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Planned Parenthood In Crisis: Social Media Strategies And Frames

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PLANNED PARENTHOOD IN CRISIS: SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGIES
AND FRAMES

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Mass Communication

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The Department of Mass Communication

by
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ABSTRACT

Planned Parenthood entered crisis mode in the summer of 2015 with the release of videos alleging sales of fetal tissue by the Center for Medical Progress. Its crisis communication strategy was implemented to manage its reputation and influence public opinion regarding the organization and potential defunding by Congress. Through the use of women's health and abortion framing, Planned Parenthood was able to prime its public's attitudes towards the organization and potential negative outcomes of removing federal funding from the organization. As discovered through a content analysis, Planned Parenthood specifically addressed the crisis in its press releases, allowing the organization to target political elites, traditional media, and opposition with defensive tone, while managing its reputation through a positive tone in its women's health frame on the social media platforms of Twitter and Facebook.

CHAPTER 1- INTRODUCTION

During July 2015, The Center for Medical Progress, an anti-abortion organization, published videos of high-level Planned Parenthood officials allegedly selling aborted fetal parts for profit, an illegal activity (Ludden, 2015a). These videos were filmed by representatives from the Center for Medical Progress over three years, undercover, and have proven to be highly edited (Ludden, 2015b). Planned Parenthood maintains that the allegations made in the videos are false, that it operates within full compliance of all regulations, and that its fetal tissue donation program is only operated in the states that permit it (Ludden 2015b). The videos that were released received significant news coverage and forced Planned Parenthood to enter crisis mode and defend its reputation not only to political elites and its supporters in an effort to maintain funding sources, but also to its patients and opponents to quell fears of improper medical care (Ludden, 2015b).

The crisis that ensued due to the release of the videos prompted Congressional investigations, and attempts to remove federal funding from the organization began, making Planned Parenthood the target of politically conservative pundits (Ludden, 2015a). Five states, the House Energy and Commerce Committee, and the House and Senate Judiciary Committee subsequently investigated these highly controversial videos and Planned Parenthood (Ludden, 2015a). The videos were ultimately deemed to not have any merit after an independent analysis of the footage by Fusion GPS, a research and corporate intelligence agency (Calmes, 2015). Some of the states investigating, such as Louisiana, also attempted to end Medicaid contracts with Planned Parenthood (Shuler, 2015). The independent analysis' findings that the videos were highly edited and

questionable did not stop Congress' continued efforts to defund Planned Parenthood, and investigations by the special committees have continued (Shuler, 2015). The impact this defunding would have on the organization would amount to nearly \$529 million of its overall \$1.1 billion in revenue and place the organization in heavy financial trouble (Kurtzleben, 2015).

At the onset of any crisis, an organization begins managing its reputation through crisis communication and implementing its overall strategy to repair any reputation damage (Kuntzman & Drake, 2016). Crisis communication strategies range from corporate apologia or image restoration to the Situational Crisis Communication Theory and have the primary goal of mitigating negative outcomes from the crisis (Fearn-Banks, 2010; Ulmer, Sellnow, & Seeger, 2014). Within each of these strategies, organizations who are in crisis must account for its level of responsibility for the crisis and often includes either denying allegations or accepting full responsibility for the crisis (Fearn-Banks, 2010; Ulmer, Sellnow, & Seeger, 2014). In either case, the organization is using a crisis communication strategy to communicate with its stakeholders during the life cycle of a crisis. Planned Parenthood managed its reputation in the public after the release of the videos by the Center for Medical Progress using crisis communication messaging on Facebook, Twitter, and its press releases in a coordinated effort.

Media coverage plays a significant role in organizations communicating with publics during a crisis. Organization's crisis communication messages are attempts to provide consistent and accurate messaging to the media in order manage stakeholder reactions (Vielhaber & Waltman, 2008). The media's primary role during a crisis is to provide information to stakeholders and publics and an organization's crisis

communication should explain responsibility, expansiveness, and implications from the crisis (Austin & Jin, 2015; Seeger, Sellnow, & Ulmer, 2003). New media sources, such as social media, are now highly integrated into an organization's crisis communication strategy, however, these platforms bring different implications to the messaging (Coombs, 2014). The fact that social media is more interactive, is primarily used by a younger audience, and allows for information to spread quickly requires additional considerations (Schultz et al., 2011). The use of media during a crisis allows an organization to influence messaging provided to its publics.

From a theoretical perspective, the media use frames to tell stories and these frames prime reader's and viewer's attitudes about topics in a specific manner, thus influencing public opinion (Iyengar et al., 1982; Chong and Druckman, 2007; Zaller, 1992). Employing frames in communication can range from showing stories as thematic or episodic, strategic or issue, or even attributing blame or responsibility (Borah, 2011; Cappella & Jamieson, 1997; Coombs, 2014). Public relations, the media, and the public develop and borrow frames from one another and create a coherence of information as a result, especially during a crisis (van der Meer, Verhoeven, Beentjes, & Vliegenthart, 2014; van der Meer & Verhoeven, 2013). These frames then influence public opinion and prime attitudes (Chong and Druckman, 2007). Crisis communication messages are an attempt by an organization to provide the information the public needs to reinforce, change, or influence its public's opinions (Fearn-Banks, 2010). However, what occurs when the media are given specific frames in the context of crisis communication? Crisis communication focuses on an organization's reputation while it is in a vulnerable state,

and the messages being conveyed are an attempt to influence attitudes, specifically of an organization's publics, in an effort to repair its reputation (Coombs, 2014).

Understanding how organizations employ framing in crisis communication messages in order to protect or rebuild its reputation can give insight into its overall crisis communication strategy. Additionally, with new sources of communication, such as social media, what impact, if any, is there to framing crisis messaging in these new mediums and ensuring message consistency across platforms and traditional media sources? Planned Parenthood continuously receives media coverage for the abortion services it provides, the federal funding it receives, and its position as a political lightning rod. The intersection of its crisis communication messages and attempts to frame them in a manner that sways public opinion deserve an in-depth look.

This research will consist of a qualitative content analysis of Planned Parenthood's crisis communication messages through press releases, Twitter, and Facebook posts in an effort to understand its overall crisis communication strategy during its initial crisis period. As a measure of comparison, the content from the same platforms will be analyzed from the month preceding the onset of the crisis. A comprehensive coding scheme has been created to evaluate the frames Planned Parenthood developed for its crisis communication and gauge the overall tone of these messages. This is an attempt to glean Planned Parenthood's messaging for its crisis communication strategies and how it attempted to contain negative opinion regarding its reputation and services. Evaluating Planned Parenthood messages against traditional frames used in the media, such as emphasis or equivalency framing, gives greater understanding into its crisis communication strategy and priming attitudes in the media. By considering three sources

of communication: press releases, Facebook, and Twitter, determining if Planned Parenthood varied its crisis communication messaging across platform is possible. If Planned Parenthood had decidedly different tones or frames for its platforms, its crisis communication messaging would have been tailored for its different publics in an attempt to influence opinion. Analyzing the crisis communication messages Planned Parenthood uses during the initial crisis period instigated by the Center for Medical Progress released videos provides a chance to evaluate its crisis communication strategy and publics.

The purpose of this study is to determine the frames Planned Parenthood used in its crisis communication messages and the message consistency across platforms. As a comparison, messages from the same platforms from the month preceding the crisis will be analyzed to understand if Planned Parenthood's communication changed once the crisis began. Additionally, analyzing the tones of the messages and how these may have differed across platforms will show how Planned Parenthood further implemented its crisis communication strategy through its messaging. Determining the different frames and tones for the identified publics Planned Parenthood is reaching with each social media platform and traditional media, through press releases, will also contribute to understanding its crisis communication messaging.

The goal of this research is to understand the different frames Planned Parenthood uses in its crisis communication to manage its reputation, especially because it is an organization that must rely on public opinion and government funding. While this study will not measure the effects of such communication on publics, it will give greater insight into the crisis communication strategy Planned Parenthood uses. The nature of public opinion and the ability of the media to influence it, and ultimately political elites and

policy, deserves scrutiny, especially in the case of organizations that enter crisis mode and receive federal financial support. Planned Parenthood's crisis communication and strategy provides a blueprint that other non-profit organizations can employ if it enters a crisis. The crisis communication messages ability to frame Planned Parenthood as a women's health provider that serves an underprivileged and underserved patient population translates to other organizations who deal with similar funding issues and populations. Planned Parenthood's crisis communication strategy and messages are easily translated to other industries that are also heavily influenced by political elites and public policy. By analyzing the frames Planned Parenthood used, logical inferences can be made about its strategy and its attempts to influence media coverage, and how its communication strategy shifted once the organization entered crisis mode.

Significance of the Study

The videos introduced new information that the public needed to decipher in order to understand if their values aligned with Planned Parenthood's. Identifying whether or not Planned Parenthood's strategy was to model its communications to help focus the public on its women's health services as opposed to its abortion services to protect its reputation could show its attempts to influence opinion. Arguing that this was a direct strategy that would help minimize the negative effects of the videos released for Planned Parenthood is possible. Planned Parenthood's crisis communication strategy post video release was an effort to frame its position, prime its publics, and mitigate the government's response of potential defunding in order to maintain a major funding source. Through a content analysis of Planned Parenthood's press releases, Twitter posts, and Facebook posts during its initial crisis period, determining if it used specific frames

within its crisis communications, the tone of these frames, and if the frames were tailored to its specific publics should be possible.

The significance of this study lies in its ability to discern how Planned Parenthood used frames in its crisis communication and how these frames may have shifted from its previous communication strategy once the video crisis began. Identifying how the frames differed across platforms helps understand Planned Parenthood's crisis communication messaging for its publics. Concentrating on the frames and tones of the messages provides a different approach to understanding crisis communication strategies. Current scholarship focuses on organizational and resource needs during a crisis and less on the crafting of messages themselves. This study seeks to help close this gap and give greater understanding to how crafting crisis communication messages fits in to an overall crisis communication strategy.

CHAPTER 2- LITERATURE REVIEW

What is Planned Parenthood?

Planned Parenthood Federation of America is one of the nation's leading reproductive health care providers and operates approximately 700 health centers across the U.S. and serviced 2.7 million patients in 2014 (Planned Parenthood, 2014). The services provided range from sex education in schools, birth control and emergency contraception, sexually transmitted disease testing, cancer screenings and breast exams, vaccines, research, and other preventative health services (Planned Parenthood, 2014). Additionally, medical services are provided for men, such as sexually transmitted disease testing and prostate cancer screening. Planned Parenthood receives 41 percent of its funding from Government Health Services Grants and Reimbursements, with the remaining sources of funding coming from private donations, non-government health services revenue, and other sources (Kurtzleben, 2015). The non-profit provided over 10 million types of services to its patients, "with STI/STD testing making up 42 percent of its business, 34 percent contraception services, 11 percent other women's health services, 9 percent cancer screening and prevention, 3 percent abortion services, and 1 percent other services" (Planned Parenthood, 2014, p. 17). Ultimately, Planned Parenthood is a reproductive health care provider that offers abortion services, along with preventative health care to patients who choose it for care.

Planned Parenthood, Federal Funding, and Patients

The federal funding Planned Parenthood receives is mainly associated with the Medicaid program, government sponsored health coverage for low-income individuals, and the Title X program, which provides funding for family planning services (Kurtzleben, 2015). Family planning services are not specifically defined by the federal

government, but typically consist of contraceptive services, pap smears, STD testing and treatment, and counseling, and they receive a higher reimbursement rate—90 percent, compared to 50-75 percent— more than any other service covered under Medicaid (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2012). States also play a role in determining how to support Medicaid and Title X funding, with regards to the discretionary practices states can implement with the funding provided to their individual state. The fiscal relationship between the federal and state levels of government and Planned Parenthood is well documented and plays the most significant role in public policy debates regarding the organization. Removal of Planned Parenthood physicians as Medicaid eligible providers and Title X program participants is what is truly being discussed when talking about defunding Planned Parenthood.

Medicaid and the Title X program were impacted by the Affordable Care Act, and the changes to Medicaid eligibility categories expanded coverage to even more low-income women, Planned Parenthood's largest patient population (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2012). Women who have Medicaid, 68 percent of the recipients in 2009, are more likely to be members of racial/ethnic minority, in fair or poor health, have lower incomes, and levels of education which all affect their ability to receive timely, high quality health care and Planned Parenthood provides services associated with family planning at a reduced cost to lower income women (Montanaro & McCammon, 2015; Kaiser Family Foundation, 2012). Medicaid is a solution for probably the single most defining factor that low-income women must overcome in gaining access to health care, affordable care and health insurance and Planned Parenthood serves as a provider for this financially risky patient population (Errickson et. al, 2011; Ranji, 2015).

Additionally, low-income women are restricted to where they can access providers of the Title X program. For example, Texas limited access to care through its Women's Health Program (WHP), its Title X program, specifically targeted to women between 18-44 years, with low-income, who are not pregnant in an effort to provide family planning services (Ranji, 2015). This resulted in limiting access to family planning services for low-income women across the state and significantly lowered number of providers able to serve the population (Ku, 2012). This also directly affected Planned Parenthood in the state of Texas, as Planned Parenthood is the dominant provider of the WHP, serving between half and four-fifths of the patients (Ku, 2012). Patients who are served by Planned Parenthood would now have to be treated by additional facilities and providers, causing those in the area to expand their capacity by two- to- five times their current patient volumes (Ku, 2012). These state-imposed limitations also decrease the network of providers who will see Medicaid patients and gives concern about the ability to provide preventative care services, such as cancer screenings and routine checkups to low-income women (Lu & Slusky, 2014). Planned Parenthood provides these same services to its patient population and fills a much needed gap in health care access, particularly for low-income women.

Planned Parenthood and Past Crisis

Planned Parenthood, whose beginnings date back to 1916, provides reproductive health care for women and men of all socioeconomic statuses and has often become a target for opposition based on the services it provides, most notably, abortion (Planned Parenthood, n.d.). Throughout its history, Planned Parenthood has attempted to grow access to affordable health care for women and provide family planning services in an effort to give women more control over their lifestyles and economic freedom (Planned

Parenthood, n.d.). As its mission gained the support of politicians during the 1960's and 1970's through family planning policies supported by Presidents Johnson and Nixon and the legalizing of abortion through the Roe v. Wade Supreme Court ruling, ultimately its governmental support has been at the decision of political elites (Planned Parenthood, n.d.). Initial successes were followed by years of limiting funding and instituting policy changes during the Reagan and George H. W. Bush eras, reestablishment of funding and policies during the Clinton presidency, with another roll back during George W. Bush's presidency during the early 2000's (Planned Parenthood, n.d.). Planned Parenthood has continually been subjected to restrictive policies and government funding due to political elites and have entered crisis mode with each threat to its mission and funding (Planned Parenthood, n.d.).

Planned Parenthood has not just faced crises due to wavering governmental support, but also due to issues with non-profit organizations. A recent example that received significant national news coverage was Susan G. Komen for the Cure Foundation limiting grants to the organization for breast cancer screenings in 2012 (Hensley, 2012). The Komen Foundation's cited its grant-making policy that did not allow for providing funds to organizations under investigation and Planned Parenthood is often under investigation when government support ebbs (Hensley, 2012). However, the removal of grant funding by the Komen Foundation was widely believed to be political in nature because Planned Parenthood provides abortion services to its patients (Hensley, 2012). Eventually, the Komen Foundation changed its grant-making policy to allow for the distribution of funds to Planned Parenthood, however, Planned Parenthood faced intense public scrutiny and entered crisis mode because of the Komen Foundation's

actions (Hensley, 2012). Even today, Planned Parenthood clinics are attacked, government funding is threatened, and policies are enacted to limit the services Planned Parenthood is able to provide which often forces the organization to respond with crisis communication and legal efforts to protect its reputation (Planned Parenthood, n.d.).

