generate messages that develop a sense of competence and expectation of success. XXXchurch provides such coaching frequently on many aspects of maintaining sexual integrity, such as how to talk about the issue, protect children, be accountable, or manage technical safety nets. Specific directives, which were generously present in the campaign, theoretically help the audience increase their sense of capability and expectation of success more efficiently than general anti-pornography statements would. Self-efficacy suggestions were the most frequently found type of all the persuasion theories, showing that the campaign is designed on theoretically effective principles. When the audience leaves with an understanding of specific actions they can take, theory suggests that their perception of personal competence and the likelihood that they will perform the desired behavior rise.

Second, the Persuasion Model states that while verbal persuasion is the easiest way to influence self-efficacy, offering vicarious experience through a variety of behavioral models is the most effective strategy. Verbal persuasion was the most often used method in the campaign. However, XXXchurch's generous use of exemplars functioned as a source of observational learning; many of these were negative models designed to warn the audience. The campaign could be even more strongly based on a theoretically effective foundation by offering more models for positive behavior, such as people successfully carrying on open conversations.

Differences Between Sources

Comparison of the use of persuasion theories in the different sources directed to the audience (presentations, web content, blog posts, and the NPS video) show remarkably similar profiles. The non-blog web content was the most unique, as 40% of these references were coded for evidence due to the extensive lists of statistics tailored for each group. Otherwise, all of the sources showed high use of self-efficacy, exemplars, and fear appeals.

Comparison of the themes in the audience-directed sources shows that the campaign is presenting a unified message about prevention and recovery, especially the subtheme of open communication, as these are the dominant themes in every source. The frequency of themes about the harm of pornography and purpose of life vary a little more between sources, but are still adequately present to offer a cohesive overall message.

The Overall Campaign

Taken as a whole, and based on the insight provided by each persuasion theory, the campaign is clearly established on research-based principles, which suggests a theoretical prediction of successfully influencing attitudes and behavior. In cases where theory provides recommendations for improvement, following that guidance will strengthen the impact of the campaign even more.

Implications for Theory

The analysis of messages in this study resulted not only in evaluating the theoretical foundation of the campaign, but also the usefulness of the selected persuasion theories as tools for assessing the campaign.

This study provides support for the role of agenda setting and attitude accessibility theories in explaining the process the campaign is using to spread awareness of the harm of pornography. These theories offered a beneficial way to observe and describe what is happening as the campaign boldly invites their publics to consider and act on the issue.

The theories about the rhetorical elements of exemplars and evidence were valuable for identifying specific ways to use the elements successfully. This allowed the study to not just identify if they were present, but if they were being used in a beneficial way as shown by research. Patterns identified with the use of exemplars showed an aspect not discussed in the literature. By inviting and providing platforms for the audience to share their own experiences, the campaign involves the public as a source of exemplars. Exemplification theory could investigate this concept further, as this is an integral phenomenon in new media.

Cognitive dissonance, guilt, and reactance helped understand the processes the audience goes through when the campaign necessarily criticizes the use of pornography. They also provided guidelines for determining if there were sufficient moderating messages to balance the negative emotions and avoid reactions such as blaming, withdrawal, or defiance.

Theory also was beneficial for judging the use of fear appeals by looking for the action recommended to avoid the threat. The research provided by Ordonana et al. (2009) suggesting that fear appeals could be more appropriately viewed as appeals to apprehension proved to be a valuable addition to this theory. It made the identification of these appeals easier and better described the emotion they attempt to generate. As well, Bandura's (1977) four sources that influence self-efficacy provided a helpful way to

categorize and understand the messages that could increase people's expectations of performing successful behavior.

These persuasion theories were demonstrated to function as useful tools for analyzing and understanding the XXXchurch campaign. It is interesting to note that although the XXXchurch team did not design the campaign with these theories in mind, the theories strongly explain the foundation of the campaign. Examples could be found to illustrate the concepts of every theory. This fact may call into question declarations made by Manheim (2011), Noar (2006), Perloff (2008), and Devine & Hirt (1989) that successful campaigns must be planned on a theoretical foundation. It's possible that campaigns often naturally exhibit characteristics that persuasion theories help explain, or that some communicators intuitively understand these processes. It is clear, however, that analysis with theory can identify weaknesses as well as strengths, and recommend improvements that will reinforce the success of information and influence campaigns.

This study also supports the definitions of information and influence campaigns in the literature. The XXXchurch campaign exhibits the following characteristics identified in the research:

- Is systematic, sequential, and multi-faceted (Manheim, 2011) by employing, and expanding, a variety of tactics and channels over time.
- Has an objective of reducing a risky practice (Hallahan et al., 2007) by advocating for pornography resistance.
- Communicates to a large, relatively well-defined audience (Rice & Atkin, 2002) of Christian church members.

