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PLANNED PARENTHOOD TAKES ON LIVE ACTION: AN ANALYSIS OF

MEDIA INTERPLAY AND IMAGE RESTORATION STRATEGIES

IN STRATEGIC CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

by

Leslie Lynn Rasmussen

Abstract of a Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate School
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

May 2012

ABSTRACT

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IN STRATEGIC CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

By Leslie Lynn Rasmussen

May 2012

On February 1, 2011 the pro-life organization Live Action released videos that appeared to show Planned Parenthood clinic staff disregarding statutory rape and abortion reporting laws and aiding sex traffickers. The videos posted online quickly garnered over a million views and placed Planned Parenthood at the forefront of national news. The Federal government intervened and threatened to remove funding to the Title X organization. Planned Parenthood launched a campaign to retain funding using social media and controlled online media, and attempted restore its image as a reputable healthcare provider while engaged in conflict with Live Action.

A content analysis was performed to investigate the use of social media and controlled online media of two parties engaged in conflict and to explore the interplay with traditional media. Results illustrate public relations theories in practice as organizations manage conflicts while considering new communicative platforms. Planned Parenthood's approach contradicted research that suggests organizations at fault have more influence by admitting fault and apologizing. Results further suggest Planned Parenthood's efforts were effective in securing favorable media coverage.

The University of Southern Mississippi

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to express my sincere thankfulness and appreciation to my committee members: Dr. Jae-Hwa Shin, Dr. Kim LeDuff, Dr. Fei Xue, Dr. Christopher Campbell, and Dr. Cheryl Jenkins. Despite their busy schedules, each one offered guidance, patience, moral support, and friendship.

I would like to give special recognition to my committee chair Dr. Shin. Thank you for allowing me to explore my interests through this project and providing me with excellent guidance. In addition, I owe a great deal of gratitude to Dr. LeDuff and my graduate advisor Dr. Fei Xue who both provided immense support from day one. Dr. LeDuff allowed me to carve out my path and explore different fields. Dr. Xue's humor, wit, and joyful spirit helped guide and comfort me. Dr. Campbell, the first professor I met at Southern Miss, regularly checked in on my progress and wellbeing throughout my graduate studies. Dr. Jenkins offered excellent technical and editorial advice, and was kind enough to join the committee on short notice. You have all been a tremendous help to me throughout this journey.

I would also like to thank my fellow graduate students for their camaraderie and constant motivation. Melody Fisher, Sidharth Muralidharan, and Lisa Parker – I will count you as friends for the rest of my life.

Last, though certainly not least, I would like to thank my parents, Louis and Gloria Casiano, and my husband, Michael Rasmussen. They constantly said, "You can do this." And I did. A simple thank you does not do justice to the overwhelming feelings of love, respect, and gratitude I have in my heart for you all.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The rise of social media has created new challenges and opportunities for public

relations practitioners unlike ever before. Simple publication capabilities make it difficult

for public relations practitioners to control citizen-generated content. Anyone with

Internet access can share messages that may challenge practitioner efforts to ensure goal-

oriented and accurate content is disseminated. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and blogs

allow users to share opinion-based information that has the potential to be regarded as

truth. Public relations managers must also contend with content posted by opposing

organizations. Content shared across a variety of platforms may not represent

organizational stances or goals, yet still has the potential to reach large publics. Though

problematic at times, social media provides organizations with the ability to quickly

engage with publics and attempt to facilitate a two-way flow of communication. This

characteristic is an avenue to building organization-public relationships and can prove

beneficial during times of crisis. Organizations actively engaged on social media can

dispel rumors and attempt to minimize reputational damage in a more personal and

timely manner. As a growing trend in public relations, social media provides an outlet to

promote and manage reputations, and engage in activism and mobilization.

Lariscy, Avery, Sweetser, and Howes (2009) argued that more "non-public

relations content from user-generated and social network sites, like YouTube and Twitter

are fast becoming resources for journalists to obtain story ideas, break scandals, and find

sources" (p. 314). Because new media can foster scandals, mistruths and rumors, it is

essential to examine approaches to managing new environments in an effort to identify effective strategies.

<center>Problem Statement</center>

Preventative crisis plans should include emerging technologies as a tactic to communicate with publics, and manage conflicts and crises. The impact technologies can have on response strategies seems to be profound, though Coombs and Holladay (2009) argued it is understudied (Schultz, Utz, & Goritz, 2010). Additional investigation is required to build a composite understanding of new media and its incorporation into communication and strategic conflict management.

During a crisis situation, an organization may engage with multiple publics while struggling to manage the circulation of misleading information. Attacks may come in the form of viral YouTube videos, Facebook and Twitter postings, or blog commentaries, which have the potential to generate negative media coverage. Over the years, Planned Parenthood Federation of America has encountered a number of obstacles that threatened its Federal funding. On February 1, 2011 Planned Parenthood encountered an attack from the prolife nonprofit group, Live Action, which arguably accelerated government debate regarding the funding of the organization and damaging its image as a reputable healthcare provider. Undercover video footage obtained by Live Action appeared to show Planned Parenthood staff disregarding statutory rape and abortion reporting laws, and aiding sex traffickers. In one video, a staff member provides information to obtain an abortion to an underage girl who claims to have been impregnated by a much older man. In another, a clinic manager speaks with two sex traffickers and provides information on obtaining abortions, examinations for sexually transmitted diseases, and explains that

after an abortion occurs, the girls should only engage in sex acts above the waist for a period of time. The footage posted on YouTube quickly went viral and garnered over a million views. The footage placed Planned Parenthood at the forefront of national news.

On its website, Live Action proclaimed, "We use new media to educate the public about the humanity of the unborn and investigative journalism to expose threats against the vulnerable and defenseless" (*Live Action*, 2011). The organization maintains a blog, Twitter and Facebook accounts, and a YouTube channel, as well as an additional Web site dedicated to its films. Each of these tools are used in its campaign against Planned Parenthood, "The Mona Lisa Project: Exposing Planned Parenthood," (*Live Action*, 2011). Embedding new media into its mission statement illustrates its reliance and highlights the important role technology plays in achieving its goals. The Live Action films aimed at Planned Parenthood and at ending abortion can be found in a variety of locations online. The organization used social media platforms to expose Planned Parenthood and reach a widespread audience. When compared to the cost of television commercials or other forms of advertisement, social media provided a lower cost option for the nonprofit organization to reach publics and place pressure on the Federal government to remove funding from Planned Parenthood. As a tactic, social media allowed the organization to keep costs low, quickly respond to publics and Planned Parenthood, and have an ample reach.

Prior to the conflict with Live Action, Planned Parenthood maintained a website, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube accounts. Although the organization does not address new media in its mission, it is incorporated into its efforts and was expanded following the release of Live Action's videos with the launch of its blog, Stand With Planned

Parenthood, which chronicled a nationwide bus tour dubbed, The Truth Tour, a more grassroots approach aimed at dispelling rumors and mistruths following the circulation of Live Action videos. Live Action also went on a bus tour with the Susan B. Anthony List and former Colorado Representative Marilyn Musgrove and visited 13 congressional districts aimed at exposing the acts captured on video at Planned Parenthood clinics. Live Action and its partners have sought to remove government funding to organizations that provide abortions, as well as those the groups whom they believe fail to protect the vulnerable and defenseless. Initially, the bus tours visited the same locations in attempt to counter protest the respective opposition. During some rallies, the busses could be seen parked adjacent to each other. The images of the two busses arguably illustrated the contention and depth of conflict between the organizations; it appeared neither would back down.

Turnbull (2000) argued that technologies only highlighted crises; however, the ease of publication made possible with Web 2.0 has opened the door for crises to begin online and quickly spread, which make it difficult for crisis managers to contain. The increased use of social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, blogs, and Wikis to share information, make it essential for crisis managers to incorporate the use of new technologies into communication plans to effectively reach desired publics, manage crises and protect organization image and reputation. When Live Action released the videos on YouTube, the damaging content sparked a funding crisis for Planned Parenthood and threatened its value as a reputable healthcare provider for the uninsured and underinsured. The Live Action videos were also linked on Facebook and Twitter, and the organization president appeared on several news outlets to discuss the video operation

and called on the Federal government to pull Planned Parenthood funding. In comparison to Live Action, Planned Parenthood initially had little activity on its Facebook and Twitter pages. Though its followers posted and tweeted on the Planned Parenthood pages, the organization did not quickly engage. Live Action, on the other hand, regularly posted and communicated with its followers on social media during the 48-hours following the video release. Many of its posts contained links to the videos, while others urged followers to support its effort to expose Planned Parenthood, often labeling the organization as so-called abortion chain, and strip its funding. Nearly two months after the video release, Live Action claimed Planned Parenthood clinics do not provide mammograms, contrary to a statement Planned Parenthood CEO, Cecil Richards, made on *The Joy Bauer Show*. Live Action recorded telephone calls as actors posed as patients calling Planned Parenthood clinics to request mammograms. Planned Parenthood staff is heard stating that the organization does not provide mammograms. Less than a year later, the Susan G. Komen foundation, a global leader in the breast cancer movement, moved to end a $700,000 grant to Planned Parenthood citing the ongoing government investigation, which was prompted at the urging of anti-abortion groups. Live Action immediately released a statement of support for Komen that stated:

> We applaud Susan G. Komen for its pro-woman decision to end their financial support of Planned Parenthood, the nation's biggest abortion chain. After a slew of scandals at Planned Parenthood, and the opening of a Congressional investigation, Komen is wise to distance itself from the corrupt abortion giant. In just the last year, Live Action's undercover footage revealed Planned Parenthood workers in 7 clinics aiding and abetting the sex trafficking of young girls, and

Planned Parenthood falsely claiming they provide mammograms to women. In

reality, our undercover investigation revealed that not a single Planned

Parenthood clinic even has the equipment to do a mammogram. Komen realizes

that their money to detect, prevent, and cure breast cancer is better spent

elsewhere. (*Live Action*, 2011)

Though Live Action and Komen are not linked, Live Action appeared to believe its

operation, which prompted a government investigation, led to Komen's decision to

revoke funding. However, after three days of intense scrutiny on social media and in

traditional media, and from publics and government officials, Komen reversed its

decision to cut funding to Planned Parenthood. Komen agreed to fund the existing grants

and stated Planned Parenthood would be eligible to apply for future grants. Planned

Parenthood claimed it performed over four million breast exams in the last five years, and

170,000 were made possible through the Komen grants. While further investigation is

required to determine the impact social media had on the Komen reversal, it is clear that

there was some degree of influence stemming from social media. Publics, again, played a

role in communication and the decision-making process of an organization.

As social media has becomes a viable communicative tool for public relations

practitioners, journalists have also turned to social media to research and gather leads.

The benefits of social media are not lost on journalists as more turn to the Web to

research and gather leads. This was evident during the 2007 Virginia Tech shootings, the

earthquakes in Haiti in 2010 and in Japan in 2011, as many reporters gathered firsthand

accounts from Twitter users. The potential influence social media can have on what

becomes news requires further investigation to include media coverage of crisis

situations. Thelwall and Stuart (2007) argued technology could influence what and how items are reported. Video cameras now come in compact designs and are standard on many cellular phones, making it quick and easy for a person to record events. The publication capabilities on YouTube allow videos to quickly be shared across the world. In 2011, a UCLA student quickly made national news when she uploaded a video rant on YouTube about Asian students who were in the campus library. An Australian student, Casey Heynes, garnered national news attention in 2011 after his classmates posted a video of Heynes retaliating against a schoolyard bully. Though these videos are relatively insignificant in scale, the ability to garner high profile attention speaks to the potential for news coverage that may arise when YouTube videos go viral. The Live Action YouTube videos quickly went viral and garnered national news coverage and challenged Planned Parenthood's mission, reputation, and government funding. Planned Parenthood had to battle multiple fronts – an angered public, the relentless barrage from Live Action, and the Federal government. It was clear that its existence was at stake, as was its reputation as a reputable healthcare provider that aimed to help the underinsured and uninsured. The videos painted a disparaging picture of Planned Parenthood and while it had to fight for funding, it also had to manage the damage done to its reputation. The struggle played out on social media, controlled online media, and on traditional media as the organization strived to maintain funding and protect its image.

<center>Purpose of the Study</center>

The twofold purpose of this study is to examine media interplay and the strategic conflict management of two organizations engaged in a conflict.

This study will examine the interplay between social media, controlled online

media, and traditional news media during a conflict. Specifically, this study examines Planned Parenthood's Federal funding crisis and the conflict with Live Action. Identifying the actions and reactions among different types of media is aimed at profiling potential trends that may exist as a result of new technology.

This study will also examine strategic conflict management by Planned Parenthood and Live Action as they responded to each other and to media coverage. The need for consistent representation of their stances and strategies across platforms is important; however, as events unfold, new information is revealed and organizations may need to adjust stances and strategies. The representation of their stances and strategies seem to be varying across media. Particularly, the differences can be more salient between controlled media and traditional news media. Identifying the factors influencing each organization's stance over a period, as well as image restoration strategies (Benoit, 1997) will illustrate how effective each organization was in achieving favorable media coverage. Organizations use message frames in concert with strategies to obtain favorable media coverage. Analyzing media coverage is representative of what made it through the gatekeeping process and may illustrate which organization was more influential to, and effective in, the court of public opinion.

This study aims to understand the stances and strategies of each organization employed via social media, controlled online media and the interaction with traditional media. Live Action released undercover videos on YouTube, which prompted uproar on social media and traditional media. Twitter and Facebook users engaged in conversations regarding the videos, the Federal funding debate, and abortion rights. This study will

identify the responses each organization took on the various social media outlets to profile trends over the crisis period.

Controlled online media, in this case online news releases and official statements, will be analyzed to identify strategies and the potential factors influencing organizational stances and uncover any differences between crisis response strategies employed by organizations as the crisis unfolded. Further analysis of news articles will profile framing by traditional media and represent what made it through the gatekeeping process.

Social media provides the opportunity for organizations to facilitate two-way communication while providing information, whereas controlled online media disseminated by organizations provides digital access for users to view official items. Organizations have no control over whether traditional media outlets will cover official statements and news releases. They can, however, digitally share press releases and other documents on a Web site, which provides an opportunity for interested publics to obtain content without gatekeeping of traditional media. To increase readership, organizations can also link news releases on social media sites. On the other hand, traditional news media tend to follow a one-way flow of information, although, many media outlets are now integrating social media and Web 2.0 tools, such as blogs, onto news Web sites, which allow users to participate in the discussion of news. Social media have extended these interactive and participative features more than controlled online media. One distinct difference is that media do not respond to user comments, whereas organizations may engage in feedback. Traditional media facilitate and even encourage debate among users, but do not engage in the discussion with users, likely to maintain journalistic ethical considerations. Traditional media does, however, turn to social media to obtain

information and leads, as seen during the massive earthquakes in Haiti and Japan in recent years. This study aims to profile trends involving the interplay between the different forms of media during a conflict to understand the interactions among different media, technological changes and the influence each may have.

Significance of the Study

In the past, public relations practitioners and traditional media relied on one another to obtain information and coverage of issues; however, the addition of social media has changed the interaction between the two. The increasing use of social media to engage publics, and gain leads and firsthand accounts of events requires investigation of its relationship with traditional media. As traditional news media turn to social media for information, it becomes increasingly more important for public relations practitioners to understand social media influence and its relationship with media coverage. On the other hand, organizations directly reach the public through social media, without the gatekeeping of traditional news media. For example, news releases previously seen only by news media can now be shared via a digital newsroom or on a social media site for direct sharing with publics. Exploring the interplay of media types can offer insight into interactions and the new interdependence that may result from the emergence of social media.