Defining Crisis

Defining crisis can be difficult due to the fact that crises exhibit different characteristics and unfold in different manners. Crises can either be a natural disaster, such as a hurricanes, or a man-made organizational crises, such as ignored sexual abuse claims, and are exhibited in both private and public sectors (Ulmer, Sellnow, & Seeger, 2014). Ulmer, Sellnow, and Seeger (2014) note the importance of not confusing a crisis with a difficult time, as crises are unique and seminal events for an organization. Additionally, crises carry significantly more weight in that they require different approaches due to the seriousness of the threat, the unexpectedness of the event, and the required response time is short (Ulmer, Sellnow, & Seeger, 2014). The working definition Ulmer, Sellnow, and Seeger (2014) ultimately provide is, “An organizational crisis is a specific, unexpected, and non-routine event or series of events that create high levels of uncertainty and simultaneously present an organization with both opportunities for and threats to its high-priority goals” (p.8).

Coombs agrees with the distinction that crises are either organizational or a natural disaster (Coombs, 2014). Coombs (2014) defines an organizational crisis as “the perception of an unpredictable event that threatens important expectancies of stakeholders related to health, safety, environmental, and economic issues, and can seriously impact an organization’s performance and generate negative outcomes” (p.3). He gives additional consideration to the fact that stakeholders ultimately define whether

or not an event is a crisis and considers this true regardless of whether or not the crisis is organizational or a natural disaster (Coombs, 2014). The distinction between unpredictable is also explained, noting that it is not the same as being unexpected, as a crisis event could be expected based on the industry, but unpredictable in when it occurs (Coombs, 2014).

Fearn-Banks (2010), defines crisis as, “a major occurrence with a potentially negative outcome affecting the organization, company, or industry, as well as its publics, products, services, or good name” (p.1). Crisis communication scholars continue to develop the definition of crises, however, the consistent message is that a crisis occurs when a substantial event, that might have been expected, but not predicted, interrupts the daily routines of an organization. A crisis has a serious impact on an organization’s reputation and if left unmanaged, could irreparably harm the organization. Crises cause uncertainty among an organization’s stakeholders and require a communication strategy that can address both the harm that occurs and the reputation management that is needed to address the uncertainty.

While each of the previous definitions deals with defining crisis from the perspective of public relations, it is important to also define it from the media’s perspective. A crisis interrupts the media’s norms and routines and requires it to communicate information to the public as soon as possible (Fearn-Banks, 2010). Media resources must then acquire crisis information from the organization for its news stories and fulfill the publics need for information (Fearn-Banks, 2010). Ultimately, crises hold the same implications for the media as they do for organizations; they are unexpected and

require changes to routines in order to account for the media's role in crisis communication.

Crisis Communication

Crises exhibit themselves in five stages; detection, prevention/preparation, containment, recovery, and learning. Organizations in crisis must communicate with their publics during all of these stages as part of a response strategy (Fearn-Banks, 2010). Organizations must communicate with its publics during each phase of the crisis, typically through the media or social media accounts, as a form of reputation management. Situational Theory of Problem Solving (STOP) states that by focusing crisis communication toward key publics and a problem attribution strategy, an organization's overall communication strategy during a crisis is formed (Kim & Grunig, 2011).

The power of the traditional media, such as newspapers and television broadcasts, has been widely documented when discussing crisis response strategies and the potential to tell the organization's viewpoint (Coombs, 2014). In an effort to control messaging around the crisis, managers attempt to provide consistent and credible messaging, especially to the media (Vielhaber & Waltman, 2008). Newspapers, a traditional media, are widely expected to be less effective than social media during a crisis because of social media's viral character and ability to spread messages quickly (Schultz et al., 2011). Schultz and colleagues (2011), found that newspaper articles were shared more often by social media users than blogs or tweets themselves, due to higher credibility, indicating the need to continue to integrate traditional media sources in crisis communication. Other research supports this notion and takes it a step further by noting the importance of strategically matching crisis communication messages with the form it is disseminated to

the public (Liu et al., 2011). With the changing nature of media as a whole, crisis managers must not only integrate a crisis communication strategy with traditional media, but also social media (Coombs, 2014). Technology has changed the face of crisis communication and how messages are crafted (Vielhaber & Waltman, 2008).

For organizations and their publics, social media can be both an instigator and a tool, and it has become increasingly important to utilize in crisis communication (Coombs, 2014). The demand an organization faces to provide information regarding a crisis quickly, effectively, and efficiently plays a significant role in why social media is a major actor in a crisis communication plan (Schultz et al., 2011). Social media is often the first place where stakeholders will learn about a crisis. Social media users continue to seek information regarding organizations in crisis by often bypassing traditional media, therefore crisis managers must use social media to connect with stakeholders (Coombs, 2014; Wehr, 2007). The characteristics of social media - participation, openness, conversation, communities, and connectedness, rely on different communication strategies that still deliver the same messages in a crisis (Coombs, 2014). Social media can make a crisis worse or provide opportunities for an organization to combat negative messaging with favorable messaging sent directly to a key public or publics.

Successful crisis communication strategies utilize the characteristics of social media to effectively monitor reputation. Organizations have successfully used social media to address customer concerns on an individual basis and during a crises provide a space for victims or volunteers to connect (Fearn-Banks, 2010). Other organizations, such as the American Red Cross, use their social media accounts to disseminate information and resources in preparation for natural disasters (Fearn-Banks, 2010).

Social media allows for quick communication with an organization's publics. The most successful organizations use the platforms to develop trustworthy communications at some of its most vulnerable times (Fearn-Banks, 2010).

Crisis Communication Strategies

Developing a communication strategy before the onset of a crisis provides an organization a chance to reduce uncertainties and prepare for unpredictable crises (Seeger, Sellnow, & Ulmer, 2003). Once a crisis has materialized, crisis communication seeks to answer questions about the expansiveness, responsibility, and implications a crisis can have on an organization's publics (Seeger, Sellnow, & Ulmer, 2003). Crisis communication is effectively implemented to mitigate negative responses from stakeholders and protect an organization's threatened reputation at the onset of an unpredictable event (Coombs, 2014). Organizations must account for their communication strategies during crises in order to appropriately address the concerns of their publics around the ensuing crises.

The Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) assesses the threat level to an organization during a crisis and then concentrates communication on the attribution level needed to maintain a positive relationship with key publics (Coombs, 2014; Weber, Erickson, & Stone, 2011). Coombs (2014) also points out that, "SCCT organizes crisis response strategies by determining whether the intent of the strategy is to change perceptions of the crisis or of the organization in crisis" (p.146). One major theme of crisis communication, according to SCCT, is attribution of blame in reference to accepting or attributing any level of responsibility for the crisis (Coombs, 2014). This exhibits itself in the form of frames within the crisis communication (Coombs, 2014). Attribution of blame can range from very little to strong depending on the type of crisis

and level of responsibility an organization must take to ensure believability of its crisis communication (Coombs, 2014). An acceptance of responsibility can range from denial, the lowest acceptance to confession, the highest acceptance (McDonald et al., 2010). The SCCT model defines these more thoroughly. Denial strategies include attacking the accuser, denial of responsibility, or scapegoating (Coombs, 2014). Diminishing strategies include providing excuses or justification for the crisis (Coombs, 2014). Rebuilding strategies are when compensation and apology are used in crisis communication (Coombs, 2014).

Higher acceptance of responsibility was found to impact an individual's emotions, which in turn impacts behavior regarding an organization in crisis (McDonald et al., 2010). McDonald and colleagues' (2010) research showed that confession, the highest level of responsibility acceptance, received the most positive reaction by organization stakeholders. However, they also found that when crises were out of the control of organizations, like Planned Parenthood's crisis, stakeholders were much more sympathetic to the organization (McDonald et al., 2010). Planned Parenthood's crisis communication could possibly use the attribution of blame frame to ensure its publics understood what level of responsibility it was taking during the initial crisis period and increase sympathy to the organization.

Apologia is used to defend an organization's reputation due to accusations of wrongdoing, but it does not necessarily mean an apology for the crisis is offered (Fearn-Banks, 2010; Ulmer, Sellnow, & Seeger, 2014). Apologia can provide an explanation for what has instigated the crisis, deny responsibility for the crisis, or explain what led to the crisis occurring (Fearn-Banks, 2010). Defensive communication strategies such as

redefinition or dissociation are used to show the organization did not mean to offend or that the action in question did not actually happen (Fearn-Banks, 2010; Ulmer, Sellnow, & Seeger, 2014). However, in certain cases, apologizing must occur, and an organization must take responsibility and the apologia strategy also accounts for those times with the conciliation approach (Fearn-Banks, 2010).

As an organization enters crisis mode, inevitably negative news coverage follows. The image restoration strategy of crisis communication attempts to identify threats to an organization's reputation, identify the publics that must be persuaded, and restore a positive image for the organization (Fearn-Banks, 2010). Key strategies for image restoration theory are denial, evasion of responsibility, reducing offensiveness of the event, corrective action, or mortification (Benoit, 1997). Each of these strategies has actions an organization should take with its communication that range from shifting blame to another, stressing the good traits, providing a plan for resolution, or simply apologizing for the act (Benoit, 1997). It is important to note, that in image restoration, mortification is the action of apologizing, and should not be confused with corporate apologia (Benoit, 1997). For image restoration to be successful, an organization must identify the publics and threats and strategically determine when to address the threats and when not to (Fearn-Banks, 2010). Benoit (1997) also explains that the perception of the organizations involvement in a crisis is more important than the reality of whether or not they are responsible for the offensive action. Ultimately, an organization must provide the appropriate messaging for what occurred to its publics in order to persuade public opinion (Benoit, 1997; Ulmer, Sellnow, & Seeger, 2014). Planned Parenthood continuously denied the allegations made by the Center for Medical Progress (Calmes,

2015). The non-profit's crisis communication strategy during the onset of the crisis was to deny the allegations made and attack the accusers. During the remaining portion of the initial crisis period, Planned Parenthood focused on repairing its image. The exact strategy of image repair will be determined through the analysis of its crisis communications in this study.

Crisis Communication and Publics

Situational Theory of Problem Solving defines four publics: The non-public, with no consequences from the crisis; the latent public, who face similar problems but have not experienced them yet; the aware public, who recognizes the problem; and the active public, who has begun solving the problem created by the crisis (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). The goal of crisis communication is to provide these publics with much needed information. As a crisis becomes salient, an organization focuses on providing information to those who seek it. STOPS also attempts to determine the likelihood an individual will seek out information regarding a crisis and notes that this is systematic for people (Kim & Grunig, 2011). Motivation for seeking out information during a crisis by publics is directly connected to whether or not they see their effort as relevant or necessary to their everyday lives (Kim & Grunig, 2011). In addition, access to the crisis communication (public relations or news) is imperative. Lessening the barriers to access information by crisis communicators is important to ensuring their message is communicated to their publics, meaning the easier it is to find, the more likely the message will be accessed (Kim & Grunig, 2011). Motivation, relevancy, and access regarding publics is echoed when discussing public opinion and attitude formation as well. Crisis situations motivate publics to seek out additional information on the crisis

and often that means turning to the news or the organization's message across all platforms.

As social media usage has continued to rise in popularity, who exactly is accessing these communication platforms? Pew Research Center conducted a telephone study from March 17-April 12, 2015 consisting of 1,907 American adults in an attempt to understand social media use and demographics (Duggan, 2015). Duggan (2015) found significant increases since 2012 in the amount of American adults who access social media platforms, with Facebook being the most popular with 72 percent of online adults accessing the platform (62 percent of entire adult population) and Twitter having 23 percent of online adults (20 percent of entire adult population) as members. Findings indicated that 70 percent of Facebook users access the social media platform on a daily basis, compared to 38 percent of Twitter users (Duggan, 2015). An additional 21 percent of users for each site access the social media platforms on a weekly basis (Duggan, 2015). A significant amount of users are accessing social media platforms on a daily basis with an increase in the overall adult population using social media as a whole.

The demographic breakdown of who is accessing social media platforms is important to help indicate potential publics. Of the 72 percent of online adults using Facebook, 66 percent are men and 77 percent are women, with the age breakdown being 82 percent are 18-29 year olds, 79 percent are 30-49 year olds, 64 percent are 50-64 year olds, and 48 percent of users are 65 years old or older (Duggan, 2015). Facebook users are more likely to live in urban or suburban areas and the majority of users have an annual income greater than \$75,000 (Duggan, 2015). This means that it is mostly women, aged 18-29 that are accessing Facebook (Duggan, 2015). The overall use of

Twitter is much smaller, but is still significant. Of the 23 percent of online adults, 25 percent who access Twitter are men and 21 percent are women and overall a more urban population, and more likely to be people of color (Duggan, 2015). Thirty-two percent are ages 18-29 years old, 29 percent are 30-49 years old, 13 percent are 50-64 years old, and 6 percent are 65 years old or older (Duggan, 2015). Overall, Twitter users are more likely to be male and under the age of fifty (Duggan, 2015). These demographics indicate different publics across social media platforms, and the majority of each public accesses the platforms at least once a day, and it is expected that Planned Parenthood would have tailored its communications accordingly.

The twenty-four hour news cycle has created a more aggressive and frequent coverage of crises, especially with traditional media sources utilizing the Internet to supplement its print or newscasts (Seeger, Sellnow, & Ulmer, 2003). With that in mind, it has become increasingly important for organizations to provide information to newspapers and television news programs through press releases as opposed to a spokesperson (Coombs & Holladay, 2009). During crisis, publics engage traditional media sources for educational purposes and consider them more credible (Austin, Fisher Liu, & Jin, 2012). Therefore, any crisis communication Planned Parenthood provided to the media through press releases would be generated for a broader audience. The publics related to the press releases range from voters and political elites, to older citizens who are less engaged in social media forums, to the overlapping publics of social media. Planned Parenthood could provide less targeted messages with its press releases and address its crisis at the same time in an effort to manage its reputation within a broader audience.

Crisis communication is an effort to restore an organization's image with regard to its key publics and the relationships developed between the organization and its publics are part of the overall crisis communication strategy (Park & Reber, 2011). Maintaining relationships with key publics ultimately aids the organization in crisis by mitigating the negative outcomes that can range from financial to perception, however this applies to publics that have a favorable relationship with an organization before the onset of a crisis (Park & Reber, 2011). Developing these relationships with key publics is far more beneficial than tailoring communications to the general public (Kim & Grunig, 2011). Engaging the media in a crisis communication strategy might seem to be appealing to the general public, but the fact that the general public consumes information based on its relevancy to their everyday life, self-selection, would mean that the crisis communication is still tailored to key publics or those that wish to become involved in a public (Kim & Grunig, 2011). Planned Parenthood's crisis communication messages during the video scandal had to reach a significant portion of its publics, which range from supporters, detractors, and due to government funding, political elites and voters. The nature of public opinion, via these publics, should play a role in Planned Parenthood's overall crisis communication strategy.

Planned Parenthood's Public

Planned Parenthood's crisis communication is directed at specific publics across all platforms during its initial crisis period. First, its primary public is political elites and was primarily targeted through the press releases Planned Parenthood provided to the traditional media on its website. Political elites control the funding related to Medicaid and ultimately determine the financial and policy impacts the organization might face due to the crisis, making it perhaps the most important public. Ensuring its message and

attribution of blame was clear to the group of political elites, which would include the President, members of Congress, state legislatures, and Governors, regardless of their political leanings, are the highest priority for Planned Parenthood.

Patients, both current and potential, and current supporters of the organization are Planned Parenthood's next significant public and are reached through its social media platforms. This is supported by the demographics of social media users, women and young adults on Facebook, who are also major recipients of Planned Parenthood's services. Additionally, Twitter's more urban population and people of color would also align with Planned Parenthood's service recipients. Managing its reputation for those that currently support or use the organization's services would hopefully minimize negative reactions by these current stakeholders and encourage them to continue their support. Planned Parenthood's patients and current supporters play a vital role in maintaining its reputation and influencing public opinion.

