11-30-2010

America's P.R.I.D.E.: Entertainment Education as a Health Communication Intervention Strategy for Middle School and High School Students

Elizabeth Stephens

To the University Council:

The Dissertation Committee for Elizabeth Stephens certifies that this is the final approved version of the following electronic dissertation: "America's P.R.I.D.E.: Entertainment Education as a Health Communication Intervention Strategy for Middle School and High School Students."

_____
Amanda J. Young, Ph.D.
Major Professor

We have read this dissertation and recommend
its acceptance:

_____
Sandra J. Sarkela, Ph.D.

_____
Walter G. Kirkpatrick, Ph.D.

_____
Kenneth D. Ward, Ph.D.

Accepted for the Graduate Council:

_____
Karen D. Weddle-West, Ph.D.
Vice Provost for Graduate Programs

AMERICA'S P.R.I.D.E.: ENTERTAINMENT EDUCATION AS A
HEALTH COMMUNICATION INTERVENTION STRATEGY
FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

by

Elizabeth Stephens

A Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Major: Communication

The University of Memphis

December 2010

Dedication

This dissertation would not have been possible without the cooperation of the

P.R.I.D.E. club at Houston High School. P.R.I.D.E. faculty advisors Leanne Smith, Cathy

Crowe, and Jennifer Billet gave me complete access to the club. The P.R.I.D.E. members

graciously allowed me to be a part of their world and made me feel welcome at all times.

For these reasons, I dedicate this dissertation to Houston High School P.R.I.D.E. club.

Acknowledgements

It is a pleasure to thank those individuals whose support made this dissertation possible. First and foremost, I would like to thank Dr. Amanda J. Young, my dissertation committee chairperson for her unwavering support of me as an individual, student, and writer during the process of completing my dissertation. Her passionate interest in human beings and their experiences with healthcare helped me to understand the need for effective health communication. In addition, she demonstrated the importance of applying research to benefit others in a real, practical manner. I am also indebted to my committee members for their support and for helping me to clarify the goals and framework of my study: Dr. Sandra J. Sarkela, Associate Professor of Communication, Dr. Walter G. Kirkpatrick, Associate Professor, and Dr. Kenneth D. Ward, Professor, School of Public Health,

I owe special appreciation to Cathyrn Hinshaw for encouraging me to obtain a college degree at a time in my life when I did not believe it was possible. Without her support, I could not have taken the first step. I am sure neither of us foresaw how far I would keep moving forward after that initial step.

Finally, my deepest gratitude to my husband and partner James for helping me make this journey by moving our family to Memphis so that I could finish my education. I could not have made it this far without his love, financial and emotional support, encouragement, and gentle prodding.

Abstract

Stephens, Elizabeth. Ph.D. The University of Memphis. December/2010. America's P.R.I.D.E.: Entertainment Education as a Health Communication Intervention Strategy for Middle School and High School Students. Major Professor: Amanda J. Young, Ph.D.

The purpose of this dissertation research was to study the ways that members of the P.R.I.D.E. club at Houston High School in Germantown, Tennessee used entertainment-education communication strategies in their presentations and the interpersonal persuasive strategies members used when talking with peers about substance abuse. Participants in this study were members of the P.R.I.D.E. club and ranged in age from 14-years-old to 18-years-old.

My research questions examined how P.R.I.D.E incorporated constructs of entertainment-education (emotional involvement, identification with characters, self-efficacy, perceived realism, and fear appeals) into their presentations to persuade peers to abstain from using alcohol, tobacco, and drugs, and examined the use of persuasive strategies in P.R.I.D.E.'s presentations. To gain insight into these questions, I conducted focus groups and semi-structured interview and completed a textual analysis of club materials.

The qualitative data analysis of the focus groups revealed three communication strategies that P.R.I.D.E. members use when talking with peers about substance abuse: indirect communication, reframing, and nonjudgmental communication. The focus groups and textual materials also revealed the use of rhetorical appeals, in order of frequency: emotional appeals, logical appeals, and ethical appeals. The qualitative data analysis of the interviews revealed the use of entertainment-education themes in order of frequency: perceived realism, self-efficacy, fear appeals, emotional involvement, and

audience identification. The interviews also yielded three themes: Impact, Inclusion, and Commitment, with Impact being the foremost theme. Four subcategories of this theme emerged: members as role models, feeling of confidence, members as teachers, and reciprocity. In addition, the explicit metaphors of family and members as missionaries emerged from the interviews. Altogether, these themes reflected the impact of belonging to P.R.I.D.E as experienced by its members.

My recommendations include working with P.R.I.D.E. to develop a theory-based approach to their presentations; helping P.R.I.D.E. develop a series using the same characters for continuity and the strengthening of entertainment-education strategies; encouraging them to collaborate with other health-based clubs in their school to jointly develop materials about health issues that are relevant to both groups; and encouraging them to pair entertainment-education with interpersonal communication that includes experiential activities for their audience.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Amy Juergens is 15 years old and a straight A student who plays in band. She is

pregnant with the child of fellow band member Ricky. When she first found out that she

was pregnant, she waited four weeks before she told her parents, who are currently

separated. After telling her mother and father, Amy made the decision to carry her

pregnancy to term and have the baby. This is not a true story, but the plot of a current

television show, *The Secret Life of the American Teenager* on the ABC Family Network

channel. During its first season, the show made the highest rated debut show for the

network, and scored its highest ratings with 12-34 year old females

(www.tvbythenumbers.org). The main focus of the show is to spotlight awareness of the

incidence of teen sex and teen pregnancy. This message is reinforced at the end of each

episode with a public service announcement made by the actress who plays Amy in the

show. She urges the use of contraception, encourages the awareness of sexually

transmitted diseases, and discusses other sex-related issues. *The Secret Life of the*

American Teenager is one of many television shows that use an entertainment-education

strategy to convey health messages to a mass audience.

Entertainment-education is the intentional placement of educational content in

entertainment messages (Singhal & Rogers, 2002). It is a persuasive strategy designed to

bring about social, attitudinal, and behavioral changes. In addition, it is also a process in

which a message is designed and implemented to increase audience knowledge about a

social or health issue, create favorable attitudes and changes in social norms, and change

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individual behavior (Church & Geller, 1989; Singhal & Rogers, 1999; Singhal, Cody, Rogers & Sabido, 2004; Storey, 1998).