The study will contribute to the field of public relations by understanding which communication strategies employed on different media during a cycle of strategic conflict management have the potential to influence a positive, negative or balanced trend in traditional media coverage. Results will also illustrate how a crisis can develop and be managed through different forms of media effectively. Traditional techniques and

strategies are still relevant and essential to effective crisis management, regardless of medium; the challenge is to discover which factors have changed. Profiling trends may be the first step toward gaining a more composite understanding those factors and how to strategically and effectively use different media.

CHAPTER II

THE CRISIS SITUATION

Planned Parenthood

For more than 90 years, Planned Parenthood Federation of America has provided

reproductive healthcare and sex education to men, women, and teens. The organization

receives funding through the Title X program to support more than eight hundred

healthcare centers across the U.S. The organization also engages in issues advocacy, such

as providing affordable reproductive healthcare and the promotion of education and

prevention policies. According to the Planned Parenthood website, the organization

advocates a woman's right to make decisions about pregnancy and opposes government

limitation of these rights, including the right to have an abortion.

Planned Parenthood was at the center of the news in 1994 when John Salvi, a pro-

life extremist, murdered a staff member at a Massachusetts clinic. The center of abortion

controversy over the years, the organization has faced campaigns against it from various

prolife organizations. Planned Parenthood has also been accused of disregarding

mandatory reporting laws related to child rape and parental notification to obtain an

abortion. Live Action attempted to expose Planned Parenthood as enabling minors to

obtain abortions and allowing them to continue to be sexually abused. It has also worked

to discredit the organization as a comprehensive healthcare provider. In 2008, Live

Action released undercover videos taken in Planned Parenthood clinics. The footage

showed clinic staff providing instruction to avoid parental notification laws to obtain

abortions. The staff also appeared to disregard reporting laws related to statutory rape.

Planned Parenthood has additionally been accused of using taxpayer money to provide

abortions, though Title X funds are prohibited from being used to provide abortions. Over the years, it has been the subject of investigations for similar violations in several states.

Live Action

Live Action, an anti-abortion activist group based in California, is led by a group of young individuals dedicated to ending abortion and tackling other violations of human rights. Lila Rose, founder and president, was 15-years-old when the group formed and has appeared in several of the undercover videos shot by the organization. Live Action refers to abortion as the biggest human rights injustice of our time and is determined to use investigative journalism and new media to educate publics. The organization has several chapters located throughout California and has aligned itself with other high profile prolife organizations like the Susan B. Anthony List, a 20 year-old organization aimed at advancing prolife women.

In 2008, Live Action launched the Mona Lisa Project, which began as a hidden camera investigation at Planned Parenthood clinics because it believed the organization was violating statutory rape laws. According to the Live Action website, the investigation also planned to reveal the inside story in the abortion industry and abuses. President Lila Rose posed as a 13-year-old claiming to have been impregnated by her 27-year-old boyfriend. The clinic employee instructed her to claim the boyfriend was 14-years-old to avoid mandatory statutory rape reporting laws. Other campaigns against Planned Parenthood include The Rosa Acuna Project, which focused on obtaining video footage of Planned Parenthood staff providing false medical and scientific information to patients. Project Truth: Answering Planned Parenthood's Media Deceptions is directly related to disproving Planned Parenthood's media messages. The Mammosham Project

was aimed at discrediting Planned Parenthood as a comprehensive health clinic for women because it does not perform mammograms. Its Racism Project focuses on proving Planned Parenthood accepts earmarked funds for race-based abortions. Live Action, dubbed a new media movement for life, also has initiatives aimed at educating and advocating a prolife position.

<div align="center">Issues by Stages</div>

Planned Parenthood's situation is comprised of two serious issues and involves multiple publics. First and foremost, the organization must manage its funding crisis. Secondly, the damage to the reputation caused by the Live Action videos must be restored. The two largest issues are closely connected, as image restoration may assist in the efforts to restore funding. The attacks by Live Action spearheaded the way for what was described on the Planned Parenthood website as, "Congressional attacks on women's health" (*Planned Parenthood*, 2011). Before it can fully enter the recovery phase, the conflicts will have to be contained. Although image restoration is considered part of the recovery phase, it appears the organization has engaged in some reputation management. Presumably, efforts to repair its image will take place when a resolution is reached; however, at the time of this study, the conflict at the state level remains ongoing.

Cameron, Wilcox, Reber, and Shin (2007) depict the cycle of conflict following four distinct phases: proactive, strategic, reactive and recovery. During the proactive phase organizations engage in issues management and environmental scanning. For example, an organization may monitor media coverage or social media to identify potential issues. In the strategic phase organizations engage in conflict positioning and decide which actions are most appropriate to implement. During the reactive phase

organization engage in crisis communication and conflict resolution. Organizations take action to correct or resolve a conflict. The recovery phase involves efforts to minimize and manage reputation and image restoration that may have been caused during a conflict. Following the cycle of conflict, prior to February 2011, it can be inferred from a Planned Parenthood letter sent to Attorney General Eric Holder, that the organization was aware of organizations attempting to infiltrate the organization and obtain video at its clinics. The letter stated:

> These multi-state visits from men claiming to be engaged in sex trafficking of minors may be a hoax. In the past, Planned Parenthood affiliates have been approached by a small, organized group of people opposed to our mission, who have misrepresented their circumstance to gain access to our health centers. Once inside, these people have recorded "undercover" videos of their conversations with our clinic staff and then selectively and maliciously edited the videos in an attempt to cast Planned Parenthood in a negative light. This may be happening once again. If so, this kind of activity should be firmly condemned. (*Planned Parenthood*, 2011)

It is likely the organization actively engaged in environmental scanning in order to track potential issues during the proactive phase of the conflict, as they mentioned similar instances in the letter.

February 1, 2011 marked the release of Live Action's undercover videos filmed at several Planned Parenthood clinics across the United States, shifting the conflict into the strategic phase. The Live Action video footage involves members of the activist group posing as sex traffickers seeking information regarding sexually transmitted disease

screenings and on obtaining abortions for underage girls. The Planned Parenthood employees appear to disregard mandatory reporting of illegal operations and offers resources to obtain STD screenings and abortions. In another video, an underage female reveals she has been impregnated by her adult boyfriend and seeks an abortion. The Planned Parenthood employee stated it is best not to discuss the age of the male and proceeds to offer resources. Soon after the visits, Planned Parenthood sent a letter to Attorney General Eric Holder at the FBI recounting the tales and noting its suspicion that the visits may be part of an elaborate hoax. However, little had taken place before Live Action launched its attack against Planned Parenthood, calling on Congress to revoke its funding and sending the organization into a tailspin. Many supporters took to social media to express their disdain toward Planned Parenthood's apparent aiding of sex traffickers and failure to report sex acts against minors. The YouTube videos almost immediately went viral, many of which were broadcasted on television news programs. Live Action's president, Lila Rose, appeared on several national news programs, such as *The Glenn Beck Show* and *The O'Reilly Factor* to explain the videos and advocate Live Action's mission.

As the media blitz continued, the strategic phase would indicate that Planned Parenthood actively assessed the risks involved and determined the appropriate response strategies, as well as which channels of communication were most appropriate for its situation. The organization's reputation, image and funding were clearly at risk during this stage. In fact, weeks after the video release, Republicans in the House of Representatives voted to remove federal funding to Planned Parenthood. Many politicians argued that defunding Planned Parenthood was more an ideological battle over

abortion rights, rather than a means to alleviate the federal deficit. Soon after the video release, Representative Mike Pence of Indiana put fourth the addition of the Pence Amendment to H.R. 1, which would ban Planned Parenthood and affiliated organizations from receiving federal funding. The abortion issue was debated alongside the Planned Parenthood funding issue, as many Republicans and Democrats addressed the House of Representatives on February 17. Pence made his opposition to abortion clear and argued, "Some consider the Pence Amendment a 'war on Planned Parenthood,' but this is not about Planned Parenthood's right to be in the abortion business. Sadly, abortion on demand is legal in America. This debate is about who pays for it" (Ertelt, 2011, para. 18). Although some Planned Parenthood clinics provide abortions, Title X funds cannot be used for abortions. Planned Parenthood President, Cecile Richards later issued a statement:

> In attacking Planned Parenthood, the House Republican leadership has launched an outrageous assault on the millions of Americans who rely on Planned Parenthood for primary and preventive health care, including lifesaving breast and cervical cancer screenings, annual exams, family planning visits, birth control, HIV testing, and more. (*Planned Parenthood*, 2011)

Two months after the release of the videos, during federal budget negotiations, President Barak Obama refused to accept a budget agreement with a recommendation to remove federal funding to Planned Parenthood. As a government shutdown loomed, Congress came to an agreement, which included funding of Planned Parenthood; however, the organization acknowledged the battle is far from over by posting the following statement on its website:

After months of negotiations, Congress finally reached an agreement on the

federal budget — and because of our tremendous efforts, it does not include cuts

to Planned Parenthood funding. Unfortunately, the story does not end there. The

extremists behind the efforts to bar Planned Parenthood health centers from

federal funding lost that fight — but they were able to use the budget fight to

force new burdens on women seeking abortion services in Washington, DC. This

victory for their anti-women's health agenda, along with the fact that they came

dangerously close to succeeding in their assault on Planned Parenthood, has

surely emboldened them for future attacks. We urgently need your help to stand

strong in the coming months. (*Planned Parenthood*, 2011)

Similarly, Live Action's website contains excerpts from the undercover video footage, as

well as a complete video on its homepage. The homepage also includes a link to a May

11, 2011 article indicating Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels signed a bill to officially strip

Planned Parenthood of funding at the state level, illustrating the depth and continuation of

the conflict. The April 8, 2011 Federal budget agreement may have marked the end of the

Federal hurdle for now; however, the organization must continue to battle for funding at

the state level and possibly again during the next Federal budget cycle. This study

examines the crisis responses on different types of media and media coverage over the

course of the battle for Federal funding.

Planned Parenthood moved into the reactive phase of the cycle of conflict by

launching a blog, I Stand with Planned Parenthood, dedicated to addressing the so-called

truths about the video footage and detailing organization and activist efforts. The

organization additionally took on a grassroots approach by traveling across the United

States by bus for its Truth Tour. The bus tour visited communities and university campuses to drive support for the organization and dispel mistruths. This move came shortly after Live Action launched its own bus tour, and several of the same stops were simultaneously made by both organizations. Planned Parenthood has also taken to the Web to advocate its positions and mission by operating a YouTube channel and Facebook and Twitter pages to assist in reaching and communicating with key publics. Its official website includes a digital newsroom where official statements and news releases are posted for media and the general public. Additionally, the organization battled with government to maintain funding, which likely involves engaging in litigation and lobbying.

The 2011 video footage was not the first time Live Action went inside Planned Parenthood clinics. In 2007, Rose posed as a 15-year-old impregnated by her 23-year-old boyfriend and entered a Planned Parenthood clinic to seek information to obtain an abortion. The clinic employee explained that if she was 15-years-old, the organization must report it; however, if she claimed to be 16-years-old, it would go unreported. Although little media attention was given, Live Action continued its operation against Planned Parenthood and has since garnered greater attention for its most recent videos (www.LiveAction.org/about), as well as support from conservative government officials as seen leading up to the April 8 Federal budget agreement.

<div align="center">Timeline of Key Events</div>

The following table outlines several key events that occurred prior to the video release and in the months following. The release of the videos and impending media coverage spurred a debate between Republicans and Democrats on whether to fund

Planned Parenthood. On April 9, 2011, The White House announced that a budget

agreement had been reached and it included Federal funding for Planned Parenthood.

Table 1

Timeline of Events

Date	Event
Jan. 2011	Eight Planned Parenthood clinics report similar situations involving extreme encounters with clients within a five-day span across Arizona, Indiana, New Jersey, New York, Virginia, and Washington, D.C.
Jan. 18	Planned Parenthood sends letter to Hon. Eric Holder with U.S. Justice Department to investigate potential sex trafficking based on the visits in early January.
Feb. 1	Live Action videos posted to YouTube and on Live Action Website.
Feb. 1	New Jersey Senator Michael Doherty called on State and Federal Law Enforcement officials to investigate an undercover video showing a Planned Parenthood manager advising a pimp how to hide his underage sex slaves from the law.
Feb. 1	Planned Parenthood released a statement, which indicated it had fired the New Jersey clinic manager who appeared in the video. Planned Parenthood said in a statement that the full video showed its employee "behaving in a repugnant manner that is inconsistent with our standards of care." The organization also claims Live Action videos are clearly edited.
Feb. 3	YouTube threatens to remove Live Action videos citing privacy violations.
Feb. 4	Following the nationwide attention given to the video footage showing a Planned Parenthood staff member at a New Jersey clinic helping alleged sexual traffickers cover up their crimes, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie vetoed a bill funding Planned Parenthood. Live Action President, Lila Rose, goes on a media blitz.
Feb. 14	Rose replied to Planned Parenthoods letter to Hon. Eric Holder. Rose claims the organization did not visit an Indiana clinic mentioned in the letter, and requests an immediate and thorough investigation in Planned Parenthood of Indiana, as well as in all other Planned Parenthood clinics.

Table 1 (continued).

Date	Event
Feb. 17-18	Republican Representative Mike Pence introduces Pence Amendment to H.R. 1 to bar federal funding to Planned Parenthood, argues this is not an issue of abortion; rather it is an issue of who pays for abortions. Democratic Representative Jerry Nadler calls Pence Amendment a "bill of attainder"- saying it was unconstitutional because the legislation targeted a specific group. The Federal government vote of 240-185 bars Planned Parenthood funding. Planned Parenthood President states this is a congressional attack on women and women's healthcare.
Mar. 7	Planned Parenthood launches, "Stand With Planned Parenthood" campaign and the "Truth Tour" bus campaign, traveling across the U.S. to dispel mistruths. Live Action and the Susan B. Anthony List (SBA List) launch a 4-day, 13-district "Women Speak Out: Defund Planned Parenthood" bus tour.
Mar. 11	To avoid a government shutdown on March 18, House Appropriations Committee Chairman Hal Rogers introduces continuing resolution to fund federal government through April 8.
Mar. 27	News site Salon.com calls the shutdown, "The Planned Parenthood government shutdown."
Mar. 30	Fear of government shutdown looms. One point of disagreement is a $300 million cut for Planned Parenthood. Media begins toting the issue as an ideological one. Obama says, "What we can't be doing is using last year's budget process to have arguments about abortion, to have arguments about the Environmental Protection Agency, to try to use this budget negotiation as a vehicle for every ideological or political difference between the two parties. That's what the legislature is for, to have those arguments, but not stuff it all into one budget bill."
Apr. 5	President Obama says he will not sign a budget agreement to keep government running that cuts funding for Planned Parenthood and the EPA.
Apr. 7	Huffington Post runs headline, "Government Shutdown Threatened By Republicans Over Planned Parenthood."
Apr. 8-9	White House announces government reaches budget agreement overnight, which includes federal funding of Planned Parenthood.

Soon after the Federal budget agreement was reached in April, several states moved to defund Planned Parenthood or block the organization's involvement with public health programs. In May, Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels introduced HB 1210, a bill designed to "prohibit state agencies from entering contracts with or making grants to any entity that performs abortions or maintain or operate a facility where abortions are performed" (Hufnagle, 2011, para. 1). The bill revoked funding from organizations like Planned Parenthood. In late June, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie line item vetoed $7.5 million in funding for Planned Parenthood. In August, a Federal judge ordered the state of Kansas to resume funding Planned Parenthood clinics after the state passed a bill removing funding from Planned Parenthood and similar organizations. Also in August, Planned Parenthood clinics in North Carolina and Wisconsin faced closing after the states moved to defund the organization. Ohio state legislators are advocating a bill to reallocated for Planned Parenthood to health departments across the state.