Lastly, Planned Parenthood would hope to influence attitudes of those who do not currently support or have an opinion about its organization with its crisis communication. The groups that would consist of detractors are made up of evangelicals, abortion opponents, those that do not support Medicaid or the Title X program, and those that do not have a favorable opinion of the organization. Individuals that do not have an opinion of the organization are those that are uninformed about Planned Parenthood's services or understand Planned Parenthood's connection with Medicaid and the Title X program. While Planned Parenthood's ultimate goal with its crisis communication would be to change negative opinion or crystallize an undecided opinion, simply providing accurate

information about the organization's crisis to these publics through traditional or social media could help mitigate negative public opinion.

Crisis Communication and the Media

Crisis communication for media holds different priorities than for organizations, although it is the primary way information reaches the public during a crisis (Fearn-Banks, 2010). During a crisis, media sources serve as a distributor of information to the public and an intermediary (Austin & Jin, 2015). Organizational stakeholders often turn to social media or traditional media sources during a crisis to get the most up-to-date information and therefore organizations must account for media in its crisis communication plans (Austin & Jin, 2015). The media, however, is bound to a different set of norms and routines and must provide information, but also must remain objective and impartial when covering a crisis (Austin & Jin, 2015). The media's primary goal during a crisis is to explain the scope, harm, and responsibility of the crisis (Seeger, Sellnow, & Ulmer, 2003). Nevertheless, media play a crucial role in the crisis communication process.

The news production process and the media's role in the life cycle of a crisis ensures an influence over crisis communication through mass media theories such as news framing, focusing attention on events, or news diffusion (Ulmer, Sellnow, & Seeger, 2014). News frames show topics in a specific manner and influence how viewers perceive the crisis, and will be discussed at length in the next section of this paper (Ulmer, Sellnow, & Seeger, 2014). Focusing attention on events by the media ensures coverage of crises as they unfold and engage the public in discourse around crisis events and outcomes (Ulmer, Sellnow, & Seeger, 2014). This focusing of attention, in turn, causes a rise in salience and ultimately shows the public that their conversations are

necessary, important, and could potentially influence policy or opinion (Ulmer, Sellnow, & Seeger, 2014). Finally, news diffusion accounts for the role the media play in disseminating information to the public during a crisis (Ulmer, Sellnow, & Seeger, 2014). Social media has allowed for rapid diffusion of news. Providing fast, valuable and reliable information to the public regarding the crisis as it unfolds becomes the media's primary role, and the public relies on the media to provide this information when a crisis occurs (Ulmer, Sellnow, & Seeger, 2014).

Using Frames

Media influence viewers and readers, through news framing and the idea that each person's reality is constructed based on individual social experiences (Baran & Davis, 2011). These social constructs are really frames that "provide a systematic account of how we use expectations to make sense of everyday life situations and the people in them" (Baran & Davis, 2011, p. 330). In the context of the media, frames are used to detail social reality through the coverage of news stories and can provide a specific context in which to view these realities. Frames heavily influence news coverage and how viewers understand and interpret their realities (Baran & Davis, 2011). This influence changes the notion that the media is objective when supplying information, and thus calls into question the true influence the media can have on attitudes and opinions (Baran & Davis, 2011).

The frames the media use provide new, salient information to the public and affect attitude formation. Recognizing that the media prime attitudes is not enough, but how information is messaged to the public can also have an effect on public opinion. Framing effects, "occur when (often small) changes in the presentation of an issue or an event produce (sometimes large) changes of opinion" and is based on the premise that

issues can be viewed from several perspectives and people determine their attitudes based on these perspectives” (Chong and Druckman, 2007, p. 103). Accordingly, mass media are responsible for framing effects due to the combination of an individual’s social reality and the framing structures used in public discourse that takes place in the media and is influenced by elites (Kinder & Sanders, 1990; Druckman, 2011). Framing effects indicate that how the media presented the facts regarding the Planned Parenthood videos could directly impact how the public received it, and ultimately public opinion. Herbst (1998) is quick to note the importance of understanding media’s role by stating, “much of its power lies in the sheer fact that we know thousands of readers are reading the same material” (p.86; van der Meer & Verhoeven, 2013). The role the media plays in developing its own frames and priming attitudes is significant and should not be ignored and Planned Parenthood would have to account for this influence when implementing its crisis communication plan.

Determining types of frames within media coverage is important to understanding the overall theory. Equivalency frames, or presenting the same information in different manners, for example, highlighting a forty percent success rate as opposed to a sixty percent failure rate, can impact opinion and behavior (Borah, 2011). The emphasis frame highlights specific considerations over others, and manifests itself in news coverage as either episodic or thematic framing or strategic or issue framing (Borah, 2011). By highlighting a particular aspect of the story, news coverage can signify the event as either one single event or part of a higher level theme or pattern, thus lending to either an episodic or thematic frame, respectively (Borah, 2011). Strategic or issue framing is evident when news media focus on either political motives or the political issue itself

(Cappella & Jamieson, 1997). Frames can also lend a positive or negative light to the news story at hand, but regardless of the frames used, they affect individual's interpretations of media coverage and influence public opinion (Borah, 2011). An additional type of frame, attribution of blame, was discussed previously, as it is heavily involved in crisis communication theories.

The positive or negative tone frames take is important because negative information tends to receive greater weight when evaluating the messages (Maheswaran & Meyers-Levy, 1990). Therefore the types of media frames mentioned in the previous paragraph are all capable of presenting the information in either a way that is interpreted in a positive or negative manner, depending on how the viewer recognizes the information (Druckman, 2009). Research has shown, that attitudes are significantly dependent on whether or not the attributes of the story use a positive or negative frame (Haley & Sidanius, 2006). Individuals are consistently evaluating stories in the media with either a positive or negative outlook, often determined by the frame that is used and its relevance to their everyday assumptions (Haley & Sidanius, 2006). Haley and Sidanius' study regarding affirmative action, perhaps best simplifies the notion of positive and negative framing and its impact on attitudes. They found that when the media deployed specific storylines around affirmative action, for example, quota-based policies for the negative frame and leveling the playing field for the positive frame, support regarding affirmative action policies was impacted (Haley & Sidanius, 2006). While the positive and negative frame used in Planned Parenthood's crisis communication will obviously differ from this study, the overall tone of the frame has been shown to impact attitudes.

Framing must account for the notion of competing frames or salience (Druckman, 2011). No doubt, citizens are exposed to competing frames in the media on a constant basis and salience plays a large role in how frames impact opinion (Entman, 1993). When competing frames are present, the frame that receives the most salience holds an advantage over the frame that is covered less, as its message is more prominent in media coverage (Entman, 1993). However, people still select the frame that is most consistent with their values (Chong and Druckman, 2007). The Center for Medical Progress and Planned Parenthood utilized different frames during the video scandal and crisis communication responses, and these frames played out in the media coverage of the crisis. Most important to this study will be understanding Planned Parenthood's frames in an effort to prime its publics using traditional media and social media because these are a direct strategy implemented by its crisis communication plan.

Framing effects, however, have shown little to no impact on those who already have a value or opinion prior to news consumption (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Chong and Druckman (2007) found that elite discourse that utilized frames in communication affected individual attitudes. This indicates that how the information is constructed, especially in reference to how political elites or the media discuss salient topics, has an impact on public opinion. Others argue that political elites play a much smaller role in frame production than some think (Borah, 2011). Since individuals use their own frames to interpret media frames, the individual plays a role in the frame production process, especially when considering their role in creating consensus and public opinion (Borah, 2011). While this study will not directly look at the influence elites have on public

opinion, it must take into account that the influence exists and plays out in the media coverage and crisis communication.

Framing is also subject to real world constraints, or individual frames. An individual must possess some information about the topic to be subjected to framing effects (Chong & Druckman, 2007). If a person's access to the information does not come with a contextual background he or she can understand and employ at the same time, it is unlikely that framing effects will occur or influence opinion (Chong & Druckman, 2007). These findings indicate that attitude formation is heavily influenced by context or lack thereof and already crystallized individual opinions and less influenced by framing effects (Tesler, 2015; Chong & Druckman, 2007). Some argue that the individual viewer interprets frames by the covered story's perceived impact on that individual's social groupings (Nelson & Kinder, 1996). Media frames provide details regarding matters of public policy, but individual frames, or the social constructs used by the viewer, has a decided impact on how the media frame will influence opinion (Nelson & Kinder, 1996).

Framing and Crisis Communication

When developing crisis communication messages, organizations are ultimately presenting information in a specific frame. Using frames suggests a bias toward a particular view, and often those with the most power, money, or access to the media are most successful at ensuring its frames are being provided to its publics through the media (Kuntzman & Drake, 2016). Kuntzman and Drake (2016) also note that episodic and thematic framing are most often used during crisis communication, especially in regards to natural disasters, however, organizational crisis communication can also employ these frames to convey its messages. Frames give meaning and acknowledge certain aspects of

a crisis which helps educate publics as the crisis unfolds (van der Meer & Verhoeven, 2013). Additionally, crisis communication is an attempt to repair reputation, therefore, framing communication in a manner that responsibly addresses stakeholder concerns can be an effective tool (Kuntzman & Drake, 2016).

In the case of Planned Parenthood's crisis communication, intentionally developing frames that support the organization could influence the frames media ultimately use in news coverage. Public relations, the media, and the public develop frames, and due to the constraints provided in each domain, borrow frames from one another and create a coherence of information as a result (van der Meer, Verhoeven, Beentjes, & Vliegthart, 2014; van der Meer & Verhoeven, 2013). Organizations, interest groups, or even authorities provide frames to the media that present a favorable construct of reality (Scheufele, 1999). Additionally, the process of news making itself can introduce frames. Either a journalist actively develops frames to make sense of a news story, implements frames based on the information received from a vested organization, or the biases of the news organization frame a story through its organizational routines (Scheufele, 1999). For example, a politically conservative television news program can introduce frames that appeal to the values of its politically conservative audience to retain viewers and satisfy its advertisers. These frames are developed specifically because of the organization's biases. Norms and routines in journalism contribute to frame production because journalists employ them to write and develop stories within constraints of the news production process (Scheufele, 1999). These constraints range from timing, using sources, or gatekeeping by editors. Journalistic norms and routines provide an opportunity for organizations experiencing a

crisis like Planned Parenthood to influence media coverage by providing the frames through its crisis communication. Utilizing these norms and routines can then make positive information about Planned Parenthood salient, thus enabling its frame to influence public opinion (Entman, 1993).

Priming Attitudes

When discussing public opinion and how it is measured, attitude formation plays a major role. Since public opinion is considered the measurement of the public's opinions regarding political topics, determining how opinion is shaped and influenced is an integral part of understanding public opinion as a whole and how it helps determine policy matters (which are often funding matters). At the individual level, Converse (1964) argues that belief systems, or "a configuration of ideas and attitudes in which the elements are bound together by some form of constraint or functional interdependence," do not truly exist (p.3). Individual attitudes are only stable when a constraint, or predictor for another attitude exists and any change in attitude by an individual is due to lack of constraints about a particular topic (Converse, 1964). Some more recent scholars have gotten more granular, noting that attitude formation is a combination of beliefs, values, attitudes, and opinions (Glynn, 1999). An individual's values and beliefs form attitudes and an opinion is the verbalization of the attitude itself, however, separate individuals can have the same values and beliefs, but their attitudes and opinions can manifest themselves in opposite manners (Glynn, 1999). In a sense, Glynn (1999) argues that it is the outside factors of social norms, need for self-protection, and individual differences that causes opinions to manifest differently, but this does not prevent them from changing.

While Converse attributes attitude formation to constraints within a belief system, others attribute influence to elites. V.O. Key (1961) was perhaps one of the first scholars to incorporate elite influence into the equation, noting that the beliefs and opinions of political elites are responsible for shaping public opinion and ultimately policy. Zaller (1992) argues that individual opinions are a result of elite discourse on political topics, and their attitudes are not the result of one specific preference. Individuals receive elite messages through the mass media, and this is how opinions are ultimately formed (Zaller, 1992). The media is key in developing public opinion and influencing individual attitudes (Zaller, 1992). Attitude formation and elite influence shape public opinion through mass media, who are often considered elites in their own right.

But how does this influence crisis communication for an organization? Several scholars attribute the influence on public opinion to the media through two key factors, their ability to make topics salient to the public and serve as a resource for information for those seeking it during a crisis (Glynn, 1999; Page & Shapiro, 1983). Public opinion shows the greatest congruence when the debated issue is salient, meaning one of the best ways to converge public opinion about a topic is to have media coverage (Page & Shapiro, 1983). Being a part of the larger discussion can help define the attitudes surrounding a particular topic or organization. The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), considers motivation and ability as key factors to information seeking and attitude formation (Glynn, 1999). Individual motivation to seek out information and form an opinion is directly related to the relevance of a particular issue to that person's life and if the information is easy to find, much like crisis communication and publics (Glynn, 1999). The media are one common factor in both public opinion and crisis

communication that can directly affect attitude formation, thus it plays a central role in developing a crisis communication messaging that influences both.

As traditional media have become more and more prominent in everyday life and decision-making processes, scholars have wondered its true influence. While the evolution of mass communication theory has moved away from Lazarsfeld's limited effects theory, where the media is just reinforcing existing social norms, exactly how the media influences society has many interpretations (Baran & Davis, 2011). The media dictate what is most important to think about and tells viewers through story prominence and frequency what should be considered, otherwise known as priming (Baran & Davis, 2011). The priming hypothesis considers the media as a filter because individuals cannot consider all information they encounter in order to determine their own opinion (Baran & Davis, 2011). Priming in news coverage influences which attitudes viewers use to make judgments regarding salient topics, it does not simply change attitudes themselves (Althaus & Kim, 2006). Therefore, the media play an integral role in priming people's attitudes toward particular topics because of what they choose to cover, even if the media have very little influence with the content. Planned Parenthood needed to influence the media's coverage through its crisis communication to sway these attitudes when the video scandal became salient.

Recognizing media influence on what is being covered is only the first part, the second is recognizing its effect on the public's attitudes. Individual opinions about political topics are rarely fixed attitudes, but are formed as issues come to the forefront (Zaller, 1992). This plays a significant role in how individual attitudes are formed for salient issues in the media. Zaller (1992) argues "the impact of people's value

predispositions always depends on whether citizens possess the contextual information needed to translate their values into support for particular policies or candidates” (p. 25). Therefore Planned Parenthood’s video crisis would require the public to sort or re-sort its values related to abortion, women’s health, and Planned Parenthood in order to develop attitudes appropriately. Additionally, it requires the public to determine how their attitudes toward these topics link to the policies and funding stances that are directly in line with their newly evaluated opinions. Planned Parenthood’s crisis communication messages could use priming and attitude formation in the media in order to effectively position its cause in news coverage.

More recent scholarship insists on the differences between priming and agenda setting. Miller and Krosnick (2000) note that agenda setting occurs when media coverage increases perceived importance for a specific topic, but priming occurs when media attention causes viewers or readers to place an increased importance when evaluating these topics. They additionally argue that it is the credibility of the media that allows for priming to occur, not the coverage itself (Miller & Krosnick, 2000). Priming effects are also subjected to real-world constraints. The frequency and timing of when news coverage is viewed and the relevancy of the topic play a part in how long priming effects may last for a viewer, although these are not easily measured (Althaus & Kim, 2006). Althaus and Kim (2006) found that in complex information environments, priming effects can be attributed to both applicability and accessibility of the news coverage and the more exposure the more likely the effects would remain.