- Utilizes both mass media and interpersonal support (Rice & Atkin, 2002) through their website and church events.

This organization has a unique frame of reference because it is based on the culture, beliefs, and practices of the Christian church. While it fits the definition of an information and influence campaign, it is also a ministry conducted as “service to God and to other people in His name” (What is Christian ministry?, n.d.). The leaders are pastors, the references are Biblical, and the foundation is Jesus Christ. The literature about campaigns does not address the role of religion in information and influence campaigns. This would be a valuable addition, as there are other religiously-informed public campaigns that either advocate for a social cause or promote their faith.

Conclusion

Persuasion theories served as a valuable perspective for evaluating and understanding more about this campaign. They offered a way to appreciate the campaign messages in a way that would not have been possible otherwise. XXXchurch serves as a comprehensive, multi-faceted, inspirational model of an anti-pornography information and influence campaign. The sincerity and dedication of the team was apparent throughout this study. The stories they shared about the people who have been helped by the campaign serve to validate the success and the significance of this effort. The need is real, and with ten years of experience XXXchurch has expanded to be a source of help and healing for many people.

Limitations of This Study

As Slater (1999) and Manheim (2011) noted, many theories can explain some part of the power of communications to influence the audience, but none stand alone. There is a

larger universe of theories outside of the fourteen that were used in this study; for example, the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985) could be used to explore the role of social expectations on behavior related to pornography. Therefore, this study only explains some of the contributing factors for understanding the campaign, and does not claim to represent a complete interpretation of every possible influence on persuasion.

At the same time, the number of theories in this study provides breadth at the expense of depth. In retrospect, evaluating the campaign in light of one theory, such as cognitive dissonance, would have facilitated a more complex analysis of the message in the campaign.

Future Research Directions

The conclusions arrived at in this study are founded on research-based theories, but to truly measure the effectiveness of the campaign would require studies measuring attitude change and long-term behavioral modification. Message efficacy studies could be done to test the reception of particular messages in small focus groups to validate the predictions of this study. Furthermore, large-scale longitudinal studies finding how individuals perceive this information and influence campaign by studying effects on attitudes, intentions, and behavior would be able to provide a more accurate picture of the effectiveness of these messages.

This campaign offers interesting dynamics in their sometimes-controversial tactics and the possible effects on credibility and access to their intended audience. Further research measuring the public's perception of XXXchurch's credibility would be valuable not only for this campaign, but for the information and influence campaign literature as well. The trade-offs between drawing attention and gaining trust are of importance to any

organization seeking to persuade the public.

Furthermore, this study centered particularly on the messages of the campaign, and further research could be done analyzing its strategy and tactics or the media attention it has received. Another valuable research angle would be to distill findings about pornography recovery from clinical psychology literature and determine if this and other anti-pornography campaigns align with those recommendations.

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Appendix A

Strategies of Fireproof Ministries' Anti-Pornography Campaign

- The XXXchurch.com website
- Organized events tailored to men, women, parents, teens, or college students
- Speakers available to address meetings
- Public debates with a porn producer
- Free accountability software to track suspicious web surfing
- Blogs customized to various audiences
- Bible ministry at porn industry conventions
- Support to women who want to leave the sex industry
- A 30-day online pornography addiction recovery program

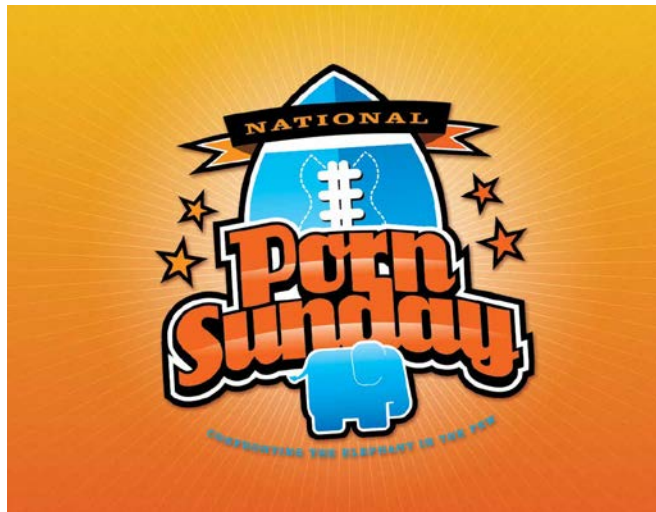
Appendix B

Fireproof Ministries' Invitation to Churches to Participate in National Porn Sunday

What is Porn Sunday

This is the chance to bring hope to those who are struggling with pornography. For some it is ludicrous to link three X's with church and for others it is long overdue. The one undeniable truth that can't be ignored is the blatant push for all things sexual in our society. Porn Sunday seeks to drive the conversation about pornography into our churches, families and lives. This weekend service brings healing to those sitting in churches who are caught up in pornography. If you sign up for Porn Sunday, you will receive

- A 40-minute video simulcast featuring Jon Kitna, Matt Hasselbeck, Ryan Pickett, Josh McCown and a few other NFL players and founder of XXXchurch, Craig Gross.
- All the graphics and promotional materials you need to promote and advertise the event
- A PDF that we call the Porn Sunday manual that will help you with follow up and answer any questions you might have about the event.