Planned Parenthood's website lists the following states as in danger of losing funding: Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Texas, and Wisconsin. The organization also lists several other states that attempt to restrict or ban abortions in the state health insurance exchange. The Kansas ruling marked the first hearing regarding the rights of states to appropriate and exercise control over Title X funding, and similar litigation is likely to follow as Planned Parenthood continues the battle for funding and protection of abortion rights at the state level.

CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Defining a Crisis

Fishman (1999) argued that the meaning of "crisis" is muddled and often inappropriately overused, transforming it into a synonym for "accident," "catastrophe," or "disaster" (p. 347) in research. Seeger, Sellnow, and Ulmer (1998) offered a refined definition of a crisis as a specific, unexpected event or series of events that create high levels of uncertainty and threat to high priority organizational goals. Seeger, Sellnow, and Ulmer (2003) expanded the crisis definition by adding that is must pose a severe threat to high-priority goals and values, and requires response in a restricted timeframe. Seeger and Padgett (2010) offered a more general definition by describing a crisis as an unexpected event involving disruption and harm. It appears most scholars agree that a crisis is an unexpected, complex event posing a severe threat to an organization.

Frandsen and Johansen (2007) defined crisis communication as "a complex and dynamic configuration of communication process – before, during, and after a crisis – where various actors, contexts and discourses (manifested in texts) are related to each other" (p. 3). Seeger and Padgett (2010) describe crisis communication as "emergency management and response activity serving a variety of important functions before, during and after a crisis" (p. 128). The activities range from clarifying risks to providing comfort and reassurance to publics. In general, a crisis increases levels of uncertainty and organizations must quickly assess situations and practice strategic communication. Organizations have recently turned to social media during crises because of its reach and immediacy.

Cameron et al. (2007) stated the cycle of conflict contains four major phases in conflict management: proactive phase, strategic phase, reactive phase, and recovery phase. During the proactive phase, organizations engage in issues management and environmental scanning, in an effort to identify potential conflicts. The strategic phase occurs when a conflict emerges, prompting organizations to evaluate the risks and to select appropriate strategies to manage the situation. Conflicts move into the reactive phase when organizations begin crisis communication and in some cases, negotiation to protect the organization's interest. When a resolution is reached, the recovery phase can begin, and involves addressing reputational concerns or other damage.

While researchers have created a number of recommendations for crisis response strategies (Allen & Caillouet, 1994; Benoit, 1997; Coombs & Holladay, 2009; Hearit, 2001), Coombs pointed out that the recommendations contradict each other (2004), creating uncertainty for crisis managers. In attempt to integrate the various recommendations, Coombs divided strategies into three groups and presented the Crisis Communication Standards; instructing information, adjusting information, and reputational concerns. Instructing information involves informing stakeholders about how to protect themselves from the effects of a crisis. Adjusting information involves taking measures to assist stakeholders in coping psychologically. Reputational concern involves using protective response strategies that fit the threat level during a crisis. Level of threat to reputation determines which strategies to employ.

Traditional News Media and Crisis Communication

Traditionally, news media have influenced public relations practice, and particularly, crisis situations. Kiousis, Mitrook, Wu, and Seltzer (2006) found a

significant relationship between salience of issues embedded in news releases and in media coverage, highlighting the interaction of news releases on media coverage. The salience of issues in news releases was also found to have a positive relationship with the perceived salience of issues in public opinion. A news release has the ability to influence media coverage, which in turn can influence public opinion regarding issues. Kiousis, Laskin and Kim (2009) found practical implications for public relations practitioners when exploring political communication by noting the influence political communication can have on media agendas, which in turn can influence key publics; however, no relationship was found between issues addressed in news releases and the Congressional activities examined.

Image restoration strategies used in news releases during a crisis have been shown to influence the story balance in newspaper coverage (Holtzhausen & Roberts, 2009). Organizations taking a proactive approach during a crisis yielded positive news coverage, whereas a reactive approach appeared to yield negative news coverage, according to Holtzhausen and Roberts (2009). Proactive organizations actively provided information and communicated with media, arguably improving relationships with journalists. Rather than providing information to media, reactive organizations responded to inquiries. Although proactive media relations efforts have been found to influence the amount and tone of coverage, Waters, Tindall, and Morton (2010) explain that it is only one factor influencing media coverage. Interpersonal relationships between journalists and public relations practitioners were found to improve media relations (Shin & Cameron, 2003), and possibly improve positive coverage. Media coverage is a traditional measure of the success of news subsidies, in the form of news releases, and other public relations efforts.

The majority of the time, only journalists or editors viewed a release; however, with the Internet, more organizations are sharing news releases on digital newsrooms with media, bloggers, and with the general public. Organization may also link news releases on social media to encourage viewing. The public no longer has to find out about events from news media coverage; rather, news releases can be disseminated directly to publics via a digital newsroom on a website or on social media.

Seeger et al. (2003) pointed out that during times of crises, media coverage becomes more aggressive and is likely to be continuous. Twenty-four hour news channels and the Internet make it possible for media to disseminate information almost immediately. Vidoloff and Petrun (2010) found messages of self-efficacy in press releases resulted in television coverage, which illustrated the self-efficacy of sampled organizations. Utilizing various mediums to communicate with media, such as posting transcripts or updates on Web sites was also found to improve the type of media coverage occurring over crisis. The organizations examined by Vidoloff and Petrun utilized official websites to share statement, updates and news releases to connect with the media and publics; although Waters et al. (2010) claimed that information shared in online newsrooms often falls short. By profiling social media and public relations trends in online media outreach, Waters et al. noted several trends, including the use of e-mail to pitch ideas to journalists and bloggers. Additionally, the use of "social media news releases" (p. 247) has also changed the way public relations practitioners transmit information to journalists. Practitioners can integrate a variety of multimedia elements in a social media news release, which can easily be inserted into blogs and on online news outlets. Marsh, Guth, and Short (2012) explained that social media news releases are

often found in the digital newsrooms of organizations, and are not necessarily targeted at traditional journalists; rather, the webpage-like release is aimed at bloggers and online journalists.

<div align="center">News and Message Framing</div>

A news frame is often defined as, "a central organizing idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion, and elaboration" (Tankard, Hendrickson, Silberman, Bliss, & Ghanem, 1991, as cited in Severin & Tankard, 2009, p. 277). Framing places issues into context by calling attention to or limiting coverage of particular aspects of news events (Iyengar, 1991). Placing news events into context has the potential to effect viewer perceptions of events. Different frames applied to an event can impact the salience of issues. Semetko and Valkenburg (2000, as cited in An & Gower, 2009) identified five prominent news frames as attribution of responsibility, conflict, economic, human interest and morality.

Human-interest frame: Places a human face or an emotional representation of a story.

Conflict frame: Used to reflect conflicts between individuals, groups and organizations.

Morality frame: Puts the event in context of morals, social and religious tenets.

Economic frame: Reports an event in relation to the consequences it will have economically on an individual or organizational level.

Attribution of responsibility frame: Attributes responsibility of an event to an individual, group, organization or country.

Iyengar (1991) explained that framing could elicit emotions in viewers when used by news media to describe events. An and Gower (2009) noted that frames with emotional presentations are likely to be regarded are as more urgent, which implies the importance of emotions when placed in news coverage. Although previously applied to news content, recent research has applied framing to social media, specifically Facebook and Twitter (Muralidharan, Rasmussen, Patterson, & Shin, 2011). As social media becomes a viable source for news and information, framing theory provides a useful examination of coverage in a new medium.

Holtzhausen and Roberts (2009) identified story balance as positive, negative or balanced media coverage following high profile crises. Similarly, Muralidharan et al. (2011) identified whether media coverage was framed as positive, negative or neutral by utilizing framing and emotions following a disaster, which serves as an extension of the dominant news frames. While organizations may frame posts on social media one way, users have the potential to comment on different issues, calls to action or use different emotions on the same post. Muralidharan, Dillistone, and Shin (2011) identified the type of emotions displayed in organization posts and user comments on Facebook and YouTube posts following the 2010 British Petroleum Deepwater Horizon explosion and oil spill. While the organization attempted to remain neutral in the messages posted, findings revealed that users comments were riddled with dominantly negative emotions, suggesting that the strategies employed by BP on social media failed to persuade audiences.

Social Media, Controlled Online Media and Crisis Communication

In the past, public relations practitioners typically relied on journalists to secure

exposure and maintain the media relations function of public relations, whereas journalists have typically relied on their relationships with sources to gain information (Shin & Cameron, 2005). However, the Internet and social media may have altered previous held beliefs regarding relationships. Web 2.0 and social media allows public relations practitioners to seek out and communicate directly with publics, while also allowing sources to produce and publish their own content. News media are also on the Web in the form of online newspapers, television and print media with online versions, and official blogs, Facebook and Twitter pages. Social media are playing a significant role in shaping journalism today, according to Stassen (2010) who found that social media appeared to facilitate a more involved exchange between newsmakers and publics, whereas news flow has typically been one-way flow communication. Lariscy et al. (2009) found that journalists expressed interest in using social media, which may lead to an agenda building function, making it essential for public relations practitioners to engage in social media. Social media has changed the communication landscape, but it has also complicated the relationships between public relations practitioners and journalists. A three year longitudinal study (Wright & Hinson, 2011) confirmed that social media as a function of public relations has increased at a rapid rate, notably Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube were perceived nearly as important as search engine marketing.

Countless companies have taken to websites to address controversial issues; for example, in 2000 Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream was accused of containing high dioxin levels. To address the crisis, the company took to its official Web page to post statements, news releases and provide links to reputable advocates to contain and manage the situation. Given the changes to communication, largely heralded by social media, it is not

always sufficient for companies to rely on official websites. However, blogs and other forms of social media allow quick and easy publication, often without much editorial constraint. The Internet has left companies struggling to contain rumors and inflammatory information. In 2000, Turnbull argued that changes in technology do not create new crises; rather it emphasizes crises and issues. The 2007 survey research of Conway et al. found that the threat of potential Internet-based crises was not translating into action by corporations. A year later, Coombs (2008) pointed out the potential to uncover signs of an impending crisis by monitoring social media, which suggests a crisis can emerge online. Brody (1991) explained that an early response might curtail additional damage to an organization. Using social media to respond may provide organizations with an outlet to reach publics in a timely manner, possibly minimizing additional damage. Gonzalez-Herrero and Smith (2010) explained the dangers of forums like Facebook and YouTube, as well as the potential for a crisis to begin and go viral with a speed that supersedes action in the real world. For example, in 2008 Motrin released a campaign targeting new moms and likened a baby caring sling to a fashion accessory. Countless moms took to the blogosphere and to Twitter to complain about the offensiveness of the ads. Although not necessarily a full-scale crisis, the dubbed Motrin Moms caused enough of a controversy to prompt Motrin to issue an apology to bloggers and tweeters, and remove the ads from media. The company acted quickly in response to the online rumbling and was able to minimize any hefty damage to its image, illustrating Coombs (2008) position that organizations should monitor social media to identify any potential controversies or crises. Engaging in issues management in new environments is necessary, regardless of whether an organization maintains an online presence.

Hilse and Hoewener (1998, as cited in Conway, Ward, Lewis, & Bernhardt, 2007) identified four Internet crisis types:

1) Reinforcing crisis: the Internet is used in addition to traditional media as a communication channel to present stakeholder opinions.

2) Absurd crisis: emerges from the Internet's uncontrollable and diverse content; i.e. a crisis results due to absurd theories and opinions circulating online.

3) Affecting crisis: occurs when corporations are critically scrutinized by virtual stakeholders and then become the subject of public discussion with negative impact.

4) Competence crisis: can be characterized by a difference in competences between the aggressor (stakeholder) and defender (corporation). (pp. 215-216)

During the 2007 Virginia Tech University massacre, crisis managers had difficulty controlling messages as events unfolded quickly. Students were recounting tales on Facebook and Twitter, unwittingly positioning themselves as powerful players in crisis communication. Wigley and Fontenot (2010) found through content analysis that reporters relied more on non-official sources and on citizen-generated content during the first two days of the Virginia Tech crisis, highlighting a relationship between social media and traditional media coverage. Similar instances occurred during the 2010 Haiti earthquake, 2011 Japan earthquake and tsunami. Social media and the ease of publication made possible with Web 2.0 have allowed publics to take part in storytelling.

Social media can facilitate a forum for crises to form, as seen in 2009 when Domino's Pizza faced controversy surrounding an incident at a North Carolina restaurant. The organization used YouTube to quickly address the uproar over two North Carolina

employees who chronicled their unruly food preparation habits and published it on

YouTube. The footage included one employee bathing in a restaurant sink. It garnered

over 500,000 hits on YouTube, prompting the corporation to record a video message

from the CEO condemning the actions of the employees. Unfortunately, the video was of

poor quality, possibly indicating a lack of preparedness for such an event. The

organization did not allow users to comment on its response video, shutting down the

two-way flow of communication facilitated by social media and failing to invite

consumers into the discussion. In this case, the organization tackled image restoration

using public apologetic discourse (Benoit & Brinson, 1994). However, research (Rybalko

& Seltzer, 2010) has shown that engaging publics in dialogic communication can

improve relationships. Social media allow organizations to achieve this unlike ever

before.

Vielhaber and Waltman (2008) examined the changing use of technology during

strikes, noting that the use of blogs and new technologies that facilitate two-way

communication can create a sense of community among stakeholders during times of

crisis. Examining a faculty strike at Eastern Michigan University revealed an increased

reliance on the Web by a faculty union and university administration to promote their

perspectives to stakeholders strategically. The faculty union appeared to use technology

to quickly update students with tailored messages, while administration used technology

to disseminate the same messages found in the media. The use of technology to reach key

publics, in this case, students, was identified as a successful strategy. Specifically, the

strategic use of e-mail, Web sites and blogs were found to communicate crisis strategies,

such as denial, bolstering and attacking the accuser, positioning technology as a legitimate source or portal of information.

Gonzalez-Herrero and Smith (2010) posited several practical considerations for public relations practitioners operating in new media:

a) Audiences now have instant access to information.

b) Stakeholders are now highly fragmented due to the huge choice of media available online.

c) Thanks to the new social platforms, 'active' individuals about an issue can find each other – and mobilize against organizational interests – very easily. Publics have, therefore, much more power today than ever before, through the aggregation of individual's opinions.

d) The gatekeeper function of the traditional mass media has disappeared in the online world. Sources of negative information about an organization are no longer filtered. (pp. 100-101)

Although many crises and scandals are fleeting, the online environment can also allow crises to linger for years to come, increasing the need for effective issues management, planning and prevention by crisis managers (Conway et al., 2007; Gonzalez-Herrero & Smith, 2010) before, during and after a crisis. However, organizations wishing to engage in dialogic communication may face other barriers, such as limited resources or thorough understanding regarding the strategic use of new media. Dialogic communication involves feedback and engagement, which requires organizations to make staff available to communicate with publics on new media. Many popular new media, such as YouTube

and Facebook are free, however, while financial constraints may not be a factor, having the appropriate staff and adequate time to effectively manage new media is essential.

Schultz et al. (2010) claimed to have conducted the first study focusing on social media use in crisis communication, while pointing out that new technologies play a significant role in crisis communication nowadays, as evident from the previous examples. During a crisis organizations turning to the Web and new media must choose the most appropriate channels to communicate during delicate situations. Schultz et al. (2010) employed experimental design to discover that the medium or channel of communication, specifically Twitter and blogs, during a crisis matter more than the actual message disseminated. Perception of reputation, secondary crisis communication and respondent reactions were found to significantly be effected by the medium or a combination of mediums, illustrating the importance in strategically selecting the most appropriate outlets to employ during a crisis. The only instance involving a significant effect, involved crisis message type and secondary crisis communication, referring to user intent to share a message online. Results further illustrated the interaction between social media and newspaper coverage, discovering that crisis communication on Twitter resulted in less negative crisis reaction than those of blogs and traditional newspaper articles. Notably, the ease of sharing on Twitter when compared to the time it takes to create a blog posting, led researchers to surmise that crisis communication via social media could cause a less secondary crisis reaction. Wigley and Zhang (2011), however, suggested crisis managers use social media to develop relationships as a means of preparing for crises, placing the emphasis on relationship building. A 2011 survey of practitioners revealed nearly half of the respondents incorporated social media, Twitter

dominantly, into crisis plans (Wigley & Zhang, 2011). The findings supported social media as an influential outlet, one allowing organizations to build relationships, engage in issues management, and prepare for crises from all aspects. However, only a quarter of respondents' organizations had a staff member solely responsible for managing social media, rather, managing social media was reported dominantly as an additional job function.