Since the nature of individual attitudes are not fixed, what happens when new information is brought to light? Planned Parenthood faced an influx of new information

when the videos were released and thus priming factors with the media coverage of the event. According to the priming hypothesis, the more media attention that is paid to a specific topic, the more likely citizens rely on it in evaluations (Tesler, 2015). However, when new information is produced, individuals are faced with whether or not their attitudes toward a particular person or organization are still in line with their values. Supporters and detractors of abortion, women's health, and Planned Parenthood were then faced with the task of aligning their values with the new, salient information provided by the media. This alignment is determined by how crystallized their attitudes about Planned Parenthood, abortion, and women's health already are. Tesler (2015) argues that "crystallized predispositions remain mostly stable even after political communications make them salient" (p.29). The expectation is that those with already crystallized attitudes toward abortion, women's health, and Planned Parenthood would remain fixed, but those without crystallized attitudes would be most affected by the media coverage and therefore have their opinions changed (Tesler, 2015). The graphic subject matter of the videos could potentially and dramatically change public opinion for each of the topics. Planned Parenthood's crisis communication plan would have to account for the potential of lost support from its publics due to the graphic nature of the videos and prime attitudes to focus on the more positive activities its organization provides to its patients, its women's health services.

Reputation Management, Public Opinion, and Crisis Communication

Reputation management has become a primary goal of organization's public relations specialists. Managing reputations has become so significant that organizations not only budget money to support communication efforts, but they define it as a primary goal for the organization (Hutton et al., 2001). Reputations have an unmeasurable value

to an organization and are often thought of as an estimation, either internally or externally, of an organization through its actions (Mahon, 2002). Since reputation is determined by stakeholders, how they receive information, typically through the media or social media, coverage becomes integral to maintaining a reputation (Weber, Erickson, & Stone, 2011).

As a form of reputation management, crisis communication is attempting to influence public opinion. What the public deems to be true and how a crisis is perceived, even by the general public, defines the public's opinion regarding the organization, and crisis communication is an attempt to ensure the public that the crisis is not true or if true, an anomaly (Fearn-Banks, 2010). The public is mostly supportive, unsupportive, or neutral to an organization and during a crisis. An organization is attempting to reinforce supportive opinions, change unsupportive opinions, and influence neutral opinions (Fearn-Banks, 2010). Crisis communication messages are an attempt by an organization to provide the information the public needs to reinforce, change, or influence its public's opinions (Fearn-Banks, 2010).

Research Questions

Communication strategies of all organizations incorporate relationships with the media and are often modeled after media theories since they are reliant on them to help disseminate its messaging to the general public. These communications are driven by theories both related to journalism and crisis communication. Planned Parenthood used framing in its crisis communication to display its message as desired. As its crisis became a prominent topic in media coverage after the release of the videos, keeping the public on its side became a primary goal of its communication. Planned Parenthood created crisis communication that not only helped dictate its values to the public, but also

provided a link to the policies that are directly in line with its values and those of its publics. The video scandal made new information salient for Planned Parenthood and its crisis communication strategy would have had to react to this new information to keep all of its communications effective, or else risk losing the support of those who have previously been in favor of the organization.

I argue that Planned Parenthood, in its crisis communication response, relied on framing as part of its communication strategy to prime attitudes of its publics and sway public opinion. I believe the content in its press releases, Facebook, and Twitter posts employed a strategy of framing themselves as a women's health organization providing preventative services for women as opposed to an abortion service provider. I argue that the frame of a women's health provider is priming its key publics to think of Planned Parenthood in the same manner as opposed to an abortion services provider, and this is a result of the crisis that ensued from the release of the videos by the Center for Medical Progress. Ultimately, its crisis communication strategy not only attempted to deal with the fallout from the video scandal, but how its public perceives the organization itself based on the services provided.

RQ1: What frames were used in Planned Parenthood's communication before the onset of the crisis?

RQ2: What frames did Planned Parenthood use in its crisis communication post video scandal?

RQ3: What information was contained in the crisis communication messaging that would provide context and could aid in public opinion reinforcement?

RQ4: Were the frames utilized consistently across platforms or did they contain different emphases post-crisis?

RQ5: Was the tone used in the messages more positive or negative and did they differ across platforms?

RQ6: What were the most frequent consequences mentioned in the messages?

Understanding these questions can give insight into how crisis communication impacts media coverage and ultimately public opinion. When an organization such as Planned Parenthood that depends on federal funding enters crisis mode, its communication plan cannot just influence specific publics, but the American public as a whole. Public opinion not only matters to these organizations, but is directly reflected in its reputation. Dominant crisis communication theories rely on the organizational make-up, who should perform what job in a crisis and how to develop a strategy to reach its publics, but do not discuss how message development matters for the media and the overall communication strategy. Determining whether or not crisis communication employs framing, can help refine formal crisis communication plans.

CHAPTER 3- METHODOLOGY

To determine the frames used by Planned Parenthood, I conducted a systematic, qualitative content analysis. Content analysis is typically performed to understand and determine trends in the content of messages, especially for mass communication purposes, with the purpose of identifying the nature or effects of the messaging on its audience (Prasad, 2008). Accordingly, a complete content analysis consists of six steps that include formulating research questions, selecting communication content, developing content categories, finalizing units of analysis, preparing coding schedule, testing, and inter coder reliability, and finally analyzing the collected data (Prasad, 2008). Often the most difficult of these tasks is defining the content categories, which must be relevant to the selected communications, exhaustive, and easily understood for coders based on defined rules to be considered reliable and valid (Prasad, 2008; Wesley, 2010). I developed a defined set of coding rules, selected a detailed sample of Planned Parenthood communications, and ensured reliability, to make inferences regarding the content of Planned Parenthood's crisis communication possible.

Since the research questions have already been defined in the previous section, the next step is selecting the content to be analyzed. This study conducted a content analysis of the press releases by Planned Parenthood from its website and its social media posts from Twitter and Facebook from July 14-September 24, 2015 in an effort to decipher the frames used in its crisis communication and determine its communication strategy toward its publics during the initial stage of the crisis. These dates cover the initial crisis period from when the videos were released by the Center for Medical Progress and when the Senate voted down a budget bill with stipulations for defunding

Planned Parenthood (Calmes, 2015). To understand how the crisis communication strategy differed from its original communication plan, an additional month of data prior to the crisis, June 13-July 13, 2015, was included in the coding process. During the combined time period of June 13-September 24, 2015, the total number of press releases is 48, Facebook posts is 99, and Twitter posts is 150. The total N before the crisis is 84 posts and press releases. The total N after the onset of the crisis is 213 posts and press releases.

Press releases, Twitter posts, and Facebook posts are all original communication that disseminated from the Planned Parenthood Federation of America website or username. The sample does not include communications originated by any local, state, or global Planned Parenthood affiliates. In regard to social media posts, only the parent organization communication was coded and any response to another tweet or Facebook post that is an original communication was not included in the sample. The mission statement included with each press release was not coded as it would skew results. Hashtags were coded, however, any tagging of other organizations or Twitter handles were not coded. While some press releases and social media posts may not directly relate to the video scandal, they are a part of its overall communication strategy during that time and are included in the study to give insight to its direction and messaging about its organization as a whole while it was facing extensive media and public scrutiny.

The next step in developing the content analysis was determining the content categories. This required creating an exhaustive list of categories that not only defined the frames used, but also the tone of the messages. In order to consider these evaluations as valid and reliable, a qualitative method of keyword mentions and evaluative

questioning that measured consistency within the messages that show evidence of intent, framing, and tone (Wesley, 2010). Keywords were associated with a specific frame and tone, while questions related to the overall intent and consistency of the messaging. A sample of the evaluations were checked using inter coder reliability to ensure the categories are accurate and reliable.

The mass communication frames were operationalized differently when examining the messages. Messages were categorized as using emphasis framing if they highlight services Planned Parenthood provides or focus in on a topic regarding the organization or crisis in a specific manner that emphasizes said topic (Borah, 2011). Equivalency framing required the message to provide data regarding a general topic, since equivalency framing is evident when the same information is presented in different manners (Borah, 2011). Attribution of blame were identified when Planned Parenthood attributes responsibility in its message, scapegoats, provides justification, apologizes, or outright denies accusations within its messaging (Coombs, 2014). Furthermore, attribution of blame was categorized as either denial, diminishing, or rebuilding. Denial was identified by if the message attacked the accuser, denied responsibility for any actions, or scapegoated (Coombs, 2014). Diminishing was identified by if the message provided justification or an excuse (Coombs, 2014). Rebuilding was identified by if the post or press release provided an apology or compensation (Coombs, 2014). While messages could contain one or more of the attribution of blame frames, the coder selected the frame that was used most predominately in the message, however each message was categorized as either emphasis, attribution of blame, or equivalency framing.

The mass communication frames of episodic or thematic and strategic or issue were also coded. Episodic frames were identified by when messages present information as a singular event or topic without referencing a larger theme (Borah, 2011). Thematic frames were identified if the message references larger themes or pattern and not shown as a singular event or topic (Borah, 2011). Strategic framing was identified when Planned Parenthood's messages contain politically motivated material that shows its political motives in a strategic manner (Cappella and Jamieson, 1997). Issue framing will be identified when Planned Parenthood's messages contain politically motivated material that addresses a single political issue or event (Cappella and Jamieson, 1997). Since Twitter limits the number of characters a message can contain, strategic or issue and episodic or thematic framing potentially was not used on social media, and therefore, coders will have the opportunity to code messages as neither type of framing on all platforms.

The press releases and social media posts were coded according to two services frames, abortion or women's health provider, and noted if it was a combination of both. The keywords for each frame were researched using health industry research leaders, such as Kaiser Family Foundation, who have thoroughly researched Medicaid and the federal government's definition of women's health and reproductive care (Ranji et al., 2015; Salganicoff et al., 2014). Categorization was developed based on the common services that are linked to abortion and women's health and reviewed against what Planned Parenthood also categorizes the services provided to its patients based on reporting needs. The abortion frame consisted of mentioning abortion, pregnancy termination, fetal tissue, or abortion service provider with defined alternates for each term

(Ranji et al., 2015; Salganicoff et al., 2014; Planned Parenthood, 2013-2014). Women's Health provider frame was determined with the mention of women's health, birth control, STI/STD testing, cancer screening, sex education, family planning, counseling services/relationships, pregnancy, service provider, sexual health/sex lives, preventative care, LGBTQ Health, Health Insurance/Affordable Health care, men's health services with defined synonyms for each value (Ranji et al., 2015; Salganicoff et al., 2014; Planned Parenthood, 2013-2014). Fetal tissue is relegated to the abortion frame due to the fact that video scandal was directly targeting the practice of fetal tissue sales when an abortion was provided for the patient. Instances when the video scandal, care recipients, or potential consequences were mentioned were noted. Consequences were defined as loss of funding, access to care, affordability, disproportionate effects on a population segment, or unable to provide specific services. These were a frequency count for each consequence mentioned. Since social media posts are often limited by character counts, types of additional media, such as a video, photo, or website link was included with the post were coded, however the content of the additional media were not coded. Lastly, for the social media posts, video views, likes, retweets, or shares were coded to include a measure of receptivity by the audience. Posts or press releases that are seen across more than one platform were coded to identify message consistencies.

An initial examination of the sample showed overarching themes in the tone of Planned Parenthood's crisis communication. These tones in the message content are defensive, denial, informational/educational, proud, advocacy/call to action. First, the overall tone of each message was determined to be either positive or negative and then further evaluated within the context of the five overarching frames. Negative tones were

exhibited by the defensive or denial frame, while positive tones were exhibited by the use of informational/educational, proud, or advocacy/call to action frames.

Informational/educational frames were identified when the message was providing factual information or educating the reader regarding services. The proud frame was identified when the message contained information that showed Planned Parenthood was proud of its services, of the services of others, or of the outcomes it was involved in.

Advocacy/call to action was identified when the message asked the reader to engage with Planned Parenthood or others on the organization's behalf, show support for the organization in a specific manner, or asked the reader to share their story regarding a Planned Parenthood experience or service. The negative frames of defensive and denial were identified when the message shows Planned Parenthood defending its services or actions or denying responsibility for a service or action. The evaluative questioning provided the coder with guidelines for categorizing the messages into one of the defined frames. A message may have more than one underlying frame, for example, a press release may be both defensive and informational/educational at the same time.

However, since tone is an attribution of an overall frame of the message, these categories were not counted, but simply noted to characterize the overall messaging (Wesley, 2010).

Coders were provided three separate files that contained all content to be analyzed. Each file contained the messages from one source and contain both pre crisis and initial crisis periods and were gathered using the date and data restrictions that have been previously documented. To fulfill the fifth step in the content analysis process, coders were trained using a subset of messages from each source. If any discrepancies with assigning values occurred, coders worked with the study director during the

reliability testing to either determine if new categories need to be added or if a consensus of where a message should be coded could be reached. Additionally, an overall reliability check was conducted through the initial training and after all coding occurs to ensure that coding is similar between coders by using Scott's pi, or taking the number of units in the same category and dividing it by the total number of units coded (Wesley, 2010).

Overall, inter coder reliability was high for the overall sample at 99 percent. For the variables of date, source, video mention, abortion frame, tone, tone frame- negative, care recipient, additional media, video views, shares, like, and message consistency were each at 100 percent reliability. Media and Crisis communication frame reliability between coders was at 97 percent and attribution of blame frame reliability was at 98 percent. Media framing for both episodic or thematic and strategic or issue were reliable at 99 percent. Reliability for the women's health frame coding was 98 percent. Both frames and both frames-most used each had a reliability of 99 percent. Tone frame-positive also had a 99 percent reliability rating between coders, as well as the consequences variable.

The frame analysis determined if there are any differences based on the medium used to convey the messages. Additionally, determining if Planned Parenthood attempted to use different frames for different publics in order to prime attitudes was a possibility. While some press releases and social media posts may not directly relate to the video scandal, they are a part of Planned Parenthood's overall crisis communication strategy during that time and gave insight to its direction and messaging about its organization as a whole while it was facing extensive media and public scrutiny.

The demographic differences across platforms showed a need to evaluate Planned Parenthood's crisis communication strategy in terms of publics reached. The expectation that messages would differ toward these publics based on their platforms is an important component to this research study. Determining when messages were consistent across platforms indicated when Planned Parenthood felt a message was most impactful. On average Twitter users are younger than Facebook users, however, Facebook users are more likely to be women. These differences could have impacted the frames Planned Parenthood used for these platforms. Additionally, the characteristics of social media could play a role in how Planned Parenthood developed its crisis communication strategy. The interactive nature of social media could change Planned Parenthood's strategy and the messages could differ dramatically from what was included in the press releases.

CHAPTER 4- RESULTS

Addressing the Video Scandal

As the video scandal became the focus of the media, Planned Parenthood addressed the crisis across its social media platforms and in press releases as seen in Figure 1. While the majority of mentions of the video scandal are found in the press releases, Planned Parenthood did address the scandal on social media. There were 8 mentions of the video scandal on social media out of a total of 154 messages, and they were primarily in July when the videos were first released. Press releases had a total of 25 mentions of the video scandal in a total of 36 messages, or 69.4 percent, which were relatively evenly distributed across July, August, and September.

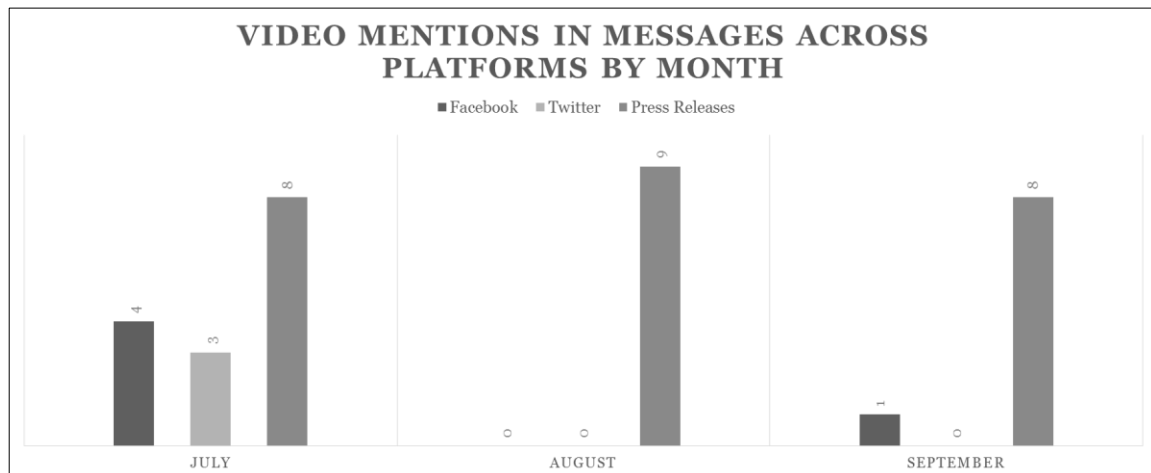


Figure 1. Video Mentions in Messages Across Platforms by Month

Framing before the crisis

Research question 1 asked what frames were used prior to the onset and of the crisis and the finding is that Planned Parenthood's messages overwhelmingly used emphasis framing across all platforms as seen in Figure 2. Ninety-seven percent of the messages utilized emphasis framing. In regards to episodic versus thematic framing, press releases and Facebook were the only platforms whose messages utilized this framing technique, totaling 18 percent of all messages. There was even less utilization of

strategic and issue framing before the crisis, with only 14 percent of all messages employing this type of framing. Strategic or issue framing was also only utilized on Facebook and press releases.