Entertainment-education is persuasive by design. Persuasion is the deliberate act of influencing another person to behave in a desired manner. It can be spontaneous such as in face-to-face encounters, or planned, like a media campaign. Both types of persuasion are complex, requiring multiple, simultaneous cognitive processes in both the sender and receiver of a persuasive message. Individuals must know how to select the most effective words and strategies when attempting to persuade another person. In a broad sense, persuasion is concerned with changing people's beliefs, attitudes, motivations, and behaviors, which is also the goal of entertainment-education.

Most of the research about entertainment-education focuses on mass media channels. It examines the behavior effects of entertainment-education programming and viewer identification with characters (Papa, Singhal, Law, Pant, Sood, Rogers et al., 2000; Smith, Downs, & Witte, 2007; Valente & Bharath, 1999). The goal of most studies is to gauge audience reaction to the message or theoretical framing. Less research has examined entertainment-education in the theater setting (Glik, Nowak, Valente, Sapsis, & Martin, 2002; Hillman, Hovell, Williams, Hofstetter, & Burdyshaw, 1991; Winston, 2001). None of the studies has focused on the group who is producing the entertainment-education message for the audience and the planning that goes into the messages. America's P.R.I.D.E is an example of such a group.

America's P.R.I.D.E. is a national, school-based club designed for 14-to 18-year-old students. According to the group's website, (www.prideyouthprograms.org) P.R.I.D.E. (Parents' Resource Institute for Drug Education) was established in 1977 by a

group of parents concerned about teens using illegal drugs in their community. They were successful in establishing drug and tobacco education in their children's schools. An outcome of this success was the formation of P.R.I.D.E. Although originally established by parents, the club is now controlled by teenage students and their faculty mentors. P.R.I.D.E. members focus on motivating younger students to abstain from illegal drug, alcohol, and tobacco use by using theater productions, music, dance, and public speaking as entertainment-education strategies.

During the fall of 2007 I worked as a graduate assistant for Tobacco Free Memphis, a community coalition whose objective was to reduce youth initiation of tobacco use. One of the coalition's strategies was community outreach, which connected us with different anti-tobacco groups in Shelby County. One of these was America's P.R.I.D.E. Youth Program at Houston High School in Germantown, Tennessee.

Before meeting the students involved in P.R.I.D.E. I expected them to be quiet and serious. What I learned about them was quite different. Visualizing students' behavior as the bell rings to signal the end of the school day might give you a clearer picture of the atmosphere at the beginning of a P.R.I.D.E. meeting. At the end of a school day, students are restless, noisy, tired, and most are ready to talk to their friends. The students in P.R.I.D.E were not much different at the start of each meeting. This is not to say that their meetings were quiet – far from it. As one member described P.R.I.D.E.: "It's fun, energizing, and I wanna say focused. But it is teenagers, so we're gonna say half focused." A typical meeting included announcements, discussion about upcoming events, planning for presentations, physical icebreaker exercises and other group interactions. Often, the club president tried to quiet different cliques of students, or yelled

above the din to be heard. The faculty sponsors allowed the students to run the club, with minimal interference. Normally, club members broke into task groups that depended on the club's upcoming events. Whatever their task, these club members were lively, creative, and energetic.

After simultaneously observing and working with this enthusiastic group of teens for several months, and studying various persuasion theories concerned with health behavior, I realized that they were using entertainment-education to spread their message. The members seemed to genuinely enjoy participating in P.R.I.D.E., writing their presentations, and performing for their audiences. They spent much of their club meetings discussing the importance of P.R.I.D.E.'s message and how to reach their audience. As a result, I became especially curious about whether P.R.I.D.E.'s anti-substance abuse message achieved its intended effect on its audience and what type of interpersonal persuasive strategies members used when talking with peers or near-peers. With the permission of P.R.I.D.E.'s faculty sponsors, Houston High School's principal, the Shelby County School District, P.R.I.D.E. members, and the IRB at the University of Memphis, I conducted focus groups with the club members to learn about the persuasive language they used when talking with peers. The results of the focus group interviews led to a case study of P.R.I.D.E. and its entertainment-education strategies and persuasive strategies.

I chose entertainment-education as my area of study because it is a prevalent health information strategy both nationally and internationally. Developers of public health campaigns and health interventions, as well as television writers who want to promote health messages, rely heavily on entertainment-education to convey their

messages. An assumption seems to exist that if we entertain people while sending a message about a health issue, then somehow the audience will absorb the information and want to make beneficial changes in their lives. However, as the literature review in this dissertation will demonstrate, studies show mixed results about the intended effects of entertainment-education.

This topic also interests me because I wanted to explore the effects of anti-substance abuse messages and programs on teens. Beginning in the 1970s, a major public policy push was made to stop the distribution of marijuana, cocaine, and hallucinogens, and to educate the public about adverse health effects associated with drug use (Mosher & Yanagisako, 1991). According to current data, the highest rate of illegal drug use occurs among 18-25 year olds. This trend has not changed since the 1980s (SAMHSA, 2007). Public health educators who write anti-drug abuse programs and messages for teens reason that if they can raise awareness and help educate younger teens then they will be less likely to abuse illegal drugs as they grow into young adulthood. This is one of the major reasons for P.R.I.D.E.'s existence.

P.R.I.D.E. members are unique teens who are role models in their school and mentors for younger adolescents. The P.R.I.D.E. members with whom I developed relationships with were energetic, motivated, and dedicated to spreading the message about the harmful effects of drug and alcohol abuse. Many of them had personal stories about the impact of substance abuse in their families' lives. I was curious to learn how their group mission and personal experiences impacted their audiences. Through my study of P.R.I.D.E. I examined how and why specific messages were written for their

audiences. Using tools of participant-observer observation and textual analysis of scripts, club documents, focus groups, and interviews, I completed a case study analysis of P.R.I.D.E.