In 2005, Cornfield, Carson, Kalis, and Simon explored the correlations between political blog, "citizen chatter" on political message boards and forums, and media coverage, and discovered blogs did influence media coverage; however, media had a much less significant influence over political blog coverage. Results suggested a potential agenda setting function of blogs, albeit high profile blogs. Few studies have examined the media's influence over user-generated content (Lee, B., Lancendorfer, & Lee, J.L., 2005; Roberts, Wanta, & Dzwo, 2002). Lee et al. (2005) found that newspapers influenced discussion board conversations in South Korea, while Roberts et al. (2002) found that online media in the U.S. influenced discussion board conversations for three specific issues, all suggesting the possibility of influence among differing types of media.

Image Restoration Strategies

The responsive stage of strategic conflict management cycle suggests how an organization should respond to a crisis, issue or conflict. Benoit's (1997) image restoration theory is based on the nature of attacks that precipitate corporate crises. An incident must be perceived as offensive and the corporation must be held accountable for an offense. Perception of offensiveness and attribution of responsibility places a corporation's image in danger. Multiple key publics may exist, such as governments,

regulatory agencies, and consumers, requiring a corporation to prioritize publics by importance. The underlying focus of the theory is on message options corporations may select during a crisis by offering five broad image repair strategies: denial, evasion of responsibility, reducing offensiveness, corrective action, and mortification.

Organizations may chose to deny actions or that harm exists; alternatively, denial may occur by shifting blame to others. Evading responsibility encompasses four options, according to Benoit (1997). An organization can argue it acted in response to another organization's offensive act or claim the act resulted from an accident. Alternatively, an organization can evade responsibility by suggesting an act resulted from uncontrollable situational variables or argue the act was rooted with good intentions. An organization may bolster itself to reduce perceived offensiveness by publics. Minimizing the amount of damage, differentiating an act from a more offensive act, and using transcendence to create a more positive context may assist in reducing offensiveness. In a more aggressive approach, an organization may choose to attack its accusers in attempt to lessen offensiveness. A more accommodating approach to reduce offensiveness involves offering acceptable compensation to those offended by an act. Organizations can improve image by taking corrective action to reduce harm and take preventative measures to reduce potential reoccurrences. Benoit's last strategy for improving reputation requires organizations to confess or apologize and ask its publics for forgiveness. In preparation for image restoration at the onset of a crisis, organizations must adequately understand the accusations and fallout, while simultaneously identifying important publics to determine the most appropriate and beneficial strategies to employ. Coombs and Holladay (2008) explained that research has over-emphasized apology and mortification

as the most effective strategy, however, it can open the door for litigation and prove costly for an organization. Experimental research revealed that apologia is not the best strategy (Coombs & Holladay, 2008). If people respond similarly to a sympathetic approach that does not require an organization to accept guilt, organizations may choose to forgo the apology in order to avoid the threat of litigation that may result from an admission.

Research regarding persuasive attacks against organizations (Benoit & Dorries, 1996) highlight the strategies used to convince publics of the wrongful deeds by organizations, often prompting a crisis and requiring organizations to engage in image restoration. According to Benoit and Dorries (1996), a persuasive attack encompasses two components; the accused must believe the act will be negatively perceived and be salient. Stakeholders must also perceive the accused as responsible, whether partially or wholly. The two components rely heavily on the perceptions of the accused and intended publics. The attacker must establish guilt, which may be exacerbated by previous feelings held by stakeholders. Benoit and Dorries contend that offensiveness, rather than blame, is a continuous variable used to enhance overall disdain with an organization. In this case, the attacker expands the offense to increase negative perceptions of the accused.

Coombs (2007) posited that the selection of image restoration strategies was based on an organization's perception of threat; however, his work suggested strategies move along a continuum ranging from accommodation to defensive stances, post crisis. Weiner's (1995) attribution theory offers insight into persuasive attacks seeking to strategically increase an organization's responsibility, as well as the degree of offensiveness. Coombs (2007) pointed out the logical connection between crises and

attribution theory, noting that stakeholders attribute the cause of a crisis when deciding who the responsible party is. Coombs (2007) explained, "If the organization is deemed responsible, the reputation will suffer. In turn, stakeholders may exit the relationship and/or create negative word-of-mouth" (p. 136). New media make it possible for negative word-of-mouth discourse to spread quickly, causing harm to an organization. Additionally, organizations must be concerned with the speed by which responsibility can be attributed because of the immediate nature of technology. Publics may forge attributions of responsibility immediately after viewing strong, persuasive content online without knowing all of the facts. Park and Lee (2007) used experiments to explore the interaction between postings on online news forums and corporate reputation. Two important findings emerged: (1) A single negative comment impacted corporate reputation, whereas a single positive comment yielded little impact on reputation perception, suggesting practitioners should expend effort towards monitoring online news forums; and (2) The amount of diverse comments improved favorability of the news source, suggesting the media organizations should offer discussion forums, while also remaining cognizant of its potential influence over the quality perception of the news site. Holtzhausen and Roberts (2009) noted, "The impact of reputation and history of crisis management is regarded as important for crisis outcomes," (p. 169) suggesting that image restoration is crucial during all stages in the cycle of conflict.

Contingency Theory of Strategic Conflict Management

Strategic conflict management of public relations offers insight into the cycle of conflict. Contingency theorists view public relations as strategic crisis management based on two major principles: (1) Dealing with publics is a dynamic process that unfolds over

time; (2) Many factors, internal and external, influence an organization's stance and strategies. Cancel and colleagues (1997) argued for a more it depends approach to public relations claiming, "antecedent, mediating, and moderating variables lead to greater or lesser accommodation" (p. 31), as it challenged normative models posited by Grunig and Grunig (1992). Instead, contingency theory considers the complex nature of the practice and offers a more fluid approach based on the two-way symmetrical model.

Shin, Cheng, Jin and Cameron (2006) defined a conflict as occurring "when a public moves in a different direction from the organization or when an organization refuses to change its direction after having received input from its public" (p. 400). The ability to shift position along a continuum suggests that there is not a single best method for practicing public relations. Research (Shin & Cameron, 2004) illustrated its use in explaining the strategic moves of two parties engaged in a conflict. Advocacy refers to the public act of representing an organization or idea in attempt to persuade intended publics to view it favorably; whereas accommodation refers to the act of building trust with external publics, which may require an organization to compromise or bow to other pressures (Cancel et al., 1997). The factors influence an organization's position along a continuum ranging from pure advocacy to pure accommodation, allowing initial and subsequent stances to adjust as needed (Cameron, Wilcox, Reber, & Shin, 2008) based on a number of influential factors.

The theory is composed of 86 external and internal variables that influence an organization's stances. As events unfold and new information is revealed, it is essential to adjust, rather than stay stagnant in an effort to achieve an ideal state of coordination, or two-way symmetric communication. Organizations may also find that it is not always

ethical or legal to engage in two-way communication with certain publics, which

contradicts an earlier presupposition that two-way symmetrical communication is the

ideal method to practicing excellent public relations (Grunig & Grunig, 1992). At other

times, conflicts may be unavoidable, especially when dealing with multiple publics,

internal or external. Each public has its own unique set of characteristics, thus the ability

to adjust communicative approaches is necessary in practice. The number of variables

organizations must consider is vast, prompting Cancel, Mitrook, and Cameron (1999) to

organize the variables that are present and those that are situational. Cameron, Cropp, and

Reber (2000) organized variables by themes: moral conviction, multiple publics,

regulatory constraints, management pressure, jurisdictional issues, and legal constraints.

However, in-depth interviews with top public relations professionals revealed more

support for moral conviction, managing multiple publics, and legal and jurisdictional

issues, circumventing the need to take an accommodative stance when managing conflict.

Shin, Cameron, and Cropp (2006) later quantified the variables through survey research

to prove the reliability and validity of the variables, ultimately grouping variables into 12

manageable factors divided between two dimensions, internal and external. For example,

external variables can include fear of litigation or government relations, which may also

cause potentially damaging publicity. The industry environment, static or dynamic, can

cause a shift in stance, as can the degree of political or social support. Internal

characteristics of an organization and the potential of economic loss or diminishing

internal relations with employees and stakeholders can influence organizational stances.

The combination of several factors, some more dominant than others, are more likely to

have influence the way an organization responds to publics, hence the *it depends* nature of contingency theory.

Hwang and Cameron (2009) explored the predictive power of contingency theory for both organizations and publics through experimental design. Results revealed an interaction between perceptions of leadership and threat severity on the public's evaluation of the crisis responses by organizations. A transformational leadership approach caused participants to estimate an accommodative organizational stance, as opposed to transactional leadership stories. Additionally, an interaction effect was found between perceptions of leadership and threats on the participations evaluation of organizational stance. Ultimately, Hwang and Cameron (2009) uncovered what could possibly become a secondary crisis or reputational concern. Unavoidable factors may require organizations to take a particular stance; however, if it is aware of the potential issues that may result from one stance, an organization can strategically prepare or prevent it from occurring. Applying contingency theory to latent publics may provide organization the opportunity to better prepare for crises.

Shin et al. (2005) illustrated organizational shifts along the contingency theory continuum by analyzing news coverage to record the shifts in organization stances during four high profile crises. Organizations did not remain static; rather, each appeared to change stance as the conflict evolved, suggesting that public relations operates in a contingent manner. The study showed several predominant factors such as internal threats and organizational characteristics, determined stances and shifts as conflicts unfold. Similarly, strategies employed by organizations were also related to the contingent factors outlined in the theory.

In recent years, several studies have illustrated the contingency theory of public relations (Cho & Cameron, 2006; Lumpkins, Jiyang, & Cameron, 2010; Mitrook, Parish, & Seltzer, 2008; Shin et al., 2005; Zhang, Qui, & Cameron, 2004), quickly establishing its status as a robust theory. Researchers have applied contingency theory to public relations in political communication (Stromback, Mitrook, & Kiousis, 2010), sports communication (Mitrook et al., 2008) and health communication (Lumpkins, et al., 2010), illustrating its value in explaining and understanding the practice. Lumpkins et al. (2010) suggested generating conflict using specific factors in news releases could lead to favorable media coverage when applied to health advocacy. Ultimately, contingency theory embraces the variety of factors that go into creating an ideal conflict management plan by answering the question: What is the most effective way to practice public relations? The answer: *It depends*.

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The funding crisis and Live Action conflict facing Planned Parenthood is vast and communication has been spread across a variety of forums. The following research questions are designed to understand the strategic conflict management approaches taken on different media and to explore the interplay between social media, controlled online media and traditional media. The questions explore image restoration and aims to understand the factors influencing each organization as conflict engagement began.

Because social media postings and controlled online content were disseminated by an organization, identifying the news frames (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000) in each type of media will illustrate how each organization framed the crisis situation on different types of media, and how traditional media framed the situation. Previous research (An & Gower, 2009; Muralidharan et al., 2011) identified the inclusion of emotions in message, noting that frames with emotional presentations are likely to be regarded are as more urgent on social media when responding to a crisis. Holtzhausen and Roberts (2009) examined the subject of attack during a crisis as a policy, individual, or organization. Identifying subject of attack on media and by organization will further illustrate how the crisis was framed and who or what was considered a target. The following set of questions will examine the aspects of framing related to the crisis and the interplay among different media types:

RQ1: Is there a difference in the way the conflict and funding crisis was framed on social media, controlled online media and traditional media?

RQ1a: Is there a difference in message frame used by Planned Parenthood and Live Action and addressed among social media, controlled online media and traditional media?

RQ1b: Is there a difference in main issue addressed by Planned Parenthood and Live Action framed among social media, controlled online media and traditional media?

RQ1c: Is there a difference in type of emotions used by Planned Parenthood and Live Action framed among social media, controlled online media and traditional media?

RQ1d: Is there a difference in the main subject of attack by Planned Parenthood and Live Action framed among social media, controlled online media and social media by organization?

Previous research (Holtzhausen & Roberts, 2009) profiled story balance in traditional media coverage during a crisis, while other research (Muraliharan et al., 2011) identified messages as positive, negative or neutral on social media. The next set of questions examines story balance with sources of information, news frames, and main issue among media and used by each organization with:

RQ2: Is there a relationship in sources of information and story balance?

RQ2a: Is there a relationship in sources of information among media?

RQ2b: Is there a relationship in sources of information between organizations?

RQ2c: Is there a relationship in story balance among media?

RQ2d: Is there a relationship between story balance and news frames?

RQ2e: Is there a relationship between story balance and main issues?

Following the release of Live Action videos, which depicted Planned Parenthood staff appearing to disregard reporting laws and assisting sex traffickers, several issues emerged on media. To identify the dominant issue addressed on each type of media and explores the relationship between issue and story balance as events unfolded. The next set of questions explores story balance (Hotlzhausen & Roberts, 2009) with main issue and news frame among media and by organization. Examining main issue addressed by month will profile any trends among media as the crisis matured.

The videos not only spurred a Federal funding crisis for Planned Parenthood, but also caused significant reputational damage. The apparent willingness of clinic staff to offer services to sex traffickers and failure to report statutory rape arguably was viewed as immoral and illegal conduct. Benoit's (1997) image restoration theory identified several dominant strategies organizations may employ to restore damage to its image. To identify the strategies that appeared on social media and controlled online media the following research questions is advanced:

RQ3: Is there a difference in the image restoration strategies of Planned Parenthood and Live Action, and among social media and controlled online media?

RQ3a: Is there a relationship in image restoration strategies that appeared among media?

RQ3b: Is there a relationship in image restoration strategies represented by organizations?

Contingency theory (Cancel et al., 1997) claimed the organizational stances, ranging from pure accommodation to pure advocacy, are influenced by internal and external factors. Strategic conflict management unfolds over time, requiring

organizations to shift accordingly. Lumpkins et al. (2010) suggested generating conflict using specific factors in news releases could lead to favorable media coverage, when applied to health advocacy. To understand the factors influencing Planned Parenthood and Live Action, as well as the relationship between factors and traditional news coverage, the following questions are advanced:

RQ4: How did Planned Parenthood and Live Action change their stances along the continuum ranging from pure advocacy to pure accommodation?

RQ5: Which contingent factors influenced the stances of Planned Parenthood and Live Action?

CHAPTER V

METHODOLOGY

To answer the research questions, content analysis will be performed on the social media pages and digital newsroom content of Planned Parenthood and Live Action, as well as print news media coverage. Babbie (2010) explained a content analysis as "the study of recorded human communications" (p. 333), suited for analysis of newspapers, Webpages, Internet postings, letters and other similar forms of communication. Content analysis also allows the study of events that occur over time, making it an appropriate method to examine the Planned Parenthood crisis situation as it unfolded. Social media pages included official Facebook and Twitter account pages, YouTube channels, and organization blogs. The controlled online media analyzed are the news releases and official statements posted by each organization on respective digital newsrooms. Print news articles represent traditional media coverage.