Mass Communication Frames Before Video Scandal (6/13-7/13, 2015)				
		Facebook	Twitter	Press Releases
Mass Communication Frame	Emphasis	29	42	9
	Equivalency	1	1	2
	Attribution of Blame (Denial)	0	0	1
Episodic or Thematic Framing	Episodic	3	0	5
	Thematic	3	0	5
	Neither	24	43	2
Strategic or Issue Framing	Strategic	3	0	1
	Issue	3	0	5
	Neither	24	43	6

Figure 2. Mass Communication Frames Before Video Scandal (6/13-7/13, 2015)

Before the videos were released, media and crisis communication frames were used consistently across all platforms. Emphasis was the most used frame across platforms. Additionally, episodic or thematic framing and strategic or issue framing were used in consistent manners across social media platforms. In the instances a message was coded as using the episodic frame, it was also coded as using the issue frame. This also occurred when messages were coded as using a thematic frame, the same messages were coded as also using a strategic frame. There was less consistency among the press releases. The five messages coded as using an episodic frame were also coded as using an issue frame, however, messages coded as using a thematic frame were also coded as

not using either an issue or strategic frame. There was one message coded as using a thematic frame and strategic frame in the press releases.

Additionally, in response to research question one, prior to the onset of the crisis, Planned Parenthood rarely used the abortion frame across all three platforms, as shown in Figure 3. A mere .09 percent of the total messages across Facebook, Twitter, and press releases employed the abortion frame prior to the video scandal. The women’s health frame was utilized 90.4 percent of the time. However, in the instance that the abortion and women’s health frame were found in the same messages, the abortion frame was dominant in 5 of the 7 messages.

Abortion and Women’s Health Frames Before Video Scandal (6/13-7/13, 2015)				
		Facebook	Twitter	Press Releases
Abortion	Yes	3	2	3
	No	27	41	9
Women’s Health	Yes	27	37	12
	No	3	5	0
Both	Primarily Abortion	1	1	3
	Primarily Women’s Health	2	0	0

Figure 3. Abortion and Women’s Health Frames Before Video Scandal (6/13-7/13, 2015)

Finally, in response to research question 1, as tones of the messages skewed either positive or negative, additional frames were found based on direction, prior to the onset of the crisis, as detailed in Figure 4. Messages that exhibited a positive tone were coded for an informational/educational, proud, or call to action/advocacy frame. Ninety-one of the 93 messages across all platforms were coded with a positive tone, with two exhibiting a negative tone. Fifty-nine percent of the positive toned messages utilized an informational/educational frame. Eighteen percent of the positive toned messages utilized a proud frame and 21 percent utilized the call to action/advocacy frame.

The two negative toned messages were found in the press releases and utilized a defensive frame.

Positive and Negative Tone Framing Before Video Scandal (6/13-7/13, 2015)				
		Facebook	Twitter	Press Releases
Positive Tone Frame	Informational/Educational	16	32	6
	Proud	6	8	3
	Call to Action/Advocacy	8	2	10
Negative Tone Frame	Defensive	0	0	2
	Denial	0	0	0

Figure 4. Positive and Negative Tone Framing Before Video Scandal (6/13-7/13, 2015)

Framing After the Crisis Onset

In response to research question 2 that asked what frames did Planned Parenthood use in its crisis communication post video scandal the finding was that Planned Parenthood introduced the attribution of blame frame and this was primarily seen in its press releases after the onset of the crisis, as shown in Figure 5. Twenty-five of the total 36 press releases during the initial crisis period utilized the attribution of blame frame.

Mass Communication Frames After Video Scandal (7/14-9/24, 2015)				
		Facebook	Twitter	Press Releases
Mass Communication Frame	Emphasis	58	91	11
	Equivalency	7	12	0
	Attribution of Blame-Denial	4	4	25
	Attribution of Blame- Diminishing	0	1	0
Episodic or Thematic Framing	Episodic	7	8	26
	Thematic	13	16	6
	Neither	49	84	4
Strategic or Issue Framing	Strategic	14	9	11
	Issue	6	11	20
	Neither	49	88	5

Figure 5. Mass Communication Frames After Video Scandal (7/14-9/24, 2015)

In the 34 instances of the attribution of blame frame across all platforms, 33 were denial and 1 was defensive. The social media platforms primarily utilized emphasis framing at the onset of the crisis, totaling nearly 84 percent use in Facebook and Twitter messages. Episodic or thematic framing shifted slightly once the crisis began. While the majority of messages across all platforms did not employ either episodic or thematic framing, 26 of the 36 messages from press releases utilized episodic framing. On the social media platforms, a combined 16 percent of messages utilized thematic framing. Strategic or issue framing mimicked a similar pattern during the initial crisis period. Seventy-seven percent of the messages on Facebook and Twitter did not utilize strategic or issue framing. Nearly 13 percent of the social media platform messages utilized strategic framing, while only 9.6 percent utilized issue framing. Fifty-five percent of press releases utilized issue framing and 30 percent utilized strategic framing.

Episodic or thematic framing and strategic or issue framing remained consistent across social media platforms as it did prior to the video scandal. The majority of messages contained neither type of framing, however, 24.8 percent of messages on Facebook and Twitter did employ either episodic or thematic framing. Twenty-two and a half percent of messages on Facebook and Twitter employed strategic or issue framing. Comparatively, nearly 89 percent of press releases used episodic or thematic framing and 86 percent used strategic or issue framing.

Additionally, to answer research question 2, after the videos emerged, the abortion frame was used more often across the three platforms, increasing to 21 percent utilization, as detailed in Figure 6. The women's health frame was still more dominant, but used a slightly lower frequency of nearly 79 percent across all three platforms. In the

cases where both the abortion and women’s health frame were used in the same message, the abortion frame remained the dominant frame in those messages 63 percent of the time. Press releases used the abortion frame more often than the social media platforms with their messages containing the abortion frame 77 percent of the time compared to 11.5 percent in Facebook messages and 8.3 percent in Twitter messages.

Abortion and Women’s Health Frames After Video Scandal (7/14-9/24, 2015)				
		Facebook	Twitter	Press Releases
Abortion	Yes	8	9	28
	No	61	99	8
Women’s Health	Yes	60	86	34
	No	9	22	2
Both	Primarily Abortion	3	1	19
	Primarily Women’s Health	2	2	9

Figure 6. Abortion and Women’s Health Frames After Video Scandal (7/14-9/24, 2015)

Finally, after the videos were released, Planned Parenthood’s messages, specifically its press releases, contained more negative toned frames, also answers research question 2 and is shown in Figure 7. In total, across all platforms, 175 messages contained a positive tone and 38 contained a negative tone. Seventy-one percent of the positively toned messages utilized an informational/educational frame, 13 percent utilized a proud frame, and 15.4 percent utilized the call to action/advocacy frame. Thirteen

Positive and Negative Tone Framing After Video Scandal (7/14-9/24, 2015)				
		Facebook	Twitter	Press Releases
Positive Tone Frame	Informational/Educational	49	73	3
	Proud	4	14	5
	Call to Action/Advocacy	13	14	0
Negative Tone Frame	Defensive	3	7	28
	Denial	0	0	0

Figure 7. Positive and Negative Tone Framing After Video Scandal (7/14-9/24, 2015)

percent of all messages contained a negative tone and all utilized the defensive frame. Seventy-three percent of the negatively toned messages were found in press releases.

Planned Parenthood’s Services

Research question 3 asked what information was contained in the crisis communication messaging that would provide context and aid in public opinion and the finding is that Planned Parenthood consistently referenced the services it provides to patients in its messages to help reinforce public opinion, shown in Figure 8. These are exhibited in the abortion and women’s health frames. As previously mentioned, the abortion frame was primarily used in press releases once the video scandal emerged in the media, shown in Figure 9. It was used a total of 20 times across Facebook and Twitter after the onset of the crisis, with 4 of those times referencing fetal tissue donation, the thrust of the videos.

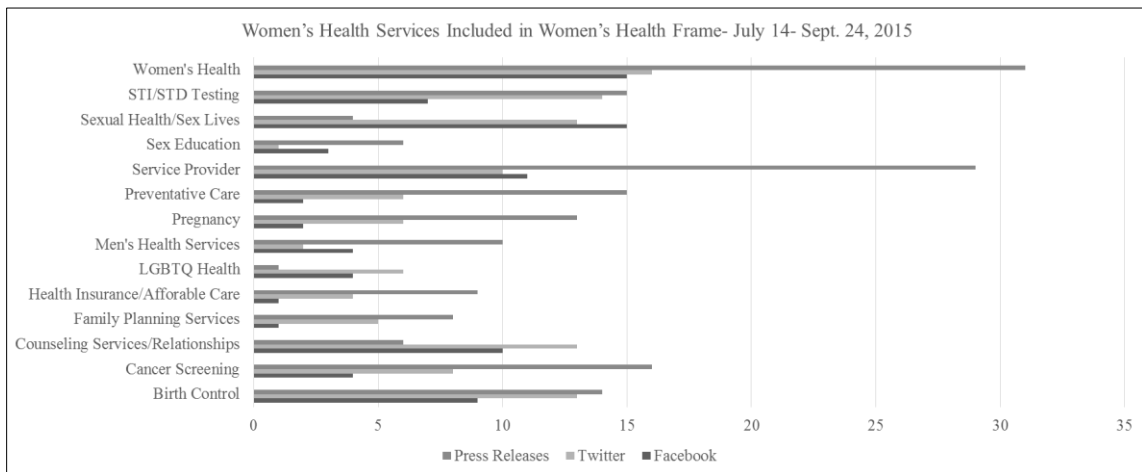


Figure 8. Women’s Health Services Included in Women’s Health Frame- July 14-Sept. 24, 2015

Additionally, the women’s health frame highlighted the remaining services Planned Parenthood provides to its patients in an effort to influence public opinion. Planned Parenthood employed the women’s health frame across each platform and in a total of 240 messages before and after the crisis ensued, making its women’s health

services known in 87.6 percent of its total messages. Within these 240 messages, Planned Parenthood mentioned its top four services, STI/STD testing, contraception, cancer screening, and women’s health services at least 162 times. Planned Parenthood also called attention to the fact that it is a women’s health service provider almost as frequently as it did its women’s health services in press releases, 31 to 29 messages, respectively.

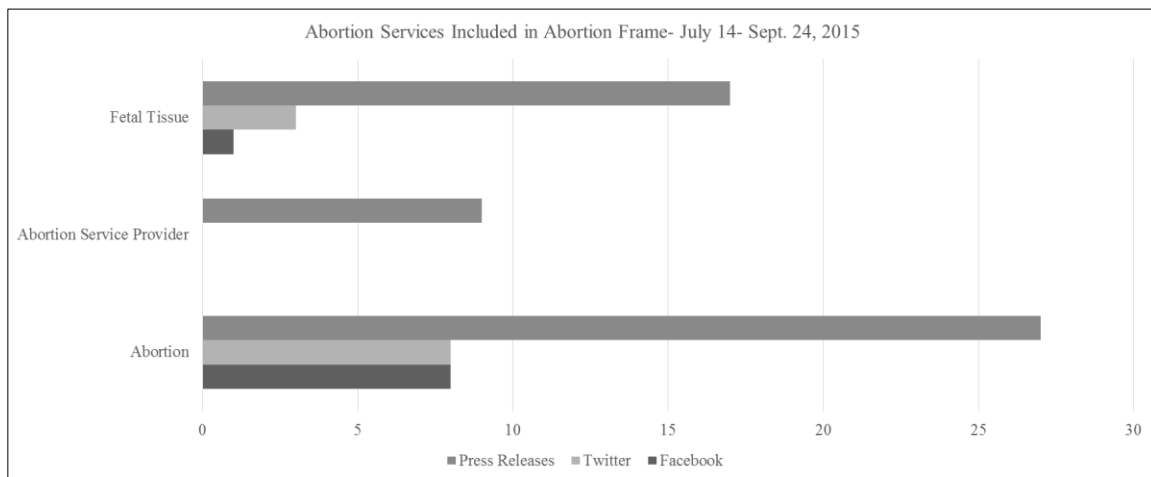


Figure 9. Abortion Services Included in Abortion Frame- July 14-Sept. 24, 2015

Planned Parenthood’s Message Consistency Across Platforms

Research question 4 asked if the frames were utilized consistently across platforms or did they contain different emphases across platforms post-crisis and the finding is that messages were relatively consistent across platforms with the exception of press releases post video release. Social media messages were found to be similar or the same on Facebook and Twitter. Sixty-six percent of Twitter messages were also shared on Facebook and 72 percent of Facebook messages were also shared on Twitter once the videos were released, as shown in Figure 10 and Figure 11. After the videos were released by the Center for Medical Progress, messages in press releases were not found

on the social media platforms as often. Forty-one percent of the messages found in press releases were also included on social media, as shown in Figure 12.