Overview of Entertainment-Education

The way in which entertainment-education is presented to the public may offer a more effective way to influence attitudes and behaviors than traditional methods of persuasion. Brown and Walsh-Childers (2002) hypothesize that "the insertion of socially responsible messages in entertainment media is a potentially powerful way of affecting behavior because the 'selling' of a particular behavior is not as obvious as it may be in a public service advertisement, and thus, audiences may not be as likely to resist the message" (p. 459). For this reason, entertainment-education may vary in terms of its intensity, length, and means by which it is delivered. The message may be lines of dialogue in a television show, included in several television episodes, written into a comic strip, delivered via the internet or radio, or delivered using live drama presentations.

Since its inception almost 40 years ago, entertainment-education has been recognized as a major tool for social change throughout the world (Greenberg, Salmon, Patel, Beck, & Cole, 2004). It has been used as a strategy to advance awareness of family planning (Rogers et al., 1999), HIV and STD prevention (Vaughan, Regis, & St. Catherine, 2000) and adult literacy (Nariman, 1993). Although the topics are diverse, the main goal is the same: to educate and recommend courses of action and behavioral change to the target audience (Smith, Downs, & Witte, 2007).

Miguel Sabido, a writer-producer-director at Televisa, a private Mexican television network, is a television writer who has written highly successful education-entertainment stories for four decades. He created a blueprint for successful entertainment-education programs throughout the world after viewing *Simplemente Maria,* a popular Peruvian soap opera that depicted how a young woman overcame her life circumstances and found success through hard work using her sewing skills. Evaluative research showed that the program had strong audience ratings, and sales of Singer sewing machines increased significantly throughout Peru (Salmon, 2000). Sabido's method emphasizes the use of long-running soap operas in which characters serves as role models for the audience to bring about positive behavior change. He found that using long-running serials offered some important advantages, including character development and behavior change over time, and allowed the audience to bond with the characters. Sabido's first education-entertainment program was *Ven Conmigo* (Come with Me) and was written to address the issue of literacy. Within weeks of the show's premiere, nearly one million Mexican citizens had enrolled in literacy classes (Connolly, 2008).

Sabido cites his main theoretical sources as MacLean's theory of the triune brain (1973), Bentley's dramatic theory (1967), Jung's theory (1970) of archetypes, and Bandura's (1977) social learning theory. MacLean's theory focuses on how the brain operates and responds to different stimuli. Sabido studied this theory because he was interested in how the brain responded to emotional tone in the soap operas that he helped write. Bentley's dramatic theory, which examines five genres: tragedy, comedy, tragicomedy, farce, and melodrama, informed Sabido's writing of soap opera storylines.

Next, Jung's theory of archetypes was present in Sabido's characters who represented either archetypes or stereotypes. Last, Sabido incorporated Bandura's social learning theory by having soap opera characters perform health-related behaviors that led to positive outcomes, which encouraged self-efficacy for audience members through the characters' actions. Although American entertainment-education follows the same basic format as Sabido's programs, most rely more heavily on Bandura's theory, different types of drama theory, and familiar prototypes (Singhal, Cody, Rogers & Sabido, 2004).

Educational drama shares an assumption with social cognitive theory because both base learning on self-reflection and interaction between individuals and their environment (Joronen, Rankin, & Kurki, 2008). In addition, both intentionally attempt to influence audience behavior, instill self-efficacy in the audience, and use positive and negative role models to demonstrate desirable and undesirable behavior. However, social cognitive theory is not sufficient to explain the effects of entertainment-education. At a more basic level, examining the impact of narrative or storyline on the intended audience also adds to our understanding of the impact of entertainment-education on its intended audience.

The Use of Narratives

Berger (1997) defines *narrative* as a story that tells us about past events or events that are happening to people, animals, or other characters, and that contain a sequence of events that take place during a specific time period. Narrative is the foundation of all entertainment-education programs that brings the audience and storyteller together in a common perspective and builds empathy. The use of narratives to impart values, morals, and truths to an audience, according to Slater (2002), "is at least as old as Aesop and is

deeply ingrained in Western as well as non-Western cultures" (p.158). Coherent narratives contain plot, point of view, setting, and characters that act as heroes, villains, or supporting players. They usually have a beginning, middle and end and describe fictional or non-fictional events (Berger, 1997).

Narrative is an integral part of human communication and may serve as a single speech act, a genre of communication, or as the basis for ethical decision-making (Roberts, 2004). Stories can help us more sharply identify our beliefs, values, and perspectives. Fisher's (1984, 1985) narrative paradigm promotes the belief that humans are natural storytellers and that values and emotions ground our beliefs and behaviors. Fisher believes that instead of using only rational logic, humans make decisions and communicate based on *good reasons*, which is decision-making based on values. As stories are told to us we choose whether or not to believe them based on *narrative probability*, which is our feelings of how internally consistent and truthful these stories feel to us. A second concept in this paradigm is *narrative fidelity,* which is whether a story feels authentic to us. Fisher believes that we are more persuaded by a good story than by a good argument, which is a departure from rationally-based decisions. Fisher (1984) sees the world as offering us a set of stories from which to choose so that we can "live the good life in a process of continual recreation" (p. 8). Stories enable us to understand the lives of others and apply those stories to our own lives. However, stories are not told in isolation. We respond to stories based on the context of earlier interactions, exchanges, experiences, expectations, and concerns for the future using "some system" for what counts as reliable, reasonable, and truthful (Fisher, 1985, p. 349).

In a narrative, attention is focused on the unfolding relationship of characters, situations, and events. Green, Brock, and Kaufman (2004) argue that people naturally become involved in narratives with or without instructive advice included in the story. Petraglia (2007) equates humans *as* stories and says "the role of narratives can hardly be overemphasized in any arena of human behavior, particularly in the area of public health" (p. 495). Petraglia adds that we readily identify with narratives because they feature recognizable prototypes such as spoiled children, stressed housewives, and jealous husbands. Last, we identify with narratives because they usually reinforce straightforward ideas, such as if we treat others well then we can expect the same in return.

Narratives that inform our understandings about health can influence decisions regarding our health. Using familiar stories and focusing on characters, situations, and events in the context of health, narratives draw from our real life experiences and enable us to draw parallels between the story being told and ourselves. Health narratives add another layer to a simple narrative because the narrative becomes prevention-oriented. We are asked to change a behavior that will positively impact our health or are given guidance on how to avoid or prevent disease. Petraglia (2007) says that "behavior change is essentially accomplished by weaving together past and present perceptions into coherent stories, or narratives" (p.493).