Sampling Frame and Method

The conflict was ongoing at the time of this study; therefore, it was impossible to example the complete crisis cycle. The conflict can be viewed as two battles: the debate over Federal funding of Planned Parenthood and the state-level funding debate, which followed soon after the Federal resolution. The focus of this study involves the Federal funding crisis situation. Exploring the onset of the Federal funding crisis and its evolution will provide a thorough inquiry into the initial response and efforts to control the damage and manage the crisis at the onset, while profiling any trends as they emerge.

The sampling frame began the day Live Action released the videos on YouTube February 1, 2011 through April 9, 2011, the day President Obama signed the budget

agreement continuing Federal funding of Planned Parenthood. This particular conflict has strong ideological and emotional undertones, further emphasizing the importance and delicacy of the beginning stages of strategic conflict management. While the conflict continues, the sampling frame reflects the actions that sparked the debate over funding Planned Parenthood and the government budget agreement announced on April 9, 2011.

The official websites of Planned Parenthood and Live Action served as the source to link to the organization's official social networking accounts on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, as well as respective blogs. This measure ensured that only the official social media accounts of the organizations were included in analysis. The news releases and official statements for this study were drawn from the digital newsrooms on Planned Parenthood's official Website (*Planned Parenthood*, 2011) and Live Action's official Website (*Live Action*, 2011). Both organizations publish news releases and official statements for journalists, bloggers and the public in a central location. All artifacts posted during the sampling frame were included in analysis. Traditional news artifacts were obtained through the LexisNexis search engine because of its reputable status for providing current and extensive searches; however, editorials, commentaries, letters to the editor, and articles from religious-based media outlets were omitted from analysis. The sample was drawn using keyword searches for "Planned Parenthood" and "Live Action."

The following terms were operationalized as the unit of analysis in this study:

Social Media: Organizational messages on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube channels and Blogs by Planned Parenthood and Live Action.

Controlled Online Media: Online news releases and official statements released

by Planned Parenthood and Live Action.

Traditional News Media: Print news stories.

<div align="center">Units of Analysis</div>

Because the study attempts to capture trends between three types of media, multiple units of analysis exist. Social media units include Facebook posts, Twitter tweets, YouTube videos and blog posts released during the selected sampling frame. Although social media posts by organizations can be considered public relations content, this study refers to public relations content, specifically news releases and official statements, as controlled online media. Each print news article served as one unit of analysis representing traditional media. Table 2 describes the units of analysis on social media and controlled online media. Controlled online media units of analysis include news releases and official statements drawn from the digital newsrooms of Planned Parenthood and Live Action. Each artifact is one unit of analysis. Table 3 illustrates traditional media units of analysis by newspaper size. For example, *USA Today* and *The Washington Post* are regarded as national newspapers, while regional newspapers include papers specific to certain areas, such as *The Salt Lake Times* and the *Quad City Times*. A combined total of 2663 units of analysis exist for social media, controlled online media and traditional media.

Table 2

Units of Analysis on Social Media and Controlled Online Media

Units	PPH	LA
Facebook Posts	163	371
Twitter Tweets	619	788
YouTube Videos	41	15
Blog Posts	257	114
Controlled Media	34	7
Total	1114	1295

Note: PPH=Planned Parenthood, LA=Live Action

Table 3

Unit of Analysis on Traditional Media

Traditional Media	Units
National Newspapers	43
Regional Newspapers	211
Total	254

The four social media platforms analyzed accounted for 89.9% (*n*=2368) of the

sample. Traditional media accounted for 9.6% (*n*=254) of the sample, while 16.9%

(*n*=43) were identified as national newspapers and 83.1% (*n*=211) were regional

newspapers. The majority of stories (45.3%, *n*=115) contained 501 words or more,

followed by 40.9% (*n*=104) ranging from 251-500 words. Few stories (13.8%, *n*=36)

contained less than 250 words. Controlled online media accounted for 1.5% (*n*=41), with

56.1% (*n*=23) identified as news releases and 43.9% (*n*=18) were official statements.

Live Action's messages accounted for 53.8% (*n*=1295) of the sample, while Planned

Parenthood's accounted for 46.2% (*n*=1114). In February, when the videos were released,

38.8% (*n*=1034) of sampled messages were disseminated, followed by a spike in March

(42.7%, *n*=1295), and 18.5% (*n*=492) during April, though it should be noted that only 9

days during April were sampled.

<div align="center">Pretest and Reliability</div>

A pretest was conducted to identify areas of disagreement and issues related to the

coding process and categories. This included a meeting to correct coding schemes,

operationalize terms and finalize coding schemes. Ten percent of each units of analysis

were coded and intercoder reliability was calculated using Holsti's (1969) coefficient of

reliability formula for an overall reliability of 94% between the two coders.

<div align="center">Coding Categories</div>

Each individual Facebook post, Twitter tweet, YouTube video, and blog entry

was coded and served as one unit of analysis representing social media. Each press

release and official statements represented controlled online media, and each news story

represented one unit of traditional media.

To answer the first set of research questions, the following sets of coding

categories are presented. To assess framing on social media, controlled online media and

traditional media, the five prominent message frames identified by Semetko and

Valkenburg (2000, as cited in An & Gower, 2009), human-interest, conflict, morality, economic or attribution of responsibility were identified in each unit. The dominant issue addressed in each unit was identified as Live Action attacks, government funding debate, policy position, activism and mobilization, donations, women's health, patient stories, organization support, and pro-life or pro-choice views. Categories were created after reviewing units prior to coding to identify the dominant issues pertaining to the situation. The presence of emotions in each unit was identified as positive, negative or neutral. The main subject of attack in each unit was identified as an individual(s), policy or organization. An individual refers to an organization leader, spokesperson, Congressperson, etc. Policy refers organization or government policies, such as abortion rights, women's health care and funding sources. The organization references an entity, such as Planned Parenthood, Live Action, an individual state and U.S. government offices.

To answer the second set of research questions, story balance was identified as positive, negative or neutral. To identify the sources of information used on social media, controlled online media an traditional media, the dominant source quoted in each unit of analysis was identified as a Planned Parenthood official, Live Action official, non-official source from social media, general public, government official, Planned Parenthood activist and Live Action activist or other. The categories for message frames and main issue addressed were also used.

To answer the third research of questions, the following sets of coding categories are presented. Because an organization can employ multiple image restoration strategies at once, coders determined the dominant strategy (Benoit, 1997) present in each unit of

analysis, which include denial, evasion of responsibility, reducing offensiveness of event, corrective action and mortification, similar to previous studies (Holtzhausen et al., 2009; Muralidharan et al., 2011) which identified strategies in press releases, print news stories and on social media. Story balance, noted previously, was used to explore the relationship between image restoration strategy and balance. The date of each unit was also identified to observe the salience of the issue in the various types of media analyzed as the crisis unfolded.

To answer research questions four and five, the following sets of coding categories are presented. Each unit of analysis was coded along a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from very advocating to very accommodating (Shin & Cameron, 2004). The factors influencing organizational stances, which include: external threats, industry environment, political/social environment, external public, issue under question, organization characteristics, PR department characteristics, management characteristics, internal threats, individual characteristics, and relationship characteristics (Cancel et al., 1997) was identified for each unit of analysis. The dates of units were collected to profile movement along the continuum as events unfolded.

CHAPTER VI

RESULTS

The release of the Live Action videos damaged Planned Parenthood's image and was arguably a catalyst to the organization's Federal funding crisis. The first set of research questions examined message frames to ascertain the angles in which messages were presented by organizations and by media.

RQ1: Is there a difference in the way the crisis was framed on social media, controlled online media and traditional media?

RQ1a: Is there a difference in message frame used by Planned Parenthood and Live Action and addressed among social media, controlled online media and traditional media?

Chi-square testing revealed a significant association between message frame used and media type ($\chi 2 = 167.67$, $df =8$, $p < .01$). Controlled media were more likely to use the attribution of responsibility frame (39%, $n=16$), whereas social media and traditional media were least likely to use it (8.5%, $n=201$; 5.5%, $n=14$). The news releases and statements most often contained messages attributing responsibility of the situation to an individual or group. For example, in a February 9, 2011 statement, Planned Parenthood stated, "Congress should be doing everything it can to ensure that women have access to preventive care, not eliminating the very program that provides it." The excerpt attributes responsibility to Congress by claiming it is at fault for halting funding that provides healthcare to women. Social media and traditional media most often relied on a conflict frame (33.6%, $n=796$; 38.2%, $n=97$). For example, Live Action postings often directly targeted Planned Parenthood and its responses, chronicling the conflict between the

organizations. Planned Parenthood used conflict frames aimed at government and at "extremist" groups; for example, the organization tweeted, "LA Gov. signed a bill yesterday forcing women to be told of alternatives before an abortion & compared women to criminals." The tweet also contained a link to a full article describing the conflict between it and the Federal government over funding and women's health. Controlled media was least likely to employ a human-interest frame (2.4%, n=1). See Table 4 for full comparison.

Table 4

News Frame by Media Type

	Human-Interest	Conflict	Morality	Economic	AR
Social	450 (19%)	796 (33.6%)	656 (27.7%)	265 (11.2%)	201 (8.5%)
Traditional	14 (5.5%)	97 (38.2%)	50 (19.7%)	79 (31.1%)	14 (5.5%)
Controlled	1 (2.4%)	6 (14.6%)	7 (17.1%)	11 (26.8%)	16 (39%)

Note: AR=Attribution of Responsibility

A significant association was also revealed between news frame and organization (χ2=357.95, *df*=4, *p* < .01). Planned Parenthood was most likely to use a human-interest frame (28.5%, *n*=317), while Live Action was most likely to use a conflict frame (43.9%, *n*=569). Both Planned Parenthood and Live Action followed by employing morality frames (21.6%, *n*=317; 32.6%, *n*=422). Planned Parenthood relied more on attribution of responsibility frames (16.5%, *n*=184), while Live Action rarely used it (2.5%, *n*=33).

Table 5

News Frame by Organization

	Human-Interest	Conflict	Morality	Economic	AR
PPH	317 (28.5%)	233 (20.9%)	241 (21.6%)	139 (12.5%)	184 (16.5%)
LA	134 (10.3%)	569 (43.9%)	422 (32.6%)	137 (10.6%)	33 (2.5%)

Note: PPH=Planned Parenthood, LA=Live Action, AR= Attribution of Responsibility

RQ1b: Is there a difference in main issue addressed by Planned Parenthood and

Live Action framed among social media, controlled online media and traditional

media?

There was not a significant association between main issue addressed and media,

though several similarities and differences were revealed. Social media, traditional

media and controlled media each dominantly addressed the Federal funding debate over

Planned Parenthood (29.1%, *n*=688; 75.2%, *n*=191; 53.7%, *n*=22), though it appears the

amount of time traditional media devoted to the funding issue was much more than other

forms of media.

Table 6

Main Issue by Media Type

	Videos	Funding	Stance	Activism	Donation	Health	Patients	Abortion	Other
Social	450	688	205	681	27	193	25	73	25
	(19%)	(29.1%)	(8.7%)	(28.8%)	(1.1%)	(8.2%)	(1.1%)	(2.1%)	(1.1%)
Traditional	24	191	2	26	0	10	0	1	1
	(9.4%)	(75.2%)	(.8%)	(9.8%)	(0%)	(3.9%)	(0%)	(.4%)	(.4%)
Controlled	9	22	3	5	0	1	0	0	1
	(22%)	(53.7%)	(7.3%)	(12.2%)	(0%)	(2.4%)	(0%)	(0%)	(2.4%)

A significant association was found between main issue addressed and organization ($\chi2=756.42$, *df*=8, *p* < .01). Live Action was more likely to focus on undercover video footage (30.9%, *n*=400), while Planned Parenthood rarely addressed the issue (5.3%, *n*=59). Planned Parenthood dominantly addressed activism and mobilization (47.3%, *n*=527), while Live Action was much less likely (12.3%, *n*=159). Similarly, Planned Parenthood was more likely to address women's health issues (13.6%, *n*=152) than Live Action (3.2%, *n*=42). Both Planned Parenthood and Live Action regularly addressed the Federal funding debate over Planned Parenthood (26.5%, *n*=295; 32.1%, *n*=415). Live Action was much more likely (19.3%, *n*=76) than Planned Parenthood (2.9%, *n*=22) to devote messages to its position on abortion.

Table 7

Main Issue by Media Type

	Videos	Funding	Stance	Activism	Donation	Health	Patients	Abortion	Other
Planned Parenthood	59 (5.3%)	295 (26.5%)	31 (2.8%)	527 (47.3%)	27 (2.4%)	152 (13.6%)	21 (1.9%)	1 (.1%)	1 (.1%)
Live Action	400 (30.9%)	415 (32.1%)	6 (1.1%)	177 (13.7%)	0 (0%)	42 (3.2%)	4 (.3%)	72 (5.6%)	25 (1.9%)

During the first month of the crisis, the dominant issue addressed was the Live Action videos (35%, *n*=362), followed closely by the funding debate (30.3%, *n*=313), and activism and mobilization (20%, *n*=207). Minimal time was given to policy position (7.7%, *n*=80), women's health (5%, *n*=52), donation requests (.7%, n=7), patient stories (.3%, *n*=0) and pro-life or pro-choice position (.3%, *n*=0). In March, as the funding debate was in full swing, the majority of artifacts were centered on the funding debate (36.7%, *n*=418) and activism and mobilization (32.3%, *n*=368). There was a sharp decrease in artifacts addressing the Live Action videos (5.1%, *n*=58) and an increase in those addressing women's health (11.7%, *n*=133) and policy positions (8.5%, *n*=97). As seen in the first month, little attention was given to patient stories (.7%, *n*=8), donation requests (.2%, *n*=2) and pro-life or pro-choice arguments (6.7%, *n*=33). The final month of analysis, though only nine days transpired before the Federal budget agreement was reached, similarly devoted artifacts to the funding debate (34.8%, *n*=171) and activism and mobilization (27.6%, *n*=136). There was, however, a spike in discussion regarding the Live Action videos (12.8%, *n*=63) and in the pro-life or pro-choice argument (6.7%, *n*=33), and a steady percentage addressed policy position (6.7%, *n*=33) and donation

requests (3.7%, *n*=18). There was also a noticeable drop in messages addressing women's

health (3.9%, *n*=19), while limited time was given to patient stories (2.8%, *n*=14).
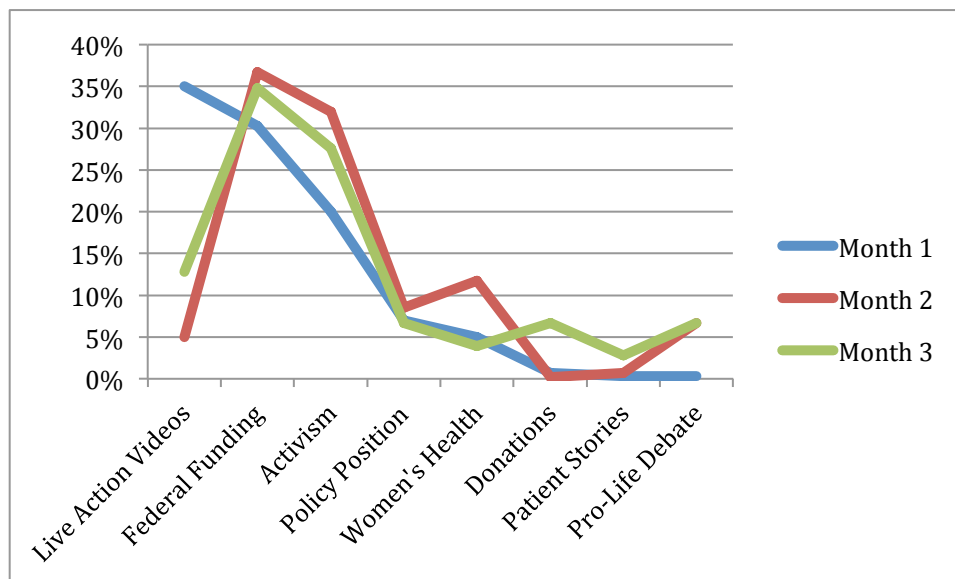

Figure 1. Main Issue Over Time

RQ1c: Is there a difference in type of emotions used by Planned Parenthood and

Live Action framed among social media, controlled online media and traditional

media?