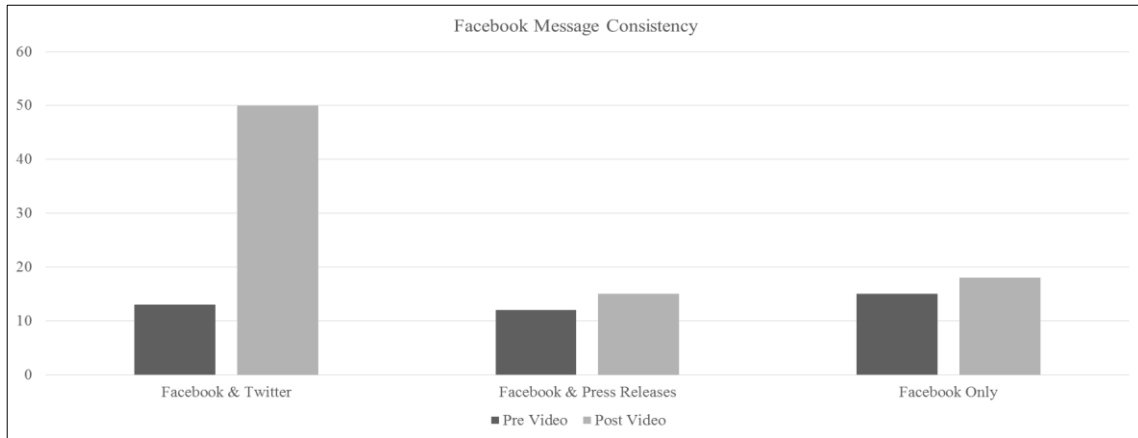


Figure 10. Facebook Message Consistency

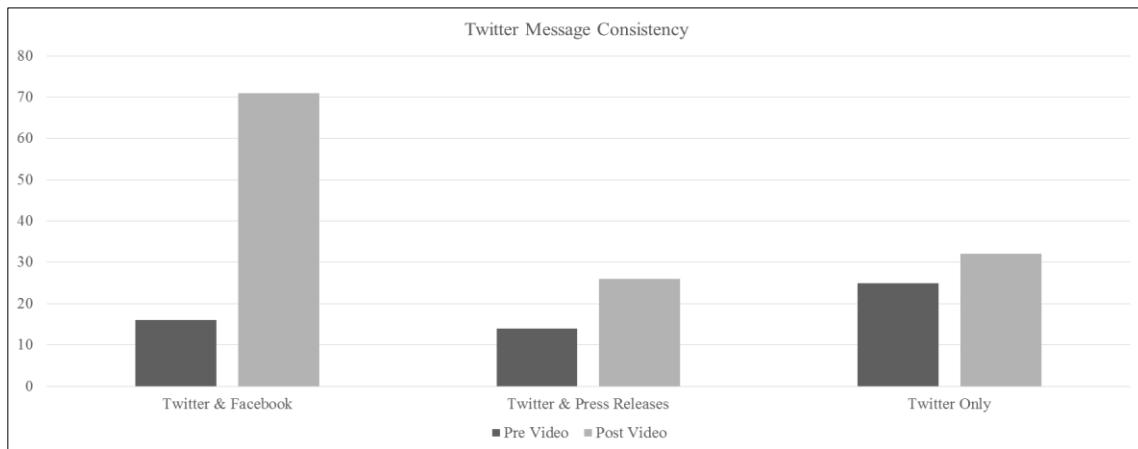


Figure 11. Twitter Message Consistency

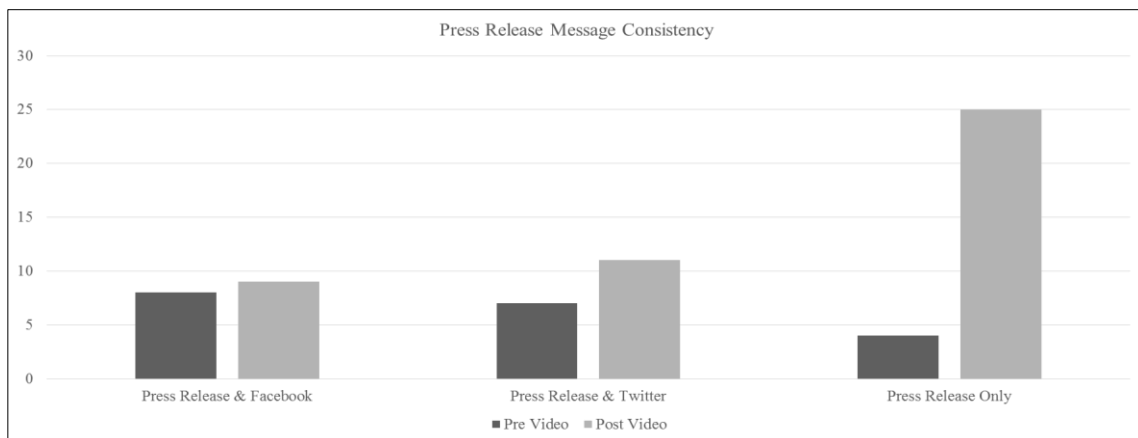


Figure 12. Press Release Message Consistency

Planned Parenthood’s Message Reception on Social Media

Message reception was determined by the number of shares and likes on Facebook and Twitter. While the number of shares and likes varied across platforms, the trend in when messages were shared and liked most often remained consistent and relatively tied to specific events within the crisis period, as shown in Figure 13 and Figure 14. Message shares and likes saw a consistent jump pre crisis on June 26, 2015 when the U.S. Supreme Court announced its decision in favor of marriage equality. A similar jump occurred when Planned Parenthood released its statements after the release of the videos on June 17, 2015. Another increase occurred later in July when Planned Parenthood’s website had been hacked by anti-abortion extremists. Likes and shares increased, most noticeably on Facebook, when Planned Parenthood posted messages about the bill to defund its organization that failed in the Senate on August 3, 2015. The increases in likes and shares on Facebook in late September coincide with another vote in the Senate to defund Planned Parenthood, however, the increase in shares and likes on Twitter are not. That increase is attributed to posts that mention Planned Parenthood’s services and support of global family planning initiatives.

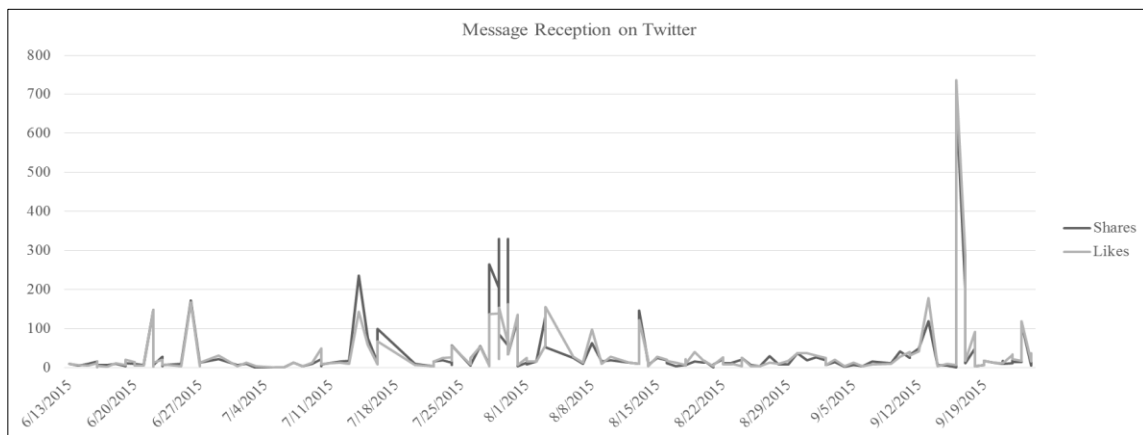


Figure 13. Message Reception in Twitter

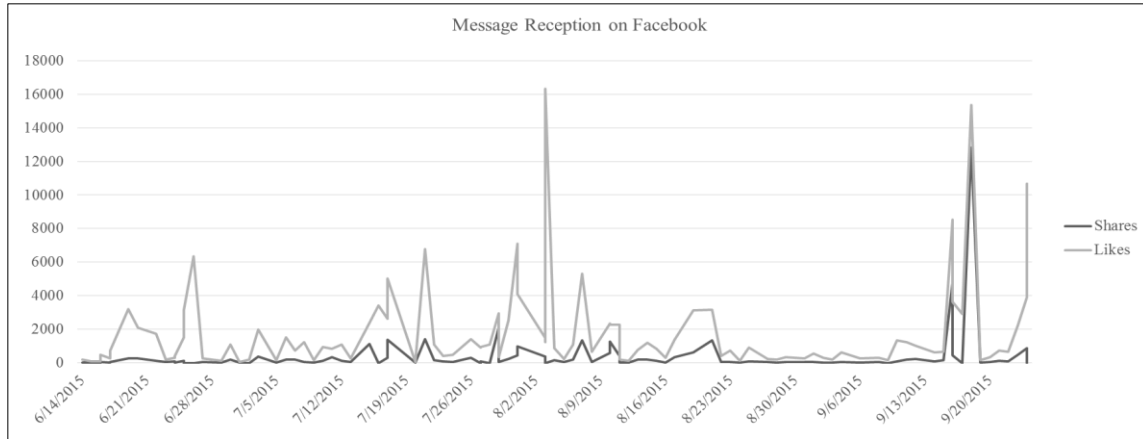


Figure 14. Message Reception on Facebook

Positive and Negative Tones in Messages

Research question 5 asked whether or not the tone used in the messages was more positive or negative and if there were differences across platforms and the finding is that nearly all messages on Facebook and Twitter exhibited a positive tone both before and after the release of the videos, however negative toned messages were found more often in the press releases post video scandal, detailed in Figure 15. Out of a total of 99 messages on Facebook, 3 posts were found to have a negative tone and all occurred after the release of the videos. A similar trend occurred in the Twitter posts. Out of 150 total messages, 7 were found to have a negative tone. In the press releases, negative tones

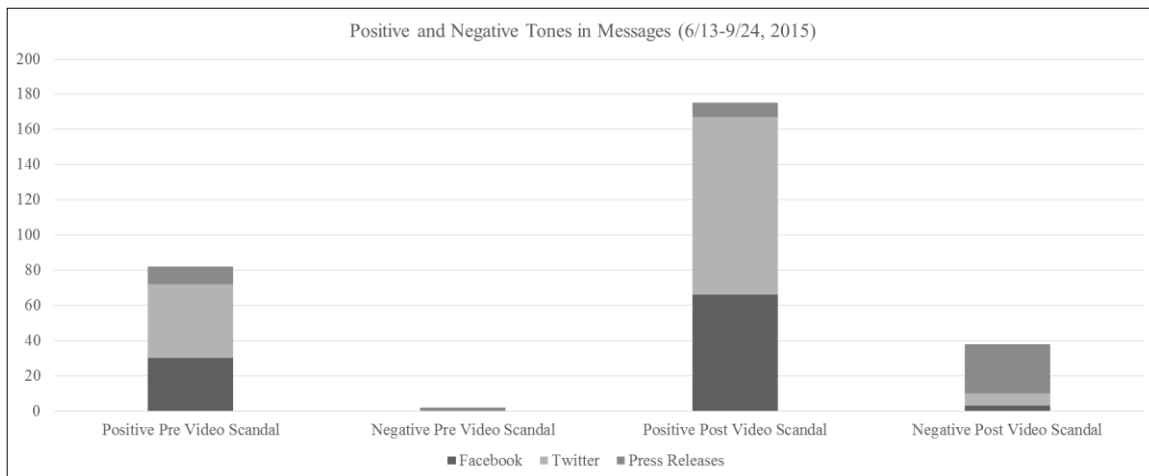


Figure 15. Positive and Negative Tones in Messages (6/13-9/24, 2015)

were found in 62.5 percent of all messages, with the majority occurring after the release of the videos. There were 2 messages that used a negative tone prior to the release of the videos.

Consequences in Messages

Research question 6 asked what were the most frequent consequences mentioned in the messages and the answer is that overall, no consequences were mentioned the majority of the time, as shown in Figure 16. However, consequences were most frequently mentioned in the press releases after the release of the videos, with a few exceptions. On Twitter and Facebook 104 and 63 posts, respectively, contained no mentions of consequences. On Twitter, “defunding Planned Parenthood” and limited “access to care” were each mentioned twice, while “unable to provide a specific service” and “affordability” were each mentioned once. These 6 mentions of consequences consisted of just .04 percent of the total messages on Twitter. On Facebook, “defunding

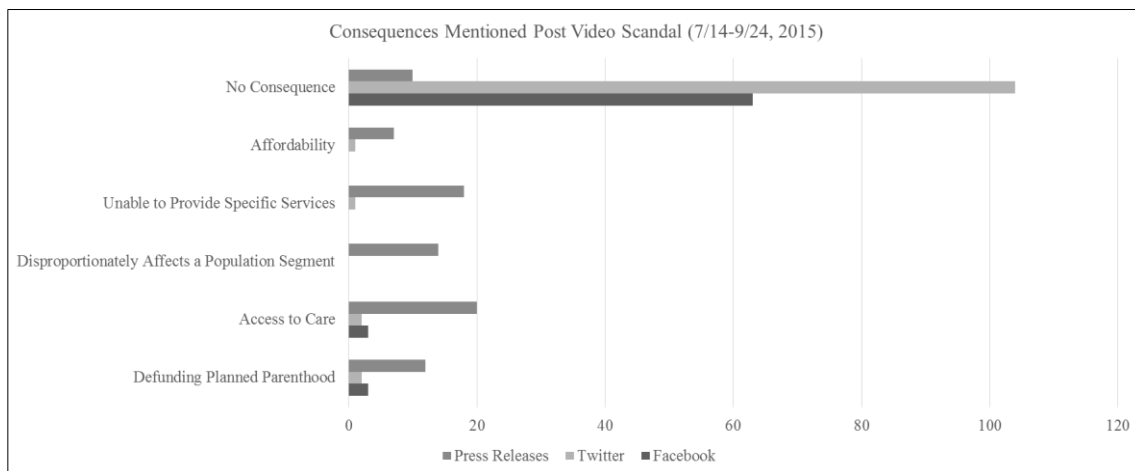


Figure 16. Consequences Mentioned Post Video Scandal (7/14-9/24, 2015)

Planned Parenthood” and limited “access to care” were each mentioned 3 times, making the 6 mentions of consequences on the platform a total of .06 percent of the total messages. Press releases contained the majority of mentions of consequences.

“Defunding Planned Parenthood” was mentioned 12 times, limited “access to care” was

mentioned 20 times, “disproportionately affects a population segment” was mentioned 14 times, “unable to provide a specific service” was mentioned 18 times, “affordability” was mentioned 7 times. No mentions of a consequence occurred in 10 press releases, totaling 20.8 percent of the sample.

CHAPTER 5- DISCUSSION

Planned Parenthood's Crisis Communication Frames

Overall, Planned Parenthood used emphasis framing in most of its messages both before and after the crisis began, especially on social media, answering research questions 1 and 2 in regards to media and crisis communication framing. This indicates that Planned Parenthood's communication strategy as a whole was to highlight the services it provides to all publics. Even when equivalency framing was used, it often highlighted the services Planned Parenthood provided, but added additional data that showed its impact. For example, in one Twitter post from July 28, 2015 that was coded as equivalency, Planned Parenthood highlighted the services it provided stating it provided 400,000 pap tests, 500,000 breast exams, and 4.5 million STI tests and treatments to patients. After the crisis began, Planned Parenthood did utilize the attribution of blame frame at an increased rate in press releases. This shows that Planned Parenthood's communication strategy once the crisis began was to address the crisis and its potential outcomes to the organization through its press releases specifically. The fact that social media frames changed minimally after the crisis began indicates that Planned Parenthood did not stray from its overall communication strategy significantly once the videos emerged and that social media was primarily used to manage its reputation and image.

Prior to the release of the videos, Planned Parenthood used very little episodic or thematic framing or strategic and issue framing on social media, answering research question 1. While this increased slightly after the onset of the crisis, Planned Parenthood overwhelmingly did not use episodic and thematic framing or strategic and issue framing within its communication on social media. The instances when either type of framing

was used were commenting directly on the video scandal. Most likely, Planned Parenthood was unable to develop episodic or thematic framing and strategic and issue framing because social media messages are shorter in nature and because the organization did not want to address the video scandal as often on social media.

The press releases utilized episodic and thematic framing in greatest proportion after the videos were released, answering research question 2. This shows that Planned Parenthood used the press releases to call attention to the video scandal repeatedly in order to address the scandal and its outcomes directly within its communication. This was done by indicating when individual states ruled that Planned Parenthood had committed no violations regarding its fetal tissue program, when other states refused to investigate the organization, and even when Congress held committee meetings regarding the video scandal. There were instances that Planned Parenthood used thematic framing within the press releases to show that anti-abortion activists continuously threatened or attempted to discredit the organization. Planned Parenthood used thematic framing to help show that it was integral in fighting for women's health and reproductive rights and continue to show the organization as an activist for all women's health care.

Strategic and issue framing showed similar patterns. Planned Parenthood used strategic and issue framing to highlight political involvement and its strategy to fight for women's health care. Often, when press releases used episodic framing the message was also coded as issue framing. This indicates that not only was Planned Parenthood emphasizing specific events, it then used these events to provide its take on the issue politically. Planned Parenthood parlayed its individual episodes and messaging around a specific event into a commentary on the issue politically. Strategic framing was used in

greater proportion in the press releases after the video scandal as well. This shows Planned Parenthood attempted to influence public opinion and was politically motivated in regards to its messaging around the crisis. Planned Parenthood used strategic framing with the purpose of indicating how the organization was going to position itself to show political elites the impact defunding the organization could have on women's health care and the support the organization carries. For example, in one press release coded as strategic, Planned Parenthood called attention to the fact that it is the nation's most trusted women's health care provider and quoted 25 editorial boards from newspapers across the nation that had shown support for the organization. This was part of its crisis communication strategy to show ongoing support for the organization and that trust had not waned for the organization in response to the videos.