Most health narratives are entertainment-education oriented and use a narrative approach. Typically, the entertainment-education story centers on human relationships, human error, and decisions. Some researchers have suggested that weaving entertainment-education messages into narratives instead of presenting them as traditional persuasive messages may increase their impact on the audience. Petraglia

(2007) believes that the outcomes of narrative interventions depend more on how stories are understood by the audience than on the intentions of the writers.

Moyer-Gusė, (2008) hypothesizes that education-entertainment messages that use the extended elaboration likelihood model within a narrative are more likely to engage the audience in the story and thus in the behavior change suggested by the storyline. As such, health narratives are purposely used to explain, demonstrate, promote, define and compare the consequences of different lifestyle choices (Glik et al., 2002). Kincaid (2002) believes that narrative drama creates audience involvement, offers a vehicle to show how characters change and react to different contexts and ideas, and facilitates audience identification with characters and storylines. The use of narrative drama may also increase the likelihood that audience members will make the suggested behavior change because of their identification with the characters and storylines.

Within the research on the impact of narratives on the audience, two major concepts stand out: transportation and absorption. Green and Brock (2000, 2002) define *transportation* as a mental process in which attention, imagery, and feelings toward the narrative all come together to influence readers, listeners or viewers of a narrative. Many theorists have written about transportation in narratives as a necessary component of audience engagement. Nell (2002) describes transportation as a feeling of being lost in a story, which is familiar to anyone who watches a television program, reads a book, watches a movie, or sees a live performance. Transportation is usually considered a desirable mental state and sought out by most individuals on a regular basis (Green et al, 2004).

Similar to transportation, *absorption* is another component of narrative impact. It is defined as the audience's vicarious experience of the characters' emotions and personality. Slater and Rouner (2002) attempt to explain how narratives are processed using a modified elaboration likelihood model claiming that absorption into a plot and identification with characters are mediating factors in attitude and behavior change. The researchers believe that the appeal of the storyline, quality of production, discreteness of the subtext message, and audience feelings of similarity with characters all may contribute to the amount of attitude change. However, the main reason why narratives may be persuasive lies in the audience's feeling of transportation and quality of the narrative. Transportation and absorption in a narrative are expected to reduce counterarguments and enable audiences to be more amenable to changing their behaviors.

Green and Brock (2000) conducted a series of experiments that examined the impact of narratives using both fiction and non-fiction texts. After reading a story (depending on experiment group) participants used a scale to rate the degree to which they were transported by the story. The researchers found that participants who reported feeling more transported held more consistent beliefs with the story than those individuals who did not. Transportation occurred whether the story was fiction or non-fiction and occurred in spite of whether participants were being instructed to focus on the storyline or outside issues. They also found that the more transported participants felt, the more they tended to agree with the beliefs implied by the narrative. Overall, Green and Brock's study showed positive correlations between transportation, story-consistent beliefs, and emotional responses to the story.

Dal Cin, Zanna, and Fong (2002) found results similar to Green and Brock (2000) and Slater and Rouner (2002) when they examined the effect of transportation on individuals. They assessed transportation through reading materials and films. Using a transportability scale, participants viewed or were read four separate narratives and then asked to rate their feelings of transportability. Consistent with Green and Brock's (2000) findings, strong transportation with particular stories meant strong endorsement of beliefs advocated in the narrative.

From my research, I recognized five major areas of research in the entertainment-education literature: emotional involvement, audience identification with characters, self-efficacy, perceived realism, and fear appeals. These constructs are discussed in detail in the next section.

Review of the Literature on Entertainment-Education

Emotional Involvement. Because of their narrative structure, entertainment-education messages encourage emotional involvement in the storyline (Moyer-Gusė, 2008; Smith et al., 2007). Kincaid (2002) describes *emotional involvement* as the state of being absorbed in and aroused by the unfolding story. As audiences become emotionally involved in a story they tend to identify more strongly with the characters and allow themselves to be transported into the story.

In Bae and Kang's (2008) study about the influence of viewing an entertainment-education program on cornea donation, the researchers examined the role of issue involvement and the three components of theory of planned behavior in predicting individual intentions to sign a cornea donor card. The researchers define *issue involvement* as the extent to which an individual believes an issue is personally important

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or has significant health costs for his or her life. Bae and Kang hypothesized that

exposure to entertainment-education programming on cornea donation would have a

positive impact on knowledge of cornea donation and involvement with the issue, and

that viewers would be more willing to donate their corneas than non-viewers. Using a

Likert-scale survey and a semantic differential scale survey as measurement instruments,

the researchers found that issue involvement is an important mediator in the relationship

between individual persuasion and exposure to entertainment-education. The researchers

found a correlation between viewers who were emotionally engaged in the issue of

cornea donation and the program's characters and a higher rate of cornea donation. The

researchers surveyed a total of 2,145 viewers and non-viewers of a popular Korean

television show, which was hosted by celebrities, because they reasoned that viewers

might be more persuaded by celebrities. During its 8-month run, from September 2004 to

April 2005, the number of signed cornea donor cards increased from 1,239 to 13,733.

    Identification with Characters. Entertainment-education programming also

fosters audience identification with the program's characters and encourages them to

become more emotionally involved in the narrative. *Identification* is defined as the way

in which audience members see characters as individuals with whom they could engage.

Identification occurs when one individual believes that he or she shares interests with

another individual, specifically in the context of speaker and audience (Burke, 1945).

Rosenfeld (1969) says that identification is "simply the common ground held by people

in communication." Burke focuses on the efforts of speakers to identify with the audience

as does Cheney (1983) who also views identification as a reciprocal relationship in which

the audience identifies with speaker. Kincaid (2002) connects the audience to the drama

by reasoning that if audience members identify with at least one of the narrative's characters, they will become more absorbed in the storyline.