A significant association between emotion and media was revealed ($\chi2$ = 457.8,

df =4, *p* < .01). Negative emotions were dominantly found across social media (59%,

n=1397), traditional media (55.9%, *n*=142), and on controlled media (78%, *n*=32).

Traditional media was more likely to present items in a neutral manner (37.8%, *n*=96)

than social media (3.7%, *n*=88), while controlled media never took a neutral approach.

A significant association was also found between emotion and organization ($\chi2$ =

441.03 *df* =2, *p* < .01). Planned Parenthood dominantly used positive emotions (58.5%,

n=648). In comparison, Live Action overwhelmingly used negative emotions (78.6%,

n=1016). Both Planned Parenthood (4.5%, *n*=50) and Live Action (3.3%, *n*=42) rarely remained neutral in messages.

RQ1d: Is there a difference in the main subject of attack by Planned Parenthood and Live Action, and framed among social media, controlled online media and social media by organization?

A significant association was found between subject of attack and media (χ2 = 15.89, *df*=4, *p* < .05). The dominant subject of attack on traditional media (52.2%, *n*=133) and controlled media (58.5%, *n*=24) was identified as policy, whereas social media messages were dominantly targeted at organizations (49.5%, *n*=1172). However, traditional media (42%, *n*=107) and controlled media (41.5%, *n*=17) did contain a significant amount of messages attacking organization. Social media (41.2%, *n*=997) also contained a significant amount of messages attacking policy. Controlled media did not contain messages attacking individuals, though social media (8.6%, *n*=199) and traditional media (5.1%, *n*=15) did have a few instances.

A significant association was also found between subject of attack and organization (χ2 = 573.18, *df*=2, *p* < .01). Planned Parenthood's messages were dominantly aimed at attacking policy (67.9%, *n*=756), while Live Action's were aimed directly at an organization (70.5%, *n*=913). This may be because Planned Parenthood shifted its strategic communication toward attacking the policy aimed at defunding the organization, while Live Action relentlessly attacked Planned Parenthood.

RQ2: Is there a relationship in sources of information and story balance?

There was a significant association between dominant source of information and story balance. Messages were balanced nearly half the time a government official was

identified as the dominant source of information (49.3%, n=113). Messages tended to be unbalanced when Planned Parenthood (55.3%, n=658) and Live Action (48.5%, n=617) officials were identified as the dominant source of information. Messaged were more positive when a Planned Parenthood official was the dominant source (33%, n=353), whereas messages were more negative when a Live Action official was the dominant source (33.2%, n=453).

RQ2a: Is there a relationship in sources of information among media?

A significant association was not found between source of information and media, though some differences were revealed. For example, Traditional media dominantly relied on government officials in over half its artifacts (54.7%, n=139), most likely as the crisis shifted focus from the video sting toward the Federal funding debate. Traditional media nearly equally used Planned Parenthood (7.9%, n=20) and Live Action (6.7%, n=17) activists as sources. Earlier findings revealed a more neutral use of emotion and framing by traditional media, which is indicative of its nearly balanced use of both organizations' activists as sources of information.

Table 8

Source of Information by Media Type

Source	Social	Traditional	Controlled
PPH Official	648 (27.4%)	24 (9.4%)	26 (63.4%)
LA Official	621 (26.3%)	2 (.8%)	1 (2.4%)
Nonofficial SM	1 (.0%)	1 (.4%)	0 (0%)
Public	4 (.2%)	1 (.4%)	0 (0%)
Government Official	307 (13%)	139 (54.7%)	5 (12.2%)
PPH Activist	361 (15.3%)	20 (7.9%)	3 (7.3%)
LA Activist	163 (6.9%)	17 (6.7%)	0 (0%)
News Media	145 (6.1%)	17 (6.7%)	2 (4.9%)
Other	114 (4.8%)	33 (13%)	4 (9.8%)

RQ2b: Is there a relationship in sources of information between organizations?

A significant association was found between source of information and organization ($\chi_2 = 1245.62$, *df* =8, *p* < .01). Nearly half of Planned Parenthood's messages contain information from a Planned Parenthood official (46.1%, *n*=514), while Live Action similarly relied on its officials (48.1%, *n*=623) as sources of information. Planned Parenthood closely relied on its activists and other supporters as sources (30.2%, *n*=336), while Live Action followed closely by relying on Planned Parenthood officials (12.6%, *n*=163), Live Action activists (12.6%, *n*=163), and government officials (13.7%, *n*=178). Interestingly, Live Action used Planned Parenthood officials in its messages, though it was most likely to counter arguments presented in its pursuit to defund the organization.

Table 9

Source of Information by Organization

Source	Planned Parenthood	Live Action
PPH Official	514 (46.3%)	160 (12.4%)
LA Official	3 (.3%)	619 (47.8%)
Nonofficial SM	1 (.1%)	0 (0%)
Public	0 (0%)	4 (.3%)
Government Official	154 (13.9%)	158 (12.2%)
PPH Activist	335 (30.2%)	29 (2.2%)
LA Activist	0 (0%)	163 (12.6%)
News Media	53 (4.8%)	94 (7.3%)
Other	50 (4.6%)	68 (5.3%)

RQ2c: Is there a relationship in story balance among media?

A significant association between story balance and media type was found ($\chi2$=757.40, *df*=4, *p* < .01). Traditional media dominantly contained balanced stories (*54.5%*, *n*=139), while social media messages (54.1%, *n*=1280) and controlled media messages (56.1%, *n*=23) were dominantly negative in tone, though both followed closely with positive toned messages (42.1%, *n*=998; 43.9%, *n*=18), which illustrates nearly all messages were unbalanced. Traditional media appeared to remain balanced over half the time, though it regularly presented unbalanced stories (45.5%, *n*=116).

No significant association was found in the manner traditional media presented stories over time, though a theme emerged. During the first month following the release of the videos, 53.8% (*n*=43) of traditional news stories were balanced; however, 46.3% were unbalanced and nearly split equally between a positive skew (21.3%, *n*=17) and

negative skew (25%, *n*=20). Similarly, during the second month the majority of stories were balanced (54%, *n*=67), though more were negatively skewed (28.2%, *n*=35) than positively skewed (17.7%, *n*=22). In the final month of analysis, the largest majority of stories were balanced (56.9%, *n*=29), while more were positively skewed (27.5%, *n*=14) than negatively skewed (15.7%, *n*=8).

RQ2d: Is there a relationship between story balance and news frames?

A significant association was found between story balance and news frame ($\chi 2$=685.09, *df*=8, *p* < .01). The attribution of responsibility frame (17.5%, *n*=187) and human-interest frame (32%, *n*=342) were most likely to be positive in tone, while the morality frame was nearly split between positive (26.1%, *n*=279) and negative (29.4%, *n*=402) tones. Artifacts using a conflict frame were dominantly negative in tone (46.9%, *n*=640). Artifacts with an economic frame were the only items dominantly presented as balanced (36.7%, *n*=84). See Table 10 for full comparison.

Table 10

Story Balance and News Frame

Frame	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Human-Interest	342 (32%)	110 (8.1%)	12 (5.2%)
Conflict	165 (15.4%)	640 (46.9%)	95 (41.5%
Morality	279 (26.1%)	402 (29.4%)	32 (14%)
Economic	96 (9%)	176 (12.9%)	84 (36.7%)
AR	187 (17.5%)	38 (2.8%)	6 (2.6%)

Note: AR= Attribution of Responsibility

RQ2e: Is there a relationship between story balance and main issue?

There was a significant association found between story balance and main issue addressed (χ^2=726.92, df =16, p < .01). Messages addressing activism and mobilization were dominantly positive (51.4%, n=549), while over half of the messages addressing the Planned Parenthood funding debate were balanced (60.7%, n=139). Messages addressing the Live Action videos were dominantly negative in tone (26.9%, n=368). The issue of abortion was dominantly portrayed as either negative (3.7%, n=51) or balanced (3.5%, n=8). Patient stories (2.2%, n=23) and solicitations for donations (1.4%, n=15) were dominantly positive in tone. See Table 11 for full comparison.

Table 11

Story Balance by Main Issue

Issue	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Live Action Attacks	82 (7.7%)	368 (26.9%)	33 (14.4%)
PPH Funding	232 (21.7%)	531 (38.9%)	139 (60.7%
Policy Position	56 (5.2%)	147 (10.8%)	7 (3.1%)
Activism/Mobilization	549 (51.4%)	137 (10%)	25 (10.9%)
Donations	15 (1.4%)	11 (.8%)	1 (.4%)
Women's Health	93 (8.7%)	96 (7%)	15 (6.6%)
Patient Stories	23 (2.2%)	2 (.1%)	0 (0%)
Pro-Life/Pro-Choice	15 (1.4%)	51 (3.7%)	8 (3.5%)
Other	3 (.3%)	23 (1.7%)	1 (.4%)

RQ3: Is there a difference in the image restoration strategies of Planned Parenthood and Live Action, and among social media and controlled online media?

RQ3a: Is there a relationship in image restoration strategies that appeared among media?

There was a significant association between image restoration and social media and controlled media (χ2=22.79, *df*=3, *p* < .01), though it should be noted that the mortification strategy was removed from analysis, as only 1 item was identified. The majority of social media messages were aimed at reducing offensiveness (55.3%, *n*=1309), followed by denial (39.8%, *n*=943), evasion of responsibility (4.5%, *n*=107), and corrective action (.4%, *n*=9). Controlled media messages were aimed at denying actions (68.3%, *n*=28), followed by reducing offensiveness (19.5%, *n*=8) and evasion of responsibility (12.2%, *n*=5). Controlled media was not used to engage in corrective action.

RQ3b: Is there a relationship in image restoration strategies represented by organizations?

A significant association was also found between image restoration strategy and organization. Planned Parenthood dominantly engaged in reducing the offensiveness of acts (67.4%, *n*=751) and denying wrongdoing (30.9%, *n*=344), and rarely engaged in evasion of responsibility (1.2%, *n*=13) and corrective action (.5%, *n*=6). Live Action dominantly engaged in denial (48.4%, *n*=627), followed by reducing offensiveness (43.7%, *n*=566) and evading responsibility (7.6%, *n*=99). Similar to Planned Parenthood, Live Action rarely engaged in corrective action (.2%, *n*=3).

RQ4: How did Planned Parenthood and Live Action change their stances along the continuum ranging from pure advocacy to pure accommodation?

A significant association was found between organization stance along the advocacy-accommodation continuum and organization (χ2=45.74, *df*=2, *p* < .01). The majority of the time Planned Parenthood (82.8%, *n*=922) and Live Action (91%, *n*=1179)

were very advocating, though Planned Parenthood was more moderately advocating

issues (17.1%, *n*=190) than Live Action (8.3%, *n*=107). Planned Parenthood (.2%, *n*=2)

and Live Action (.7%, *n*=9) were rarely neutral and neither was identified as

accommodative during the sampling frame.

There was not a significant association found between organization stances over

time, though results support the previous finding that both organizations were very

advocating over the course of the sampling frame. In February the organizations nearly

always very advocating (90.4%, *n*=862), and only slightly declined in March (85.4%,

n=866) and April (84.6%, *n*=373).

RQ5: Which contingent factors influenced the stances of Planned Parenthood and

Live Action?

A significant association was found between contingent factors and organization

(χ2=517.41, *df*=6, *p* < .01). External threats appeared to dominantly influence Planned

Parenthood's stances (48.4%, *n*=539), though the same threats somewhat influenced Live

Action (17.6%, *n*=228). The external publics appeared to dominantly influence Live

Action's stances (51.4%, *n*=666), while moderately influencing Planned Parenthood

(13.1%, *n*=146). The political and social environment influenced both Planned

Parenthood (36.4%, *n*=406) and Live Action (23.2%, *n*=301).

CHAPTER VII

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This study has examined crisis response strategies employed on different media during a cycle of strategic conflict management and how social media has the potential to influence traditional media coverage. It also aimed to provide a case example illustrating how a crisis can develop and be managed through different forms of media effectively. It illustrates theory in practice by an organization facing a crisis and engaged in a conflict.

The first set of research questions examined the difference in framing among media and by organizations. Planned Parenthood dominantly relied on framing stories with a human-interest angle. Shifting the focus on the direct impact defunding would have allowed Planned Parenthood to highlight the positive health services it offers to uninsured and underinsured girls, women and men. This technique was an approach to bolster its positive attributes, while shifting attention from the damaging content on the undercover videos. The relentless nature of the Live Action attack was illustrated by its dominant use of conflict frames in messages. The organization's approach attempted to keep the focus on the undercover video content and remind publics of the wrongdoings at Planned Parenthood clinics. Traditional media's dominant use of conflict framing illustrates its focus on parties engaged in conflict. This supports Muralidharan et al. (2011) finding that traditional media tend to rely on conflict, possibly in an effort to garner audience attention. The Planned Parenthood crisis was twofold; the organization managed a funding crisis that threatened its ability to function, while dealing with damage caused to its image. Strategically focusing on the human impact defunding would

cause allowed the organization to simultaneously engage in image restoration while managing the funding crisis.

Planned Parenthood dominantly used its social media platforms to encourage activism and mobilization, which supports previous findings that nonprofits tend to use social media for such use (Muralidharan et al., 2011), though the nonprofit, Live Action, dominantly used its social media platforms to call attention to the undercover videos. Live Action used social media to address a different issue; it ultimately stirred up controversy in attempt to remind publics about the video content, which was also presented as the reason to defund Planned Parenthood. Arguably, this could be considered a method to spur activism and mobilization among its supporters. Planned Parenthood rarely addressed the Live Action videos, thereby supporting the previous finding that it attempted to downplay the videos and shift the focus toward the impact defunding would have among individuals. The dominant subject of attack is of note, as traditional media most often focused on policies, rather than the organization or individuals, which may have been beneficial to Planned Parenthood in its effort to restore its damaged image as related to the videos. This supports Holtzhausen and Roberts (2009) finding that media tend to address a highly sensitive crisis at the policy level, rather than focusing on the wrongdoings of an organization or its representatives. The case examined by Holtzhausen and Roberts involved similar behavior and illegal sexual interactions. It seems unlikely that traditional media would avoid addressing sensitive issues beyond the policy level, though it may suggest the public relations efforts of Planned Parenthood were effective in influencing coverage.

The use of emotions across media was present; notably, the dominant emotion across each media type was negative. Previous findings indicate traditional media dominantly relied on conflict frames, which may have resulted in a high use of negative emotions. As An and Gower (2009) noted, news frames containing emotion have the potential to be perceived as more urgent than those without emotion; though Iyengar (1991) explained when used to describe news, frames could also illicit emotions among publics. The use of negative emotions and conflict frames to draw interest and transfer salience, positioning the funding crisis as urgent. The use of negative emotions on social media may be attributed to the more conversational and personal nature of social media platforms. A powerful characteristic of social media is its ability to encourage a two-way flow of communication, thus using powerful emotions to draw users to engage in conversation may offer some explanation of its use of negative emotions. Planned Parenthood dominantly used positive emotions in messages, which may be attributed it to its attempt to motivate activism and mobilization. Live Action, however, dominantly used negative emotions in message, perhaps because it attempted to keep focus on the negative acts of Planned Parenthood. Ultimately, framing analysis appears to indicate Planned Parenthood successfully secured balanced media coverage, while shifting the focus toward human impact, rather than the video sting, which also managed to assist in its image restoration efforts.