Overwhelmingly, the tone was positive in messages both before and after the video scandal across all platforms, however, press releases after the video scandal exhibited negative tones, showing differences that answer research questions 1 and 2. The majority of the positively toned frames were informational/educational which shows that Planned Parenthood was using its messages across all platforms to educate its publics regarding the services it provides and how it supports women's health care as a whole. The other positive tone frames that Planned Parenthood used were proud or advocacy/call to action across all platforms. Advocacy/call to action was often used to engage publics on social media and when used in press releases referenced Planned Parenthood's social media campaigns, such as #IstandwithPlannedParenthood. On social media, publics were asked to share their experiences with the organization. When the proud frame was used, it was often to note the successes of Planned Parenthood. These ranged from launching a

smartphone app for STD/STI testing and counseling to the organization's involvement developing in two movies related to pregnancy or sexual health that reflected today's reality.

When the negative toned frames were used, primarily in the press releases after the release of the videos, Planned Parenthood consistently defended itself in regards to the accusations the Center for Medical Progress was making toward it. This indicates that Planned Parenthood's crisis communication strategy was to address the scandal in press releases. The few mentions on social media of the scandal were necessary, but Planned Parenthood did not specifically attempt to discredit or deny the allegations repeatedly on social media like it did in the press releases. Planned Parenthood not only used the press releases to deal with the fallout of the scandal, but it directly attacked the Center for Medical Progress and called upon Congress to not legitimize the group. This type of negative tone framing was not found on social media to nearly the same extent, and this indicates that Planned Parenthood did not want to provide an opportunity for publics to be exposed to the dialogue around the video scandal, at least not without Planned Parenthood's ability to control the messaging. Planned Parenthood minimized the opportunity for opposition to engage by ensuring its crisis communication strategy regarding the videos was limited to press releases which provided its own side of the story.

Planned Parenthood's Crisis Communication Strategy

Planned Parenthood's crisis communication strategy was a combination of both image restoration theory, Situational Crisis Communication Theory, and Corporate Apologia. Planned Parenthood primarily used image restoration theory to manage its

image on social media platforms, and implemented a calculated response that attributed blame, found in both SCCT and corporate apologia, through its press releases.

The high number of mentions of the video scandal in the press releases compared to social media platforms indicates Planned Parenthood attempted to address the video scandal through its press releases. For example, on July 26, 2015, Planned Parenthood released a statement regarding its President, Cecile Richards's, appearance on "This Week with George Stephanopoulos." The press release includes the following statement made by Richards regarding the video scandal, "This was... a three-year effort to entrap doctors. They were completely unsuccessful" (Planned Parenthood, 2015b). Richards goes on to say, "And now they're using these very highly edited videos, sensationalized videos, to try to impugn and smear the name of Planned Parenthood. They have zero credibility. They set up a fake company. They apparently used fake government IDs. They've faked faxed tax filings and completely falsified what they were about" (Planned Parenthood, 2015b). The clustering of video scandal mentions in July on Facebook and Twitter shows an attempt by Planned Parenthood to address the scandal on social media at the onset of the crisis, but was not part of its ongoing social media crisis communication strategy. Planned Parenthood's social media messages addressed its image and reputation through informative posts that detailed the women's health services it provides to patients.

Planned Parenthood used social media posts primarily to promote its women's health frame. This is indicated by the primary use of the women's health frame compared to the abortion frame on Facebook and Twitter. This indicates that its overall crisis communication strategy on social media platforms was to repair its image. The

positive tone of the messages on Facebook and Twitter and the inclusion of the informational/educational, proud, and call to action/advocacy frames indicate Planned Parenthood's crisis communication strategy was to provide information about its organization's services, engage publics, and promote its image and reputation as a women's health service provider. In an effort to manage its reputation in the public, Planned Parenthood continuously called attention to its women's health services like birth control options, sexually transmitted disease testing and treatment, and cancer screening services. These serve as the bulk of services Planned Parenthood provides to its patients, and its crisis communication strategy ensured that these were mentioned on social media to help remind publics what care it provides to both women and men.

Planned Parenthood's use of the image restoration strategy on social media managed the threats made to the organization's reputation with positively toned messages toward key publics that used the platforms. Message consistency across platforms indicates Planned Parenthood saw Twitter and Facebook users as relatively similar publics. Planned Parenthood strategically determined when to address the threats of the video, in July right after the release of the videos, and only mentioned the videos one other time in September. This messaging strategy minimized the opportunity for negative comments to occur on Facebook and Twitter due to social media's interactive nature. Planned Parenthood issued messages that abusive comments toward its supporters, followers, or the organization itself on social media would not be tolerated, which also minimized its detractors ability to comment negatively about the organization on its own social media sites. This exclusion provided Planned Parenthood an opportunity to use its social media to repeatedly stress its good traits through its women's

health frame. Planned Parenthood was able to manage negative effects to its reputation on social media, by consistently promoting its women's health services, portraying information in a positive tone, and minimizing the detractor's ability to interact on its social media platforms.

Planned Parenthood utilized the press releases to deal directly with the video crisis. The minimal references to the video on social media and its overwhelming references to the video on press releases support this finding. Additionally, 28 press releases used the abortion frame, significantly more than both Facebook and Twitter, despite the larger sample of messages on social media. This coincides with the 28 press releases that utilized a negative tone and defensive frame, indicating that Planned Parenthood defended its reputation and attempted to combat negative reaction to the video scandal primarily through its press releases. As an example, on July 28, 2015, Planned Parenthood released a statement of support from its Clergy Advocacy Board that also referenced the fetal tissue donation program attacked in the videos released by the Center for Medical Progress. The Clergy Advocacy Board said, "Faith leaders have supported Planned Parenthood for nearly 100 years because of our shared goals: every person — regardless of income, race, or religion — deserves access to safe, affordable, high-quality health care...Planned Parenthood does the best of what religious traditions do: care, no matter what" (Planned Parenthood, 2015c).

The attribution of blame frame was used 25 times in press releases once the crisis ensued. In each of these cases, Planned Parenthood denied any wrongdoing that was indicated in the videos and accepted no responsibility. Planned Parenthood consistently attributed responsibility to anti-abortion activists and directly called out the Center for

Medical Progress in certain press releases. Additionally, the organization repeatedly alluded to conservative political elites as being responsible for the crisis due to their legitimizing the Center for Medical Progress and the fact that it shared the video with conservative members of Congress before releasing it to the public. This is most notably seen in press releases from July 15, 2015 and August 3, 2015. Eric Ferrero, Vice President of Communications for the organization stated on July 15, “These outrageous claims are flat-out untrue, but that doesn't matter to politicians with a longstanding political agenda to ban abortion and defund Planned Parenthood” (Planned Parenthood, 2015e). On August 3, the press release stated, “While some extreme Republicans may continue to insist on shutting down the government in order to deny health care, including birth control, to millions of women, that is a fight the American people have zero appetite for and a fight these extremists will not win (Planned Parenthood, 2015d). The attribution of blame frame used all of the denial strategies detailed by the SCCT. Planned Parenthood attacked the accuser, denied responsibility, and used conservative politicians as a scapegoat. Planned Parenthood never used a diminishing or rebuilding strategy in its press releases.

Along with attributing blame to the Center for Medical Progress, Planned Parenthood additionally ensured its communication strategy utilized apologia within its messaging. Planned Parenthood detailed what led up to the crisis in its press releases when it explained that the videos were spliced together and omitted key phrases its employees stated. This is exemplified by the use of dissociation communication strategies. By showing that the Center for Medical Progress falsified the video content through editing, Planned Parenthood was able to show that the videos and resulting crisis

did not even occur as shown. The “Report and Letter to Congress Outline Substantial Deceptive Editing in Anti-Abortion Video Campaign,” press release from August 27, 2015 was the main message that employed the dissociation communication strategy and emphasized the distortion the video splicing created.

Planned Parenthood never took any responsibility for the accusations made in the videos. In fact, throughout all platforms, only one message contained an apology. In the press release posted on July 16, 2015 titled, “Planned Parenthood President Releases Video Response to Latest Smear Campaign,” Cecile Richards, President of Planned Parenthood Federation of America, issued the following apology, “Our top priority is the compassionate care that we provide. In the video, one of our staff members speaks in a way that does not reflect that compassion. This is unacceptable, and I personally apologize for the staff member’s tone and statements” (Planned Parenthood, 2015a). This single apology does not take responsibility for the crisis in any manner, but simply notes that a Planned Parenthood staff member did not meet its employer obligation of compassion as seen in the video. The responsibility that is taken by Planned Parenthood is for its own employee, that employee’s tone and action, and recognizes the insensitivity that was portrayed in the video. Ultimately, this apology does not indicate Planned Parenthood took responsibility for the crisis or played any role in the crisis, thus ensuring that Planned Parenthood was indicated to be a victim, not corroborating perpetrator of the released videos.

“Déjà Vu: Center for Medical Progress Just the Latest in More than a Decade of Eerily Similar Discredited Attacks on Planned Parenthood,” detailed how similar videos were created and dispensed by anti-abortion activists on nine different occasions over the

past fifteen years. This press release was specifically aimed to help Planned Parenthood show itself as a victim of the Center for Medical Progress and other anti-abortion activists. To further distance itself from the videos, and undermine the video's credibility, Planned Parenthood placed the organization in the victim role in its messaging regarding the video scandal. This theme was consistently seen throughout the press releases, and Planned Parenthood ensured that its crisis communication strategy portrayed the organization as being continuously attacked by anti-abortion activists who will stop at nothing to prevent Planned Parenthood from providing services to its patients simply because it also provides abortion services. This strategy is also discussed in the SCCT. Planned Parenthood was not in control of the video scandal, as the videos were released without its knowledge, and therefore allowed the organization to define itself as a victim. This strategy would help Planned Parenthood ensure publics remained sympathetic to the organization and aligned blame with the appropriate organization.

Planned Parenthood's Crisis Communication and Publics

Planned Parenthood did use consistent messages across platforms, however, it ensured that messages regarding the crisis that were found in press releases were not repeatedly shared on social media, referencing research question 4. Overall, Twitter and Facebook messages were relatively consistent. Messages found on Twitter were also seen on Facebook in some form. While Planned Parenthood did not always share the same message on the same day and often reworded its posts, the overwhelming similarity between the two social media platforms shows the importance of its message consistency. Since crisis related messages were not shared often on social media, this continues the support of Planned Parenthood's crisis communication strategy of limiting its messaging regarding the crisis to traditional media sources. Press releases that did not directly

address the crisis, however, were shared on social media, as evidenced by the mimicked posts regarding its STI/STD testing and counseling smartphone application, the consent videos the organization developed, and even its involvement in developing the movies *Grandma* and *Sleeping with Other People*.

Based on the frames used and mentions of the video scandal across social media and the press releases, it is clear the Planned Parenthood was addressing different publics on the different platforms. The press releases were more political in nature, they contained messages regarding investigations by states and committees into Planned Parenthood after the scandal, they referenced reports sent to Congress regarding the video scandal, and criminal repercussions the Center for Medical Progress could face due to its actions in producing the video. This indicates that Planned Parenthood was targeting traditional media publics of political elites and attempting to manage public opinion regarding policy. This is not to say that Planned Parenthood did not use press releases to share positive information regarding its organization, because it did, but the majority of the press releases focused on the video scandal in some form or another after the crisis began, making the pressers the primary vehicle for providing information about the crisis.

This is the division that indicates Planned Parenthood had a targeted crisis communication strategy when it came to reaching traditional media sources and its publics. Essentially, Planned Parenthood targeted political elites and those who opposed the organization through its press releases. The focus of the messages shows this and the fact that traditional media play a major role in influencing public opinion and ultimately policy shows this. People who oppose Planned Parenthood and its abortion services would have been more supportive of the videos released by the Center for Medical

Progress. The best way for Planned Parenthood to combat the video's impact on its reputation would be through discrediting the organization which was done in the press releases. The defensive nature of the press releases also provided a clear frame for traditional media sources to use in its reporting on the video scandal and Planned Parenthood could filter its response through the media and to its opposition and political elites.

The approach on social media to highlight its women's health services also indicates Planned Parenthood's crisis communication strategy was targeting specific publics through Facebook and Twitter, referencing research question 3. The nature of the messages were positive in tone, they addressed a variety of health services Planned Parenthood provides to patients, and generally attempted to show Planned Parenthood as more than just an abortion service provider. These messages are targeted to the publics that already support the organization, are patients of the organization, or who those who do not have a definite opinion of the organization. By cultivating a strategy that highlights the positives, Planned Parenthood hoped to remind and engage supporters of its positive aspects and influence those who did not currently have opinion about the organization to have a positive opinion. Planned Parenthood also attempted to engage patients by asking them to share their experiences with the organization and ultimately help bolster its reputation. Cultivating its reputation through positive and engaging social media posts was part of Planned Parenthood's crisis communication strategy, indicating the importance of research question 5.

Social media shares and likes functionality speaks to its ability to connect users and engage publics. As posts receive shares and likes, a level of support for the message

is demonstrated by the user. Likes and shares remained relatively stable on Facebook and Twitter, however, certain posts, timed with key events before and after the onset of the crisis, indicate that publics are willing to engage with and condone the messages Planned Parenthood posted regarding these events. The significance of these events were either timed with Planned Parenthood's initial response to the videos when they were released or were timed with key events regarding government policies. For example, before the crisis when Planned Parenthood expressed its support for the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in favor of marriage equality, shares and likes increased. Similarly, once the crisis began, Planned Parenthood's posts regarding key Congressional votes regarding the organization's government funding also received more attention. Other posts that mentioned Planned Parenthood's ongoing intention of providing abortion services and women's health care despite the video and other attacks by anti-abortion activists received more attention from Facebook and Twitter users showing support for its services. Finally, shares and likes increased at the end of the initial crisis period when the Senate voted down another bill that would have defunded Planned Parenthood. Shares and likes repeatedly increased when messages were directly addressing the crisis or the political fallout.

This pattern shows not only that Planned Parenthood was attempting to keep its publics informed regarding the ongoing implications of the video scandal, but that its messaging was an attempt to engage supporters politically as well. Those who support the organization are more likely to share or like a post, especially one that could potentially harm the organization financially. Engaging supporters on social media also indicates larger support for the organization across the entire voting population and sends

a clear message to political elites. If the American people still support the organization and are opposed to the defunding efforts by Congress who represent them, then voting down bills that remove this support is ultimately in the best interest of politicians.

Additionally, supporter engagement with messages around the crisis is increasingly important. As Planned Parenthood disseminated its first response regarding the videos released, supporters can and did share and like the posts, indicating they continued their support for the organization regardless of the video. Using supporters to continue to help spread Planned Parenthood's message would have been important to the organization's overall social media strategy and broader crisis communication strategy. As organization enter crises, it becomes imperative to keep stakeholders engaged and supportive in order to continue with reputation repair.

Regardless, Planned Parenthood would have used its social media support to indicate which messages were resonating the most with the public. This would help with its ongoing crisis communication strategy. The likelihood that increased shares and likes regarding public policy before the crisis, like marriage equality, would indicate to Planned Parenthood that these types of messages resonate with social media users and to continue them as a part of its crisis communication strategy. This is why it continued to call attention to the key policy events during the initial crisis period on its social media platforms.

Reputation Management, Public Opinion, and Priming Attitudes

When Planned Parenthood mentioned consequences of the video scandal and potential defunding of the organization, it was primarily done in the press releases, referencing research question 6. The two most frequent mentions of consequences were "limited access to care" and "unable to provide a specific service" indicating that Planned

Parenthood's strategy when mentioning consequences was to reference the services that it provides in the women's health sector. Additionally, when the mention of the consequence "disproportionately affects a certain segment of the population," Planned Parenthood is reminding publics that it provides these women's health services to patient populations that already experience significant barriers to care like access and affordability. The combination of these three consequences reminds publics that Planned Parenthood is providing health care, most notably through Medicaid and Title X programs that are meant to reach these vulnerable segments of the population that are typically underserved by the traditional medical community, priming its publics.