Moyer-Guse (2008) describes identification as an "emotional and cognitive process in which a viewer takes on the role of a character in a narrative (p. 410)." Oatley (1994) adds that the viewer adopts the character's goals and comes to understand the plot in relation to these goals. In addition, the viewer may experience the feelings of the character as a result of the interaction of the goals and the events that take place. In other words, the audience is processing knowledge from the standpoint of the character, which transforms into identification. Identification becomes a process of becoming lost in the narrative instead of separate attitudes or emotions (Cohen, 2001).

Parasocial interaction is a closely related concept to identification that occurs when individuals form emotional, cognitive, and personal bonds with media figures to which they are repeatedly exposed (Brown & Fraser, 2004; Sood, 2002). Media figures include news anchors, reporters, talk-show hosts, situation comedy and drama characters, and cartoon characters. Some distinction exists between identification and parasocial interaction; however, they overlap between the areas of emotion and cognition.

Brown and Fraser (2004) explored the impact of identification and celebrity influence in entertainment-education messages. They use an example from the television series *Happy Days*, in which the character Fonzie decides to get a library card. After the character modeled the behavior, an increased number of children and teens requested library cards in the days following the broadcast of the episode. When strong identification with a character occurs, viewers may imagine themselves "doing, thinking,

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or feeling something they ordinarily would not because they are experiencing it vicariously as the character" (Moyer-Gusĕ, 2008).

Smith et al. (2007) used a model of entertainment-education that combined Kincaid's (2002) drama theory and social cognitive theory. They tested this model in a field study of a government-sponsored health campaign in Ethiopia. The campaign, which focused on HIV transmission, was broadcast as a radio serial drama. The researchers found that listeners related more to the female protagonist in the serial. As stronger identification occurred, audience members reported stronger emotional involvement in the drama and stronger perceptions of efficacy related to HIV prevention behaviors.

Self-Efficacy. When audience members watch an entertainment-education program and experience the anticipated reactions of identification and storyline, the desired outcome is that they learn from the actions and behaviors of the characters. One of the goals of entertainment-education programs is to promote self-efficacy, which is necessary for behavior change. Self-efficacy as part of Bandura's theory (1977, 1986) is defined as an individual's ability to exercise control over choices and events that affect his or her life and act in way to achieve the desired behavior. Individuals have to believe that they can produce desired results through their actions. Otherwise they have little motivation to take action or keep trying when faced with new challenges or difficult events. Bandura (2004) adds that self-efficacy may be developed in four ways: through mastery, social modeling, social persuasion, or an understanding of one's own physical and emotional states. Another way in which self-efficacy can be achieved is through

interpersonal communication. By talking to others, individuals may feel more empowered and persuaded by the message thereby making a change in their lives (Wilkin et al., 2007).

Perceived Realism. Perceived realism is defined as a narrative in which the audience feels that the events in the story could happen to them (Kincaid, 2002). Although perceived realism has received little attention in the entertainment-education literature, a few scholars discuss the need to measure its impact on the audience (Guttman, Gesser-Edelsburg, & Israelashvili, 2008; Kincaid, 2002). These scholars argue that perceived realism may be a critical element in the success of entertainment-education messages and its ability to evoke emotional response and character identification. Hall (2003) says that entertainment-education messages may have a stronger impact when audiences feel the events in the story could happen to them or someone they know.

In a study that included a measurement of perceived realism, Guttman et al. (2008) investigated the views of adolescents who watched a live production of an entertainment-education program for their school's anti-drug program. In all, the researchers interviewed adolescents at 24 Israeli schools using focus groups and questionnaires. One of the major findings that emerged from the data was that 74% of the adolescents were emotionally affected by the drama's authenticity of story lines, although only 15% of the students identified with the characters portrayed.

Fear Appeals. Fear appeals are used to scare audiences into taking a course of action or adopting a certain behavior (Witte, 1998). They are often used in health campaigns although their value is debated. The basis for their use in public health campaigns is the underlying belief that fear appeals are more likely to produce desired

results in the audience when the severity of the threat is convincing and personal. Although fear about a health issue may cause some individuals to avoid messages about the topic, entertainment-education has the potential to weaken this type of avoidance through the structure of narrative. Messages that evoke fear can lead to avoidance if they do not include enough information about self-efficacy (Guttman et al., 2008). However, because entertainment-education has an engaging structure, viewers may be more willing to listen to messages that create fear in them when they otherwise would not. Zillman (2000) suggests that viewers may be willing to experience intense emotions, arousal, anxiety, and fear during a narrative because they expect that there will be a payoff in the story at the end.

Applying these constructs found in the literature and examining audience impact, communication scholars and other researchers with Johns Hopkins University (Piotrow & de Fossard, 2004) have identified challenges and made the following recommendations to producing quality, sophisticated entertainment-education programs:

• Entertainment-education should be high quality and have emotional resonance for its intended audience. Health messages should be subtly woven into the storyline in a purposeful way.

• Entertainment-education should be based on research and theory, which are essential to its effectiveness. However, there is no single theory that covers all aspects. In addition, it should rely on both qualitative and quantitative research and health data, and should be written for a specific audience and situation.

• Entertainment-education should be part of an ongoing program series so that audiences can closely identify with the ups and downs of the characters' lives, while making a gradual and logical move to behavior change.

• Entertainment-education should be part of a larger, broader health program that attempts to change social norms and remove barriers to change.

• Finally, highly effective entertainment-education efforts should be combined with other channels such as the internet, comic books, board games, and live presentations.

In addition to the Johns Hopkins group, communication scholars and other researchers with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention make recommendations for crafting effective entertainment-education messages (Salmon, 2000):

• Messages should not lecture to audience members. Early entertainment-education messages suffered from trying to deliver too much education and not enough entertainment and as a result were often preachy and dull. Conversely, the opposite problem occurred when the entertainment aspect overshadowed the health education aspect. Characters, plots, and dialogue that were not credible turned off listeners and viewers. This recommendation emphasizes the importance of balancing the two qualities, which is often a challenge for writers.

• Entertainment-education is enhanced when paired with interpersonal communication. Parents should watch entertainment-education with their children and discuss themes presented, and teachers should reinforce the message through classroom activities and discussions.

• Entertainment-education does not occur in a vacuum, but rather in a larger social context in which many factors can affect the audience's knowledge, attitudes, practices, and intended behavior changes. For example, an Egyptian television show, *And the Nile Flows On* (Piotrow & de Fossard, 2004), depicts a religious leader defending the use of birth control. In this particular culture, this advice can only be delivered by a cleric, not by a layperson or health care provider.