The second set of research questions examined story balance with sources of information, message frames, and main issues. Traditional media dominantly used government officials in its stories, which relates to the finding that the majority of traditional media artifacts focused on policies and supports previous research that

journalists rely more on official sources during crises (Cornfield et al., 2005; Holtzhausen & Roberts, 2009; Liu, 2010), though Wigley and Fontenot (2010) found journalists to rely more on non-official sources and citizen-generated content during the first two days of a high profile crisis. The availability of non-official sources and citizen-generated content has dramatically increased recently, and while the media dominantly used official sources in this case, there may be a new shift toward obtaining sources of information from new environments. At the least, there is a comingling of official and non-official sources happening in media coverage. This is also indicative of the crisis evolution as it matured into a more focused Federal funding debate, which would logically suggest government input was required. Traditional media used Planned Parenthood and Live Action activists nearly equally, as it tends to strike an unbiased approach to storytelling and supports the previous finding that traditional media was dominantly balanced. As expected, Planned Parenthood and Live Action dominantly relied on respective organization officials. It should be noted that Live Action did use Planned Parenthood officials as sources of information throughout the conflict. Doing so provided Live Action with an opportunity to directly counter the specific arguments made by Planned Parenthood officials. Live Action was able to use a full or partial statement and question the speaker's intent, while also using outside examples or previous statements made by Planned Parenthood to support its counter claim. Live Action had to use this tactic with caution to appear forthright and avoid taking sources out of context in order to appear credible. Traditional media dominantly contained balanced stories, while social media and controlled media were dominantly unbalanced, thus supporting previous findings. It should be noted that social media could also be considered controlled media because both

contain goal-oriented messages disseminated by an organization, which further explains why messages on each were unbalanced. In addition, social media and controlled media do not adhere to the same journalistic standards as traditional media and are operated by respective organizations, which is likely the reason messages were skewed. Though traditional media dominantly presented balanced stories, a significant amount was identified as unbalanced, thereby contradicting the journalistic aim to consistently present unbiased storytelling.

During the first two months of analysis over half the time traditional news stories were balanced. The remainder of the first month, stories were nearly equally unbalanced. This may illustrate the media's attempt to strike a balance as it uncovered the entire story. The second month revealed a shift from a split between positive and negative balance to a more negative presentation. As the crisis matured and focus shifted toward defunding Planned Parenthood, media coverage of rallies and political debates over funding may explain the negative skew, though it is interesting that despite the sensitive nature of the videos, a dominantly balanced approach was delivered when media initially became aware of the content.

During the first month, the majority of the messages addressed the Live Action videos and the funding crisis. This was expected given the controversial nature of the videos, however, by the second month when attention focused on funding, a sharp and significant decrease in messages dominantly involving the videos was observed. More messages encouraged activism and mobilization because the deadline for a funding decision was rapidly approaching. Planned Parenthood tried to increase its value as a reason to keep Federal funding, and it was exhibited by an increase in messages

addressing women's health as the decision deadline loomed. Live Action used the videos as a reason to defund Planned Parenthood, thus an increase in messages addressing the videos was observed during the final month of analysis. Planned Parenthood could have benefited more if it had placed greater emphasized its value and commitment to women's health throughout the cycle. Live Action, on the other hand, failed to keep attention on the damaging videos, though it did continue to pursue Planned Parenthood aggressively.

As expected, the majority of messages addressing activism and mobilization, patient stories, and solicitations for donation were skewed positively. Organizations encouraging activism, donations or sharing patient stories are likely use upbeat messages to generate support. Patient stories were likely considered a human-interest frame, supporting the earlier finding that the majority of artifacts employing the human-interest frame were also positive in tone. Over half of the messages addressing the defunding issue were balanced, while the majority of messages addressing the Live Action videos were negative. The damaging images on the videos arguably elicited strong emotions, and a mere description might contain negative terms.

Whether an organization effectively managed a crisis has traditionally been determined by the amount of negative news coverage received (Liu, 2010; Coombs, 2007), perhaps this is because publics and stakeholders obtain information from news media. The gauge put forth by Liu and Coombs suggests Planned Parenthood was moderately effective in managing its crisis, as reflected by dominantly balanced news coverage, though a large amount of coverage was deemed positive or negative.

The third set of research questions explored the image restoration strategies by the two organizations engaged in conflict, as well as the relationship between image

restoration strategy and balance. The overwhelming majority of strategies identified in

Planned Parenthood artifacts were reducing offensiveness and denying wrongdoing. The

sensitive nature of the videos made it necessary for the organization to devote extensive

messages aimed at reducing the offensiveness of the acts or to outright deny misdeeds.

Live Action regularly denied any wrongdoing related to the video sting and regularly

shifted the blame toward Planned Parenthood, thereby reducing the offensiveness of its

involvement, a tactic beneficial in image restoration according to Benoit (1997). The

deceptive tactics used by Live Action to obtain the videos were questioned, as well as the

possibility of omission of parts and editing of the videos. Live Action maintained that the

videos were not edited to appear damning, rather, the videos spoke to the illegal acts

conducted at Planned Parenthood clinics, which superseded the method used to gain

access to clinics. The majority of social media messages were aimed at reducing

offensiveness, while controlled media artifacts were overwhelmingly more likely aimed

at denial. The organizations appear to have used social media to reduce offensiveness,

perhaps because of its more personal nature. Social media allowed each organization to

connect with interested publics and perhaps offer explanations or highlight its positive

attributes. Reinforcing value raises the standard for which an organization should be

evaluated by from a public perspective and was the logical course of action in order to

create a clear societal need and organizational value. The organization almost

immediately engaged with publics on social media following the release of the videos,

and as Brody (1991) stated, early crisis responses can minimize or remove further

damage. Though Planned Parenthood eventually dealt with a Federal funding crisis, it

managed to overcome it and arguably minimized additional damage to its image. While

recent survey research (Taylor, 2010) found that organizations have not fully

incorporated social media into crisis communication, it does appear Planned Parenthood

and Live Action significantly incorporated social media, some platforms more than

others, during the conflict. For example, both placed greater reliance on Twitter and

Facebook, than YouTube. Live Action's blog contained much more thorough posts that

incorporated a variety of multimedia elements, all of which were aimed at the attack on

Planned Parenthood and its mission to end abortion. Planned Parenthood's blog posts

were brief and mostly dedicated to sharing photos and brief updates from stops along its

bus tour. The blogs of respective organizations were incorporated as a means to

communicate and connect with supporters, which is inline with the advice of Wigley and

Zhang (2011) that argues, "More crisis managers should think about social media as a

way to develop relationships with stakeholders, by using dialogue, etc. and think of this

as a way to prepare for a crisis" (p. 10). Live Action's blog was in full swing prior to the

video release, however, Planned Parenthood's blog only launched after the crisis began

and posts ended when the Federal funding agreement was reached. Unfortunately,

Planned Parenthood has not continued to grow its audience on the blog and foster

relationships with stakeholders as a means of preparing for continued conflicts involving

Live Action or with upcoming Federal budget debates. The short-lived blogging effort

had the potential as an avenue to generate support, showcase value, and prepare for

potential conflicts and crises.

Controlled media appeared to be reserved as an outlet to deny wrongdoing to the

press and may explain the favorable, balanced coverage. Though the use of strategies by

each organization was intensive, ultimately the balanced stories in traditional media suggest Planned Parenthood's were more effective in securing less negative coverage.

The fourth research question explored organization movement along the advocacy-accommodation continuum to understand the intensity and stances of Planned Parenthood and Live Action as the engaged in conflict. It is revealing to note that neither organization was identified as being accommodative during the sampling frame. Both organizations overwhelmingly took very advocating stances, though Planned Parenthood did moderately advocate its stance more than Live Action. It appears both organizations were committed to aggressively advocating respective stances throughout the conflict. Planned Parenthood did not spend a significant amount of time directly addressing Live Action; in fact, it often referred to it as an extremist anti-abortion group, rather than by name. Soon after the release of the videos, the organization focused efforts on the funding crisis. Live Action attempted to use the videos as a reason to defund Planned Parenthood by strongly advocating its position. However, Planned Parenthood was able to shift focus away from the videos by rarely acknowledging Live Action, instead it strongly advocated its services and regularly called attention to the impact defunding would have on those who need its services most.

The fifth research question explored the contingent factors that were likely to influence the stances of each organization. External threats, such as fear of legal action and government regulation dominantly influenced Planned Parenthood stances. Initially, Planned Parenthood had to be concerned with the fallout from the videos since they appeared to reveal illegal activities. The amount of political and social support for the organization was also a dominant factor influencing the approach it took as it

strategically navigated the crisis. As the crisis matured, the shift toward the funding debate became the focal point, thus supporting the finding that the amount of political and social support was an influential factor. External publics, such as the amount of advocacy the organization practiced, the past efforts of its members to defund Planned Parenthood, and the degree of source credibility were identified as the dominant factor influencing Live Action's stances. Live Action could not appear as a radical organization in order to remain a credible source of information. It was faced with the challenge of assuring publics that the videos were not altered and position itself as a conservative, non-extremist group. As with Planned Parenthood, Live Action was also significantly influenced by the social and political environment. The uncertainty surrounding the political climate and activism by both organizations had to be considered in its strategic approach to advocating its mission.

Planned Parenthood was influenced by external factors, such as fear of litigation, government intervention and regulation, which supports Holtzhausen and Robert's (2009) argument that "external issues to the entity, such as legal or regulatory constrains, affect the entity, it will likely use less accommodative strategies," (p. 171). The sensitive subject matter and complex nature of the funding crisis illustrated the need for a more fluid, organic approach to public relations theory in order to adequately predict the outcomes of crisis situations, as supported by contingency theory (Cameron et al., 2008). The results of this study illustrate that an accommodative approach is not always an appropriate strategy. Strong advocacy can be successful in securing balanced media coverage, thus supporting the it depends characteristic of contingency theory.

In conclusion, though Planned Parenthood opted to take a strongly advocating position and engage in more defensive image restoration, it ultimately was successful in securing dominantly balanced media coverage among sampled media artifacts. The organization did not necessarily take responsibility for its actions; rather it strategically aimed position messages on the positive services it provides to individuals who need it most. Planned Parenthood's approach contradicted research that suggests organizations at fault will be more influential by accepting fault and apologizing (Benoit, 1997; Coombs, 2006). This supports the contention of contingency theory, which argues that situational and organizational factors influence an organization's stance (Cancel et al., 1997). Instead, bolstering allowed the organization to position itself as one committed to the health of women, girls and men, and shifted attention away from the videos.

Planned Parenthood will undoubtedly have to continue to work toward repairing its image, and at the core of the restoration process is the goal to present organizational value to society as the next round of Federal budget debate begins. Recently in February of 2012, the Susan G. Komen foundation removed grant funding to Planned Parenthood, a decision based on the investigation linked to this study. However, three days after the news broke, the organization reinstated the grant and stated Planned Parenthood would be eligible to apply for future grants. Many outlets argued Komen succumbed to intense scrutiny on social media, and while the cause may not be certain, it does speak to the influence external publics, including social media users, can have on organizational decisions. Arguably, the situation with Komen may have actually helped Planned Parenthood in repairing its status as a reputable healthcare provider and highlighting its value to society.

Practitioners must identify, interpret, and respond to threats, and social media and the Internet have increased its importance of as a function of public relations. As social media and controlled online media become a more viable resource for practitioners, understanding the interplay with traditional media is important. The findings offer practical and theoretical implications for public relations by illustrating that the core practices of public relations have not changed as a result of social media and the Internet; rather, social media and the Internet have placed greater importance on the core practices of public relations. For example, issues management in online environments allows practitioners an opportunity to address concerns before significant damage can be done. It is not necessarily the Internet advancements or the emergence of social media that has impacted the basic functions of practitioners; instead, it is the interplay of advancements that are more significant to the practice.

There are some limitations to this study; for example, the sample size of traditional media was relatively small in comparison to social media. Incorporating broadcast news stories would also provide more depth to the portrayal of the crisis by media. The amount of news releases and official statements posted on the digital newsrooms of each organization was small in comparison to social media, though each artifact posted by organizations during the sampling frame was analyzed. Because of the nature of the Federal funding debate and Live Action's intent to strip Planned Parenthood of Federal funding, this conflict is far from over. At the time of this study, the conflict was still ongoing and will likely continue, thus the research was limited to one cycle of what will continue to be multiple cycles of conflict.

It should be noted that previous research (Coombs & Holladay, 2008; Coombs et al., 2007) has mentioned the lack of investigation regarding effect emotion effect and public perception. Though the use of emotion was present in traditional media, future research should investigate its effect on public perception of events to understand the role emotions play in public perception and image restoration. Understanding the role emotion plays in public perception of items will offer guidance to practitioners as they select the most effective strategies.

Future research should explore how publics evaluated Planned Parenthood based on the messages put forth by the organization. Additionally, public perception regarding the message on each medium should be explored to evaluate whether the medium or the message, or both, have a significant effect on public perception. Results may better equip practitioners in selecting the most appropriate channels of social media. Because crisis type and news frame affect how publics attribute crisis responsibility, and more and more publics are online, future research could also examine how news organizations frame messages on social media outlets that allow users to participate in the discussion. Analyzing news frames on social media and public responses may offer insight into perception based on frames, as well as uncover a potential second level agenda function.

A recent survey of practitioners (Wigley & Zhang, 2011) found that the majority of respondents incorporated social media into crisis plans, yet only one claimed to use it as a tool for engagement. Research regularly placed emphasis on relationship building and reputational management (Coombs, 2006; Ulmer, Seeger, & Sellnow, 2007) and while social media environments foster engagement, future research should explore the reasons why it is not being used to its full potential (Muraliharan et al., 2011; Wigley &

Zhang, 2011). The findings beg the question: Why are organizations not using social media to engage publics and build relationships? When examining news media use of social media, it is understandable that it does not engage with users as its core values are rooted in objectivity; instead, news media tend to provide the forum for users to share opinions with each other on particular topics. Organizations, however, are not held to such stringent editorial constraints, and should use social media to engage publics. Understanding the rationale for limited social media use by practitioners may open the door for further research to investigate lingering concerns and provide solutions that allow organizations to fully employ social media in public relations efforts.

APPENDIX A

SOCIAL MEDIA CODESHEET

Social Media Type:
1. Facebook
2. Twitter
3. YouTube
4. Blog

Organization:
1. Planned Parenthood
2. Live Action

Date of post: _____

Does the post include the following:
0. None
1. News article link
2. Link to organization's official Website
3. Link to organization's official blog
4. Photos
5. Videos
6. Audio
7. Non-traditional news source
8. Social Media
9. Other:_____

Select the dominant news frame present in the artifact:
1. *Human-interest frame*: Places a human face or an emotional representation of a story.
2. *Conflict frame*: Used to reflect conflicts between individuals, groups and organizations.
3. *Morality frame*: Puts the event in context of morals, social and religious tenets.
4. *Economic frame*: Reports an event in relation to the consequences it will have economically on an individual or organizational level.
5. *Attribution of responsibility frame*: Attributes responsibility of an event to an individual, group, organization or country.

Main issue addressed:
1. Live Action attacks
2. Government funding debate (State or National)
3. Policy position/stance
4. Activism and mobilization (Events, etc.)