An inference can also be made that the placement of these consequences primarily in press releases plays into Planned Parenthood's strategy of addressing the crisis and potential negative outcomes to certain publics. Since the press releases are intended for traditional media, and traditional media is targeting greater public opinion and its political influence, Planned Parenthood is attempting to remind political elites of the consequences of defunding Planned Parenthood. The consequences not only make Medicaid and Title X patients more vulnerable health wise, but the preventative care Planned Parenthood is providing is ultimately saving the government significant money over time. Additionally, the fact that Planned Parenthood rarely addressed consequences on its social media platforms indicates that its crisis communication strategy was to not engage the crisis fully on Facebook or Twitter, but to simply portray the organization as a women's health provider. Had Planned Parenthood continuously posted about the crisis and its potential consequences, there would not have been a dedicated platform for the

organization to manage its reputation with a positive tone and potentially gain support from a younger, more diverse demographic.

Planned Parenthood employed a crisis communication strategy that differed across platforms for specific reasons. Through social media, Planned Parenthood was able to manage its reputation and in the press releases it was able to address the crisis directly. Planned Parenthood could remain positively toned and use frames that emphasized its women's health services, while being defensive and more negatively toned in the press releases. Ultimately, using social media and press releases for two separate strategies became a way for Planned Parenthood to prime attitudes appropriately for the right publics.

Continuing to bring up the crisis on social media would have reminded those publics of the accusations aimed at Planned Parenthood, priming attitudes around the crisis. Instead, Planned Parenthood chose to use social media to remind publics of the good the organization provides in women's health care and primed attitudes in a more effective manner for the organization's reputation. This approach was similar with focusing on the crisis in the press releases. In order to prime attitudes around the crisis for political elites and the larger public, Planned Parenthood focused its messaging within the press releases to discredit the Center for Medical Progress, call on Congressmen to reject bills that would remove funding and limit access to care, and remind voters that Planned Parenthood provides a wide variety of health services to all women and men regardless of their socioeconomic status.

The influence these messages could have on public opinion are a result of priming attitudes. With the influx of new information with the release of the videos, Planned

Parenthood was in the unique position of needing to not only manage its reputation but protect its federal funding. Ensuring that voters understand what the organization does and discrediting the Center for Medical Progress became a top priority for managing its reputation and priming its publics. In addition, Planned Parenthood used the consequences mentioned in the press releases in conjunction with the crisis itself to prime attitudes about what could occur should its reputation become irreparably damaged and funding was removed. Reminding its publics of the women's health services it provides, even when dealing directly with the crisis was no coincidence. This strategy served the organization by juxtaposing the accusations being made against the organization with what damage could be done to being able to provide preventative care and women's health services to patients. Partnering the potential impact of defunding with details of the services provided in messages primes public's attitudes regarding the potential policy impact.

CHAPTER 6- CONCLUSION

As a whole, Planned Parenthood's crisis communication strategy was successful through the initial crisis period. The organization was able to escape immediate defunding by Congress and discredit the Center for Medical Progress. Planned Parenthood was able to prove the videos released were not accurate representations of what the organization does with respect to its fetal tissue donation programs and the ongoing investigations by Congress and states all found no wrongdoing on Planned Parenthood's part. The success of the crisis communication strategy gives the organization an opportunity to review what worked best and what was least successful in managing its reputation throughout the initial crisis period. This gives Planned Parenthood insight into how it should prepare for future crises and what messages resonate most with supporters. Additionally, its crisis communication strategy can be evaluated for weaknesses in order to manage prodromes more successfully before they become full-fledged crises. Planned Parenthood can adapt its crisis communication strategy and messages into an effective ongoing communication plan that reinforces its reputation in a positive manner.

Other organizations similar to Planned Parenthood can use these findings to help develop its own successful crisis communication strategy. There are numerous organizations like Planned Parenthood that rely on public funding and subsequently public opinion, in order to provide its services, or provide services that are controversial in nature. In these cases, when a crisis hits, it can have severe financial repercussions. Modeling a crisis communication strategy after Planned Parenthood's that highlighted its services, noted its involvement in underserved communities, and maintained its positive impact on the community is easily transferrable to other industries and markets and could

help another organization successfully manage its reputation. Planned Parenthood not only provided a relatively successful blueprint for a crisis communication strategy, but also showed that utilizing social media platforms differently than traditional media can be an advantage. Having mostly positive information around the organization on social media and addressing the negative aspects in press releases allowed the organization to strategically maneuver its messages and minimize backlash where information can easily go viral on social media. This is an important lesson for similar organization facing a crisis to learn. Social media is more interactive and engaging, but having much more controlled, positive information on a platform where it can be easily shared means that publics are focusing on the positives an organization provides and not the negatives from the crisis.

There are some weaknesses and limitations to this study. First, in the coding process it was found that emphasis framing was operationalized too broadly. In future iterations of this study, fine tuning how emphasis framing is coded would be beneficial. Crises are ongoing, and having only looked at the initial crisis period, the overall crisis communication strategy for an extended period cannot be determined. Including more messages after the crisis ensued would give insight into how Planned Parenthood dealt with and continues to deal with the ongoing fallout of the video release. This study was also limited to social media and press releases, however, Planned Parenthood certainly used other media sources, like television, to reach publics. Researchers could determine if at any point Planned Parenthood changed its strategy or began to incorporate different frames into its messaging or broaden the study to look at more media sources. Including media sources, such as television and newspapers, would provide researchers with an

even greater sample of messages to analyze and make inferences regarding Planned Parenthood's crisis communication strategy. Additionally, Planned Parenthood experienced compounding crisis events after the videos were released, such as violent attacks on affiliated centers that were unrelated to the video scandal. Exploring how separate crisis events that occurred within the same period affected its communication strategy is important. More studies that focus on public opinion polling around Planned Parenthood could give insight into the overall success of its crisis communication strategy, message resonance, and ability to influence public opinion.

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APPENDIX A- CODE BOOK

	Name	Label	Value
1	Date	Date of release or post	MM/DD/YY
2	Source	Social Media or Press Release	1 Press Release 2 Twitter 3 Facebook
3	Video Mention	Was the video scandal directly mentioned?	1 Yes 2 No
4	Media and Crisis Communication Frame	What media or crisis communication frame was used?	1 Equivalency 2 Attribution 3 Emphasis
5	Attribution Frame	If attribution frame was used what level of responsibility was taken?	1 Deny 2 Diminish 3 Rebuilding
6	Media Framing- Episodic or Thematic	Did the message use episodic or thematic framing?	1 Episodic 2 Thematic 3 None
7	Media Framing- Strategic or Issue	Did the message use strategic or issue framing?	1 Strategic 2 Issue 3 None
8	Abortion Frame	Abortion	1 Abortion 2 Pregnancy Termination 3 Fetal Tissue 4 Abortion Service Provider 5 None
9	Women's Health Provider Frame	Women's Health	1 Women's Health 2 Birth Control 3 STI/STD Testing 4 Cancer Screening 5 Sex Education 6 Family Planning 7 Counseling Services/ Relationships 8 Pregnancy 9 Service Provider 10 Sexual Health/Sex lives 11 Preventative Care 12 LGBTQ Health

			13 Health Insurance/ Affordable Health care 14 Men's Health Services 15 None
10	Both Frames	Were both Abortion and Women's Health Frame used?	1 Yes 2 No
11	Both Frames- Most used	If both frames were used, which was used most?	1 Abortion 2 Women's Health
12	Tone	Was the overall tone of the message positive or negative?	1 Positive 2 Negative
13	Tone Frame- Positive	If positive, what was the underlying tone frame?	1 Informational/Educational 2 Proud 3 Advocacy/ Call to Action
14	Tone Frame- Negative	If negative, what was the underlying tone frame?	1 Defensive 2 Denial
15	Care Recipient	Was a recipient of services mentioned?	1 Yes 2 No
16	Consequences	Was a consequence mentioned in relation to the crisis?	1 Loss of Funding 2 Access to care 3 Disproportionately affects a population segment 4 Unable to provide specific services 5 Affordability 6 None
17	Additional Media	Included additional media	1 Video 2 Photo 3 Link to Website 4 None
18	Additional Media	How often was an included video viewed?	
19	Shared	How often was the social media post shared?	

20	Likes	How often was the social media post liked?	
21	Message Consistency	Was the social media post or press release seen on another platform?	1 Press Release 2 Twitter 3 Facebook 4 None

APPENDIX B- CODING RULES

1. What was date of press release or post?
2. What was the source of the content being analyzed?
3. Does the press release or social media post reference the video scandal?
 - a. This is determined by the use of the following keywords: attack, false attack, video, scandal, video scandal, undercover video, Center for Medical Progress, fetal tissue donation, secretly videoed, smear campaign
4. What Media or Crisis Communication frame was used?
 - a. This is determined by the use of the following type of frames which are defined as following:
 - i. **Equivalency**- Does the press release or social media post present information in an equivalent manner?
 - ii. **Attribution**- Does the press release or social media post place an attribution of blame or responsibility on an organization?
 - iii. **Emphasis**- Does the press release or social media post highlight specific considerations regarding the topic?
5. If attribution frame was used, what level of responsibility was taken?
 - a. This is determined by whether or not the organization used the deny, diminish, or rebuilding strategy
 - i. **Deny**- Does the press release or social media post attack the accuser, deny responsibility, or scapegoat?
 - ii. **Diminish**- Does the press release or social media post provide excuses or justification?
 - iii. **Rebuilding**- Does the press release or social media post provide an apology or compensation?
6. Media Framing- Episodic or Thematic
 - a. This is determined by if overall message of the press release or social media post episodic or thematic in nature
 - i. **Episodic**- Does the press release or social media post discuss one single event
 - ii. **Thematic**- Does the press release or social media post exhibit a higher level story arc?
 - iii. **None**- Neither a single event or higher level story arc is exhibited
7. Media Framing- Strategic or Issue
 - a. This is determined by the overall message of the press release or social media post is strategic or issue related.
 - i. **Strategic**- Does the press release or social media post focus on political motives?
 - ii. **Issue**- Does the press release or social media post focus on a specific political issue?
 - iii. **None**- Neither political motive or political issue is focused on in the press release or social media post.
8. Does the press release or post use the abortion frame?
 - a. This is determined by whether or not the press release or post used the following keywords for each value provided:

- i. **Abortion** or one of the following: anti-abortion, medical abortion, Roe v. Wade, pro-abortion
 - ii. **pregnancy termination**
 - iii. **fetal tissue** or one of the following: fetal tissue donation, tissue donation, scientific research
 - iv. **abortion service provider**
 - v. **none** (if none of the above keywords were mentioned)
- 9. Does the press release or post use the women's health frame?
 - a. This is determined by whether or not the press release or post used the following key words for each value provided:
 - i. **Women's Health** or one of the following: Reproductive Health, repro, reproductive rights, women's rights, gender, health care, health information, vagina, health, rape kit, pelvic exam, period, menstruation, tampons, pad,
 - ii. **Birth Control** or one of the following: IUD, Condoms, Birth Control, the Pill, Birth Control Pill, Contraceptives, Contraceptive Services
 - iii. **STI/STD Testing** or one of the following: Hepatitis, Hep B, Hep C, HIV, AIDS, Herpes, STI, STD, Trich,
 - iv. **Cancer Screening** or one of the following: Cancer, HPV, breast exams, cervical cancer,
 - v. **Sex Education** or one of the following: Sex Ed, "the talk," education.
 - vi. **Family Planning** or one of the following: parenting, parent, parenthood, family, fertility
 - vii. **Counseling Services/ Relationships** or one of the following: talk, told, love, partner, sexual history, share, sharing, consent, communication, significant other, abuse
 - viii. **Pregnancy** or one of the following: pregnancies, womb, gestational period
 - ix. **Service Provider** or one of the following: doctor, nurse, staff, providers, health center, services
 - x. **Sexual Health/Sex lives** or one of the following: lube, clitoris, sex, masturbation, vibrator,
 - xi. **Preventative Care** or one of the following: pap smears, pap tests, prevention, prevent
 - xii. **LGBTQ Health** or one of the following: intersex, trans, equality, LGBTQ, bisexual, gay, lesbian, same-sex, gender identity
 - xiii. **Health Insurance/Affordable Health care** or one of the following: insurance, Obamacare, Medicaid, Medicare, enroll, loans, disability, affordable, inexpensive
 - xiv. **Men's Health Services** or one of the following: penis, men,
 - xv. **None** (if none of the keywords were mentioned)
- 10. Were both the abortion and women's health frame used simultaneously in the press release or post?
- 11. If so, which was used most?

- a. This will be determined by the frequency count of the keywords for each frame
12. Was the overall tone of the message positive or negative?
- a. This will be determined by assessing whether or not the tone of the message indicated positive or negative aspects
13. If positive, what was the underlying tone theme?
- a. This will be determined by asking the following questions for each tone listed.
 - i. **Informational/Educational**- Does Planned Parenthood provide information regarding any of the services it provides for patients? Does Planned Parenthood attempt to provide materials or information that would provide the viewer with factual information regarding any of the services it provides to patients? Are there statistics or other factual information presented in the communication that a viewer could use to make an informed decision?
 - ii. **Proud**- Does Planned Parenthood show pride in its services provided or organization through its communication? Does Planned Parenthood express thanks or appreciation for others that show support for its organization? Does Planned Parenthood use statements of support to demonstrate the services it provides to patients or for the reputation of the organization?
 - iii. **Advocacy/Call to Action**- Does Planned Parenthood request action by those viewing press releases or posts? Does Planned Parenthood reference the federal government in an effort to engage voters in showing support for its organization? Does Planned Parenthood request viewers to show support for its organization? Does the press release or post reference advocacy efforts or report on support provided by constituents?
14. If negative, what was the underlying tone theme?
- a. This will be determined by asking the following questions for each tone listed.
 - i. **Defensive**- Does Planned Parenthood defend its services and/or actions? Does Planned Parenthood attempt to discredit any opposition to its services? Does Planned Parenthood attempt to correct inaccurate information that was provided by another organization in its communication? Does Planned Parenthood question the validity of the accusations it faces? Does Planned Parenthood acknowledge attempts to prevent health care or abortion services for women in their communication?
 - ii. **Denial**- Does Planned Parenthood deny responsibility for any actions taken? Does Planned Parenthood attribute responsibility to another organization? Does Planned Parenthood scapegoat or attack another organization?
15. Was a recipient of care mentioned?

- a. This will be determined by whether or not the press release or post addresses services directly provided to patients or the group or individual patient themselves
16. Was a consequence mentioned in relation to the crisis?
- a. This will be determined by whether or not the press release or post addresses potential negative outcomes due to this crisis in the following manners:
 - i. **Loss of Funding-** Does the press release or post mention the potential loss of federal funding, its impact, or anything related to pulling government funding?
 - ii. **Access to care-** Does the press release or post mention reduction in access to care for patients?
 - iii. **Disproportionately affects a population segment-** Does the press release or post mention an effect on a specific segment of the population?
 - iv. **Unable to provide specific services-** Does the press release or post mention that it would not be able to provide a specific service to its patients?
 - v. **Affordability-** Does the press release or post mention that the ability for the patient to pay for services or Planned Parenthood to provide care at a lower cost would be limited?
 - vi. **None-** no consequences were mentioned
17. Was additional media included with the press release or post? This is including, but not limited to a video, website link, or photo.
18. If a video was included, document how many times the video was viewed if available.
19. Document the number of times a social media post was shared.
20. Document the number of times a social media post was liked.
21. Was the social media post or press release seen on another platform?
- a. This is determined by whether or not the message was replicated exactly or relatively similarly on another platform.
 - i. An amended version of a press release with same overall messages can be counted.

VITA

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Lauren has worked in healthcare information technology and hospital revenue cycle since 2010. Lauren began her studies at Louisiana State University's Manship School of Mass Communication in 2010.