• Entertainment-education programs often suffer from a perceived lack of urgency concerning the problems being presented. Smoking, bad eating habits, lack of exercise all present long-term health risks, rather than immediate. The same lack of urgency applies to routine medical advice, such as taking vitamins or birth control pills.

• Finally, merely providing helpful information will not automatically result in desired behavior change.

Entertainment-Education and Theater. In addition to media channels, entertainment-education is also presented through live theater productions. The use of live theater has a long history in educating the public, beginning with the ancient Greeks (Petraglia, 2007). Although live performance is not as efficient at reaching large mass audiences, they have some benefits for the audience (Glik et al., 2002; Valente & Bharath, 1999). First, live performances add interpersonal elements that cannot be obtained through mass media channels. Many performances involve audience interaction before, during, and after the performance. These interactions may range from audience feedback through applause and verbal responses, to planned exchanges between the

audience and performers such as question-and-answer periods and audience energizers designed to keep the audience engaged and focused. Second, live performances are usually more emotionally tuned to the audience, to the performers, and to the message, which sets up a more intimate, conducive learning environment (Valente & Bharath, 1999).

Although much of what is known about the use of live theater for health communication was written for developing countries, we can learn from these productions. These studies have shown that well-designed and executed live performances can engage audiences, add to knowledge, influence behavior, change attitudes, and positively impact cultural norms (Conquergood, 1988; Kincaid, Yun, Piotrow, & Yasar, 1993; Singhal & Rogers, 1999; Valente, Kim, Lettenmaier, Glass, & Dibba, 1994; Nariman, 1993). For example, in India, Valente and Bharath (1999) found that live dramatic performances were linked with short-term gains in knowledge and positive attitudes about health issues among audience members, many of them youth.

At the heart of entertainment-education written for adolescents are dramatic storytelling, humor, and references to popular culture. Material is presented by peers, "near peers," (those close in age to the audience) or health educators through skits, plays, and music. The most popular site for youth entertainment-education is in primary and secondary schools. A study of the New Image Teen Theater in San Diego (Hillman et al., 1991), found a number of positive effects after an entertainment-education intervention. Using a pre-test and post-test design, these researchers found that exposure to the intervention produced a modest increase in teens' reported willingness to discuss sex and birth control, an increase in their knowledge about sex, and an increase in reported

intention to use birth control. Two other studies conducted in the United Kingdom showed mixed results regarding the effectiveness of entertainment-education theater performances. A study among adolescent students in England found positive results after the performance of an HIV/AIDS entertainment-education production. There were significant knowledge gains, as well as attitude changes among the 252 students in the experimental group compared with 428 in the control group (Denham, Pearson, Moody, Davis, & Madely, 1996). In contrast, a study among disadvantaged students in Scotland found that entertainment-education in theater was not as effective when compared to a traditional health education approach. These researchers compared a drama presentation with health education seminars and interviewed participants before and after the performance and two months later. They detected no improvement in HIV/AIDS-related knowledge or in attitudes toward AIDS or safer sex (Elliott, Gruer, Frrrow, Henderson, & Cowan, 1996).

In spite of inconsistent evidence, live drama as a means of health promotion continues to be a popular means of educating school-age adolescents. Its popularity continues because entertainment-education is a participatory means of health education that has the potential to affect knowledge, behaviors, and attitudes. However, many school-based education entertainment programs have no theoretical basis or follow-up measures (Joronen, Rankin, & Kurki, 2008), and evidence of their effectiveness is limited. Most short-term school-based drama succeeds in increasing knowledge and positive attitudes toward abstinence of a behavior or practice of a healthy behavior. Long-term results are less encouraging.

Understanding P.R.I.D.E.

Beginning in middle school students may join a wide variety of extracurricular clubs, including some whose primary focus is creating awareness about substance abuse. School-based entertainment-education clubs designed to educate students about the dangers of substance abuse are popular in many middle schools and high schools. P.R.I.D.E. describes itself as "the nation's oldest and largest peer-to-peer organization devoted to drug abuse and violence prevention through education" (www.prideyouthprograms.org). Organization members use four communication channels to spread P.R.I.D.E.'s message: community outreach, community service, drug education, and drug-free activities. Community outreach efforts include performance-based activities such as song, dance, public speaking, and theater. P.R.I.D.E. members perform community service by volunteering in their communities for projects that benefit the community. Drug education is similar to community outreach because the focus is to teach others about the negative effects of substance abuse. Finally, drug-free activities are sponsored by the P.R.I.D.E. group for its members.

The purpose of my research was to examine how P.R.I.D.E. members incorporated persuasive constructs in their presentations and how they decided which topic materials to include. I also wanted to understand the process P.R.I.D.E. members went through when planning a presentation and the ways in which group processes affected the planning process. I used qualitative methods to identify the following goals:

- to identify persuasive strategies P.R.I.D.E. members used during interpersonal interactions with peers

- to identify the persuasive strategies used in their presentations

- to understand the process and group dynamics involved in planning a presentation

Because entertainment-education is a popular health promotion strategy usually broadcast by mass communication channels, it is beneficial to examine it in the context of a public school setting in which a group uses live performance as a means of entertainment-education. The members of P.R.I.D.E. whom I interviewed expressed a strong commitment to their organization, its ideals, and their audience. They believe that their message and presentations have a positive impact on their audience. However, the club does not conduct pre and post-tests of audience knowledge, so the impact was not known.

Research Questions

To achieve the purpose of this study, I wanted to learn how P.R.I.D.E. members incorporated persuasive constructs in their presentations and how they decided which topic materials to include. I also wanted to understand the process of planning a presentation and the ways in which group processes affected the planning process.

RQ1: How does P.R.I.D.E incorporate constructs of entertainment-education (emotional involvement, identification with characters, self-efficacy, perceived realism, and fear appeals) in their presentations to persuade peers to abstain from using alcohol, tobacco, and drugs?

1a: How do members incorporate each of the constructs into planning, scripting, and performing their presentations?

1b: Which constructs do they use most often?

1c: How do they contextualize each construct in their presentations?