5. Donations
6. Women's health (Services, health initiatives or statistics)
7. Patient stories
8. Pro-Life/Pro-Choice debate/position
9. Other: _____

Was the Pro-Life/Pro-Choice issue mentioned (regardless of whether or not it was the main issue addressed)?
    0. No
    1. Yes

For the given day, indicate the MAIN subject of criticism or "attack" by the organization. Select only one:
    1. Individual(s) (Organization leader, Spokesperson, Congressperson, etc)
    2. Policy (Abortion, Women's health care, funding, etc)
    3. Organization (Planned Parenthood, Live Action, Government office, State, i.e. The state of Indiana pulled PPH funding)

Identify the dominant emotion present:
    1. Positive
    2. Negative
    3. Neutral

Indicate the dominant source cited.
    0. No sources were used
    1. PPH official
    2. Live Action official
    3. Non-official source from a new technology (i.e. Tweets, FB posts, Web ref)
    4. General public
    5. Government official
    6. PPH activists (volunteer, patient, non-employee)
    7. LA activists (volunteer, non-employee)
    8. Other

It the overall theme of the story dominantly:
    1. Positive tone
    2. Negative tone
    3. Neutral tone

Identify the dominant *image restoration/repair strategy* (Benoit, 1996) present:
    0. None/Cannot be determined
    1. Denial
        -Simple denial: Did not perform act
        - Shift the blame: Act performed by another
    2. Evasion of responsibility

-Provocation: Responded to the act of another

-Defeasibility: Lack of information or ability

-Accident: Act was a mishap

-Good intentions: Meant well in act

3. Reducing offensiveness of event

- Bolstering: Stress good traits

- Minimization: The act was not serious

- Differentiation: The act is distinguished from other more offensive actions

- Transcendence: More important considerations (i.e. helping patients was more important than initial claims)

- Attack accuser: Reduce attacker's credibility

- Compensation: Reimburse victims

4. Corrective action: Plan to solve or prevent problem

5. Mortification: Apologize for act

Is the organization:

1. Very accommodating

2. Accommodating

3. Neutral

4. Advocating

5. Very advocating

Identify the dominant factor influencing the stance of the organization:

1. External Threats

A. Litigation

B. Government regulation

C. Potentially damaging publicity

D. Scarring of company's reputation in business community & in the general public

E. Legitimizing activists' claims

2. Industry environment

A. Changing (dynamic) or static

B. # of competitors/level of competition

C. Richness or leanness of resources in the environment

3. Political/social environment/external culture (level of constraint/uncertainty)

A. Degree of political support of business

B. Degree of social support of business

4. The External Public (Group, individual, etc.)

A. Size and/or number of members

B. Degree of source credibility/powerful members or connections

C. Past successes or failures of groups to evoke change

D. Amount of advocacy practiced by organization

E. Level of commitment/involvement of members

F. Whether the group has public relations counselors or not

G. Public's perception of group: reasonable or radical

H. Level of media coverage the public has received in past

I. Whether representatives of the public know or like representatives of the organization

J. Whether representatives of the organization know or like representatives from the public

K. Public's willingness to dilute its cause/request/claim

L. Moves and countermoves

M. Relative power of organization

N. Relative power of public

5. Issue Under Question

A. Size

B. Stakes

C. Complexity

6. Organization Characteristics

A. Open or closed culture

B. Dispersed widely geographically or centralized

C. Level of technology the corporation uses to produce its product or service/complexity of products and/or services

D. Homogeneity or heterogeneity of employees

E. Age of the corporation/value placed on tradition

F. Speed of growth in the knowledge level the corporation uses

G. Economic stability of the organization

H. Existence or nonexistence of issues management personnel or program

I. Corporation's past experiences with conflicting outside organizations: positive or negative

J. Distribution of decision-making power

K. Formalization: Number of rules or codes defining and limiting the job descriptions of employees

L. Stratification/hierarchy of positions

M. Existence or influence of corporation legal department

N. Business exposure (product mix and customer mix)

O. Corporate culture

7. PR Department Characteristics

A. Total number of practitioners and number with college degrees

B. Type of past training of employees: public relations practitioners or ex-journalists, marketing practitioners, and so forth.

C. Location of public relations department in corporate hierarchy: independent or under marketing; umbrella/experiencing encroachment of marketing/persuasive mentality

D. Representation in the dominant coalition

E. Experience level of public relations practitioners in dealing with conflict

F. General communication competency of department

G. Autonomy of department

H. Physical placement of department in corporate building (near CEO and other top decision makers or not)

I. Staff trained in research methods

J. Amount of funding available for dealing with external publics

K. Amount of time allowed to use dealing with external publics

L. Gender: percentage of upper-level staff female

M. Potential of department to practice various models of public relations

8. Management Characteristics

A. Political values: conservative or liberal/open or closed to change

B. Management style: domineering or laid back

C. General altruism level

D. Support and understanding of public relations

E. Frequency of external contact with publics

F. Their perception of the organization's external environment

G. Their calculation of potential rewards or losses of using different strategies with external publics

H. Degree of line-manager involvement in external affairs

9. Internal Threats (How much is at stake in a situation)

A. Economic loss (potential loss vs. potential gain from implementing various strategies)

B. Marring of employees' or stockholders' perception of the company

C. Marring of the personal reputations of the company decision makers (image in employees' perception and general public's perception)

10. Individual Characteristics (Public Relations Practitioner, Dominant Coalition & Line-Managers)

A. Training in public relations, marketing, journalism, engineering, and so on

B. Personal ethics

C. Tolerance or ability to deal with uncertainty

D. Comfort level with conflict or dissonance

E. Comfort level with change

F. Ability to recognize potential and existing problems

G. Extent to which their perception of reality is open to innovation

H. Extent to which they can grasp others' worldviews

I. Personality: dogmatic or authoritarian

J. Communication competency

K. Cognitive complexity: ability to handle complex problems

L. Predisposition toward negotiation

M. Predisposition toward altruism

N. How they receive, process, and use information and influence

O. Whether they know or are familiar with external public or their representative

P. Whether they like external public or their representative

Q. Gender: female versus male

11. Relationship Characteristics

A. Level of trust between organization and external public

B. Dependency of parties involved

C. Ideological barriers between organization and public

APPENDIX B

CONTROLLED ONLINE MEDIA CODESHEET

Organization releasing artifact:
      1. Planned Parenthood
      2. Live Action

Is the artifact a:
      1. Press Release
      2. Official Statement

Date issued: _____

Did the artifact contain any of the following?
      0. None
      1. News article link
      2. Link to organization's official Website
      3. Link to organization's official blog
      4. Photos
      5. Videos
      6. Audio
      7. Non-traditional news source
      8. Social Media
      9. Other:_____

Select the dominant news frame present in the artifact:
      1. *Human interest frame*: Places a human face or an emotional representation of a story.
      2. *Conflict frame*: Used to reflect conflicts between individuals, groups and organizations.
      3. *Morality frame*: Puts the event in context of morals, social and religious tenets.
      4. *Economic frame*: Reports an event in relation to the consequences it will have economically on an individual or organizational level.
      5. *Attribution of responsibility frame*: Attributes responsibility of an event to an individual, group, organization or country.

Main issue addressed:
      1. Live Action attacks
      2. Government funding debate (State or National)
      3. Policy position/stance
      4. Activism and mobilization (Events, etc.)
      5. Donations
      6. Women's health (Services, health initiatives or statistics)

7. Patient stories
8. Pro-Life/Pro-Choice debate/position
9. Other: _____

Was the Pro-Life/Pro-Choice issue mentioned (regardless of whether or not it was the main issue addressed)?
0. No
1. Yes

For the given day, indicate the MAIN subject of criticism or "attack" by the organization. Select only one:
1. Individual(s) (Organization leader, Spokesperson, Congressperson, etc)
2. Policy (Abortion, Women's health care, funding, etc)
3. Organization (Planned Parenthood, Live Action, Government office, State, i.e. The state of Indiana pulled PPH funding)

Identify the dominant emotion present:
1. Positive
2. Negative
3. Neutral

Indicate the dominant source cited.
0. No sources were used
1. PPH official
2. Live Action official
3. Non-official source from a new technology (i.e. Tweets, FB posts, Web ref)
4. General public
5. Government official
6. PPH activists (volunteer, patient, non-employee)
7. LA activists (volunteer, non-employee)
8. Other

It the overall theme of the story dominantly:
1. Positive tone
2. Negative tone
3. Neutral tone

Identify the dominant *image restoration/repair strategy* (Benoit, 1996) present:
0. None/Cannot be determined
1. Denial
-Simple denial: Did not perform act
- Shift the blame: Act performed by another
2. Evasion of responsibility
-Provocation: Responded to the act of another
-Defeasibility: Lack of information or ability
-Accident: Act was a mishap

　　　　　-Good intentions: Meant well in act
　　　3. Reducing offensiveness of event
　　　　　- Bolstering: Stress good traits
　　　　　- Minimization: The act was not serious
　　　　　- Differentiation: The act is distinguished from other more offensive
　　　　　　actions
　　　　　- Transcendence: More important considerations (i.e. helping patients
　　　　　　was more important than initial claims)
　　　　　- Attack accuser: Reduce attacker's credibility
　　　　　- Compensation: Reimburse victims
　　　4. Corrective action: Plan to solve or prevent problem
　　　5. Mortification: Apologize for act

Is the organization:
　　　1. Very accommodating
　　　2. Accommodating
　　　3. Neutral
　　　4. Advocating
　　　5. Very advocating

Identify the dominant factor influencing the stance of the organization:
1. External Threats
　　　A. Litigation
　　　B. Government regulation
　　　C. Potentially damaging publicity
　　　D. Scarring of company's reputation in business community & in the general
public
　　　E. Legitimizing activists' claims
2. Industry environment
　　　A. Changing (dynamic) or static
　　　B. # of competitors/level of competition
　　　C. Richness or leanness of resources in the environment
3. Political/social environment/external culture (level of constraint/uncertainty)
　　　A. Degree of political support of business
　　　B. Degree of social support of business
4. The External Public (Group, individual, etc.)
　　　A. Size and/or number of members
　　　B. Degree of source credibility/powerful members or connections
　　　C. Past successes or failures of groups to evoke change
　　　D. Amount of advocacy practiced by organization
　　　E. Level of commitment/involvement of members
　　　F. Whether the group has public relations counselors or not
　　　G. Public's perception of group: reasonable or radical
　　　H. Level of media coverage the public has received in past

I. Whether representatives of the public know or like representatives of the organization

J. Whether representatives of the organization know or like representatives from the public

K. Public's willingness to dilute its cause/request/claim

L. Moves and countermoves

M. Relative power of organization

N. Relative power of public

5. Issue Under Question

A. Size

B. Stakes

C. Complexity

6. Organization Characteristics

A. Open or closed culture

B. Dispersed widely geographically or centralized

C. Level of technology the corporation uses to produce its product or service/complexity of products and/or services

D. Homogeneity or heterogeneity of employees

E. Age of the corporation/value placed on tradition

F. Speed of growth in the knowledge level the corporation uses

G. Economic stability of the organization

H. Existence or nonexistence of issues management personnel or program

I. Corporation's past experiences with conflicting outside organizations: positive or negative

J. Distribution of decision-making power

K. Formalization: Number of rules or codes defining and limiting the job descriptions of employees

L. Stratification/hierarchy of positions

M. Existence or influence of corporation legal department

N. Business exposure (product mix and customer mix)

O. Corporate culture

7. PR Department Characteristics

A. Total number of practitioners and number with college degrees

B. Type of past training of employees: public relations practitioners or ex-journalists, marketing practitioners, and so forth.

C. Location of public relations department in corporate hierarchy: independent or under marketing; umbrella/experiencing encroachment of marketing/persuasive mentality

D. Representation in the dominant coalition

E. Experience level of public relations practitioners in dealing with conflict

F. General communication competency of department

G. Autonomy of department

H. Physical placement of department in corporate building (near CEO and other top decision makers or not)

I. Staff trained in research methods

J. Amount of funding available for dealing with external publics

K. Amount of time allowed to use dealing with external publics

L. Gender: percentage of upper-level staff female

M. Potential of department to practice various models of public relations

8. Management Characteristics

A. Political values: conservative or liberal/open or closed to change

B. Management style: domineering or laid back

C. General altruism level

D. Support and understanding of public relations

E. Frequency of external contact with publics

F. Their perception of the organization's external environment

G. Their calculation of potential rewards or losses of using different strategies with external publics

H. Degree of line-manager involvement in external affairs

9. Internal Threats (How much is at stake in a situation)

A. Economic loss (potential loss vs. potential gain from implementing various strategies)

B. Marring of employees' or stockholders' perception of the company

C. Marring of the personal reputations of the company decision makers (image in employees' perception and general public's perception)

10. Individual Characteristics (Public Relations Practitioner, Dominant Coalition & Line-Managers)

A. Training in public relations, marketing, journalism, engineering, and so on

B. Personal ethics

C. Tolerance or ability to deal with uncertainty

D. Comfort level with conflict or dissonance

E. Comfort level with change

F. Ability to recognize potential and existing problems

G. Extent to which their perception of reality is open to innovation

H. Extent to which they can grasp others' worldviews

I. Personality: dogmatic or authoritarian

J. Communication competency

K. Cognitive complexity: ability to handle complex problems

L. Predisposition toward negotiation

M. Predisposition toward altruism

N. How they receive, process, and use information and influence

O. Whether they know or are familiar with external public or their representative

P. Whether they like external public or their representative

Q. Gender: female versus male

11. Relationship Characteristics

A. Level of trust between organization and external public

B. Dependency of parties involved

C. Ideological barriers between organization and public

APPENDIX C

TRADITIONAL MEDIA CODESHEET

Date of publication: _____

Did the artifact contain any of the following?
  0. None
  1. News article link
  2. Link to organization's official Website
  3. Link to organization's official blog
  4. Photos
  5. Videos
  6. Audio
  7. Non-traditional news source
  8. Social Media
  9. Other:_____

Select the dominant news frame present in the artifact:
  1. *Human interest frame*: Places a human face or an emotional representation of a story.
  2. *Conflict frame*: Used to reflect conflicts between individuals, groups and organizations.
  3. *Morality frame*: Puts the event in context of morals, social and religious tenets.
  4. *Economic frame*: Reports an event in relation to the consequences it will have economically on an individual or organizational level.
  5. *Attribution of responsibility frame*: Attributes responsibility of an event to an individual, group, organization or country.

Main issue addressed:
  1. Live Action attacks
  2. Government funding debate (State or National)
  3. Policy position/stance
  4. Activism and mobilization (Events, etc.)
  5. Donations
  6. Women's health (Services, health initiatives or statistics)
  7. Patient stories
  8. Pro-Life/Pro-Choice debate/position
  9. Other: _____

Was the Pro-Life/Pro-Choice issue mentioned (regardless of whether or not it was the main issue addressed)?
  0. No
  1. Yes

Indicate the MAIN subject of criticism or "attack" by the organization:
      1. Individual(s) (Organization leader, Spokesperson, Congressperson, etc)
      2. Policy (Abortion, Women's health care, funding, etc)
      3. Organization (Planned Parenthood, Live Action, Government office, State, i.e.
      The state of Indiana pulled PPH funding)

Identify the dominant emotion present:
      1. Positive
      2. Negative
      3. Neutral

Indicate the dominant source cited.
      0. No sources were used
      1. PPH official
      2. Live Action official
      3. Non-official source from a new technology (i.e. Tweets, FB posts, Web ref)
      4. General public
      5. Government official
      6. PPH activists (volunteer, patient, non-employee)
      7. LA activists (volunteer, non-employee)
      8. Other

It the overall theme of the story dominantly:
      1. Positive tone
      2. Negative tone
      3. Neutral tone

Length in words of post:
      1. 1-250 words
      2. 251-500 words
      3. 501 or more

If it can be determined, where was the placement of the story?
      0. Cannot be determined/ not applicable (for transcripts)
      1. Front page
      2. Metro section
      3. Other

What type of publication did the story run in?
      1. National/major newspaper (New York Times, USA Today, etc.)
      2. Local/regional (Denver Post, Clarion Ledger, etc.)
      3. National broadcast news network (CNN, National Fox, ABC, etc.)
      4. Local/regional broadcast network (WDAM)

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