Appendix C

Fireproof Ministries' Frequently Asked Questions About National Porn Sunday

I don't know if my church is ready for this yet.

Take a risk. The freedom and healing for the people in pew is worth it.

Can I use the kit just as a resource for my congregation?

Yes.

Doesn't the title and approach trivialize a serious topic?

It actually does the opposite. People will laugh a little but in the end they will walk away equipped to deal with a tough issue in their lives.

Why is an elephant the mascot?

Porn is the elephant in the pew. The thing everyone wants and needs to hear from the church on, but continually does not.

Will the press show up at my church?

Maybe. If you send out a press release (included) and promote the weekend well.

Will some people in my church not understand why we are addressing this issue?

Yes, but a few should not hold us back from helping the majority.

Isn't pornography a men's only issue and be dealt with at a mens breakfast?

Definitely not. There are women who struggle greatly with pornography and also there are women who need to hear a message of hope because their husbands are in way too deep.

What age group is Porn Sunday appropriate for?

Middle school and up appropriate. The average age a child sees pornography is age 11 (Gross, 2011).

Appendix D

Interview Guide for Fireproof Ministries Personnel

1. What are the overall objectives of Fireproof Ministries' anti-pornography campaign?
What are the objectives of the National Porn Sunday event? How did you come to determine those objectives?
2. Do you have any documentation stating your objectives, such as a mission statement, minutes from meetings, etc.?
3. How do you evaluate whether your objectives are being met? Do you ask for feedback?
4. Do you have any data about the results of your campaign?
5. What audiences are you trying to reach? Which groups do you work with most often?
6. What messages do you present to the target audiences? How did you decide on those messages?
7. How do you measure success? What have been your most successful efforts?
8. What systems do you have for people to communicate with you? What do you hear from people who participate in events or visit your website? Do you feel that there is adequate two-way communication between Fireproof Ministries and the people you serve?
9. What are your biggest challenges with this campaign?
10. What are the organization's plans for future events? What is the process for creating and launching a new endeavor?

11. Tell me about the decision to use somewhat irreverent titles for your communications and events, such as National Porn Sunday, XXXchurch, and Porn and Pancakes. What kind of reactions do you get?

Appendix E

Mission Statement

Our Mission: Porn addiction is one of the most difficult addictions to overcome. XXXchurch is your resource online to fight porn addiction. We prevail through awareness, prevention and recovery.

Awareness - We use the web, social media and news media to tell a story often left untold.

In addition to our online efforts, we travel the world visiting porn conventions colleges, churches and community centers raising awareness about the true addictive and destructive nature of pornography.

Is this a new issue to you? This is the reality of the situation.

Come learn more at one of our speaking engagements.

Help us share this message!

We are getting the word out through the press.

College campuses across the nation host our debate with Ron Jeremy.

Book an event and educate your community.

Look hip and start a crazy, eye opening conversation all at once, wear our swag.

Prevention - We are the largest site online and the most recognized voice on the planet on the issue of pornography.

Our site offers tools, resources and blogs to help prevent pornography from becoming a destructive force in life. We have created the very best software programs for accountability and filtering online.

Most people don't even know if they have a problem. Do you?

We aren't shy about the truth, and we want everyone to hear about hope, light & love.

It's imperative that we have candid, helpful & interesting conversations about sex.

Really want to get involved? Join us on one of our teams.

If you are ready to make a difference, start by Saving a Kitten.

Recovery - We are committed to help men and women conquer sexual issues like pornography addiction and sex addiction and regain control of their lives.

We do this online through our X3pure workshops, which enable a speedy and effective recovery for men and women dealing with Internet pornography and other sex-related addictions. This is done in the most confidential and professional manner possible.

Recovery begins with prayer; submit your needs or join our prayer team.

Accountability groups and partners are an important part of the recovery process.

Get control of your life and put yourself on a path towards health, using online workshops.

If things are really out of control, there are additional excellent professional services available.

Industry gals, we love you! When you are ready, we are here for you.

We are confident there is a full life available to everyone. So we stand against the accepted norms about sexual behaviors and pornography knowing that hope, healing and true satisfaction is within reach for all us (From the website Our Mission page).