RQ2: What persuasive strategies do P.R.I.D.E. members use in their presentations?

2a: Which persuasive strategies do they explicitly discuss?

2b: Which persuasive strategies are implicit in the scripts, brochures, and other textual materials?

Evaluations of programs that use entertainment-education as a strategy suggest that it is an effective way to promote healthy behaviors (Piotrow, Kincaid, Rimon II, & Rinehart, 1997; Singhal & Rogers, 1999). However, there is a lack of research of entertainment-education in the theater setting. For this reason, my case study of P.R.I.D.E. will help fill a gap in the research. The first chapter of this dissertation has presented the background for the study, including a description of the research setting and a history of education entertainment. This chapter also clarifies the problem, lists the research questions, and explains the study's scope.

Chapter 2 outlines the theoretical framework for the study. Chapter 3 describes the qualitative methodology for the study and explains how I recruited research participants and, gathered and analyzed data; it then discusses issues of validity. Chapter 4 presents the research findings. Chapter 5 concludes the dissertation by discussing the implication of this study and recommendations for future studies.

CHAPTER 2

SMALL GROUP PROCESSES IN P.R.I.D.E.

While attending P.R.I.D.E. meetings and conducting formal observations of the club, I noticed that members who had been in the club together for a long time shared an ease and familiarity with one another. Often, during club meetings, they would tell memorable P.R.I.D.E. stories which would start with a phrase such as "Do you remember the time . . . ?" Or a member might relate a humorous story about a current or past club member. A separate set of stories centered on the annual P.R.I.D.E. conference and the retelling about performances or experiences that happened during the trip. Although some of the club members had not been present on the trip, they knew the story being told. These stories seemed to serve the purpose of being icebreakers for the group. That is they were intentionally told to create a sense of warmth among members. In addition, sometimes during planning meetings for events or presentations, a member or faculty sponsor would tell a cautionary story about a past event as a means to keep members from making the same mistake again. Many of these stories started with a shorthand reference to the event in which someone might say, "Remember what happened when we did _____?" Then most of the members would give a knowing nod of the head without having to be reminded of the entire story.

All of these stories and experiences combined to create a sense of belonging and "we're all in this together" camaraderie among members. They also served as a collective memory for the group with the effect of bonding them together into a community. I noticed that the way in which members perceived themselves in these stories often spilled over into the planning of their presentations, which spread out to their audiences. The

telling of stories was common in the group and always caused the same reaction within the group. Because of these interactions among members, it occurred to me that I could be witnessing the process of symbolic convergence. First, I witnessed the familiar community among members. They told the familiar P.R.I.D.E. stories but were also involved in creating new ones for the newer members. Members would often begin to tell a story, others would jump in, interrupt, and add their version of events, which would create more discussion. Second, I could see how the stories bonded them together into a group with a unique identity, which is what needs to happen for their shared symbolic reality to have meaning for the group.

Symbolic Convergence Theory

Symbolic interactionism is the epistemological foundation of symbolic convergence theory (SCT). George Herbert Mead (1934) is credited with originating the concepts of Symbolic Interaction. Mead died before he published any of his ideas, so several of his students collaborated on a book in which Mead's collective ideas became Symbolic Interaction theory. Mead believed that individuals were social products created through symbolic interaction with others. Two basic tenets of the theory are as follows: individuals act toward labels, objects, and concepts based on the meaning those things have for them; and, these meanings are derived from social interaction with others and modified over time (Blumer, 1969). As individuals assign meaning to labels, objects, and concepts, they ultimately create community among one another. SCT is a general communication theory that focuses on the use of narrative in conversation and describes the processes that members of small groups experience as they come to share a common symbolic reality that provides meaning, emotion, and motive for them within their groups

(Cragan & Shields, 1995). One way in which P.R.I.D.E. members share symbolic

convergence is through their public performances about substance abuse education. The

communicative processes involved in scripting a show, planning for a show, and

performing it bond members together in their goal of educating younger children about

the dangers of drugs and alcohol. The process creates a symbolic reality for the

P.R.I.D.E. members.

SCT arose from the systematic observation of groups by a team of communication

scholars, headed by Ernest Bormann during the 1970s. Using ethnographic case studies,

content analyses, surveys, and the q-sort method to analyze subjective answers, Bormann

and his colleagues formed a theory that incorporates all elements of the communication

context including message, competing message dynamics, communicators and medium

(Bormann, Knutson, & Musolf, 1997). A Q-sort is a ranking of variables which are

typically presented as statements printed on small cards. For example, in a Q study of

people's views of President Obama, a participant might be given statements like "He is a

deeply religious man" and "He is a liar," and asked to sort them from "most like how I

think about President Obama" to "least like how I think about President Obama." The use

of ranking, rather than asking participants to rate their agreement with pre-written

statements, is based on the belief that individuals think about ideas in relation to other

ideas, rather than in isolation. The sample of statements for a Q sort is drawn from a

concourse, the sum of things that people say or think about the issue being investigated.

One difference between Q and other social science research methodologies, such as

surveys, is that it typically uses fewer subjects. This can be a strength because Q sort is

sometimes used with a single subject. In such cases, a person will rank the same set of

statements under different conditions of instruction. For example, someone might be given a set of statements about personality traits and then asked to rank them according to how well they describe herself, her ideal self, her father, and her mother. Bormann and his colleagues' work was based on that of Robert Bales and his colleagues who provided a basis for SCT when they published *Personality and Interpersonal Behavior* in 1969. These researchers observed and reported on the dynamic interactions that happen in groups, which are central to SCT. They noted the process of convergence when they studied the effects on groups of messages that contained word play such as puns or double entendres (Bales, 1970; Bormann, 1985, 1990). Bales (1970) suggested two processes to account for these effects: First, he argued that individuals bring similar concerns to a communication situation such as a group meeting. During the meeting, individual or group dramatizations that failed to touch on common concerns would result in either disinterest or rejection by members, while those that related to common concerns would be shared by members. Researchers noted that some of the messages were ignored by group members while others got into the rhythm of the conversation, grew excited, interrupted one another, laughed, showed emotion and forgot their self-consciousness (Bormann, Bormann, & Harty, 1995).

Second, Bales (1970) argued that a group of individuals might develop common problems in the course of working and communicating together that are so tension-producing and threatening that the members are reluctant to discuss them directly. Group members can manage this tension by discussing the problem indirectly and by employing imaginative language. When a member dramatizes a scenario in some other time and place that reflects the here-and-now common problem, then the members are more likely

to create a fantasy chain by participating in the drama. The basic communication dynamic

of SCT is the sharing of dramatizations that bring about a convergence of feelings among

group members. Bormann (1990) says this about symbolic convergence:

> When we share a fantasy, we attribute events to human action and thus
> make sense out of what may have previously been a confusing state of
> affairs. We do so in common with others who share the fantasy with us.
> Thus, we come to symbolic convergence on the matter and we envision
> that part of our world in similar ways. We have created common villains
> and heroes and celebrated certain basic dramatic actions as laudable and
> pictured others as despicable. We have created some symbolic common
> ground and we can talk with one another about that shared interpretation
> with code words or brief allusions. (p. 106)

Basic Concepts. SCT has two subdivisions of terms: basic concepts, which are

observable communication events or objects, and structural terms, which provide deeper

insight into a group's symbolic structure. Basic concepts include: fantasy theme,

symbolic cue, saga, and fantasy type. *Fantasy,* as used in SCT, differs from its common

usage: in SCT it refers to the "creative and imaginative shared interpretation of events

that fulfills a psychological or rhetorical need for a group of people" (Bormann et al.,

1995). A *fantasy theme* provides a rhetorical means for group members to account for

and explain an experience or an event in different ways. Members share common group

experiences and stories that bond the group together. Although fantasies start with the

individual, the fantasy theme is a transactional occurrence among group members. The

group discussion becomes temporally and spatially dislocated. Bormann (1972) describes

this occurrence as ". . . a recollection of something that happened to the group in the past

or a dream of what the group might do in the future could be considered a fantasy theme"

(p. 397).

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Fantasy themes can be repeated over and over and become part of the group's culture. Similar to Burke's (1945) pentad, fantasy themes consist of characters, plot line, scenes, and a sanctioning agent. Characters can be heroes, villains, or other players who act out the plot line or the action in the group's story. The scene is the location of the action and it includes physical and cultural settings. The sanctioning agent can be an authoritative person who lends credibility to the story, an organization seen as an entity by the group, or a shared cultural ideal, such as the American belief in individual civil liberties. Fantasy themes are characterized by *chaining,* which occurs when group members spontaneously create a fantasy theme among themselves. The way in which individuals respond to a statement made by a group member determines if it becomes a fantasy theme that chains out among members. Bormann (1972) found that as "group members respond emotionally to the dramatic situation they publicly proclaim commitment to an attitude. Indeed, improvising in a spontaneous group dramatization is a powerful tool for attitude change" (p. 398). Values and attitudes are tested and legitimized through the act of chaining and help members identify group *norms*, acceptable and unacceptable topics and behaviors within the group.

Applying this understanding of small group interactions to public communication, Bormann (1972) says that fantasy themes that catch on and chain out in small groups are not limited to the boundaries of the group. They can be communicated to larger audiences, which in turn help sustain the members' sense of community. This sense of community helps motivate members to act on behalf of the group's goals and sustainment, and provides them a social reality filled with heroes, villains, emotions, and attitudes. Current examples of public fantasy themes are found in speeches and

comments about health care reform. Former Alaskan governor, Sarah Palin, created a

fantasy theme by saying that President Obama was creating "death panels," as part of

proposed changes in health care legislation. The phrase quickly caught the attention of

the media and was used repeatedly by lawmakers to denigrate Obama's health care

reform proposal. Although Palin meant for the comment to hurt Obama's reputation,

instead, Palin was quickly vilified by the press and public for her comment instead of

being cast in the hero role of her own fantasy theme.

Researchers have analyzed fantasy themes in various types of discourse.

Foundational studies include Chesebro, Cragan, and McCullough's (1973) research on

the effects of symbolic consciousness and symbolic reality on group identity. At the same

time, Bormann (1973) published an early study on fantasy themes in which researchers

analyzed public response to Thomas Eagleton's admission of electroconvulsive therapy.

Eagleton was George McGovern's running mate in the 1972 presidential election. The

study centered on how the mass media created a fantasy theme about the stigma of

mental illness complete with *villains* (George McGovern and news reporters), *heroes*

(Thomas Eagleton), and the *storyline* of McGovern's ultimately false support of

Eagleton. McGovern's campaign staff set the *stage* with a news conference for Eagleton

to announce his struggle with depression. What was supposed to be a smart political

strategy, one in which Eagleton sought the public's sympathy, turned into a story about

how McGovern removed Eagleton from his campaign and became the villain in the

public's eyes.

Putnam, Van Hoeven, and Bullis (1991) studied organizational rituals and fantasy

themes in negotiations between teachers and their school district. Through observation

and interviews, the researchers concluded that the teachers and school district representatives fostered symbolic convergence through agreement about common enemies and experiences of past negotiations. Endres (1997) used a fantasy theme analysis to examine discourse produced by and about fathers and daughters. The analysis yielded four distinct father-daughter relationship archetypes that were used to enhance communication between fathers and daughters and in family counseling.

The next basic concept of SCT is *symbolic cues,* which is a familiar theme that is so well-known within a group that members only have to say a word to trigger the memory for the group. A cue can be an inside joke, code words, phrase, slogan, or other symbolic communication (Bormann, 1996). It serves as a shorthand reference to a previously shared fantasy theme among a group of individuals. As a society, we remember the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 or 9/11. These attacks are such an integral part of American public memory that if someone says "post 9/11," we immediately understand the shorthand reference. An example from P.R.I.D.E. was the repeated performance of a song that members learned at an annual conference. The only cue that members needed to recognize the song was for someone to make the first hand gesture to the song. Once this occurred, I witnessed a feeling of recognition and belonging among group members. Bormann (1983) studied the impact of symbolic cues among coworkers in an organization and found that cues help create, shape and maintain organizational culture. Both symbolic cues and sagas are present in groups that have existed for an extended period of time.

Lastly, *fantasy types* emerge from fantasy themes as stock situations or as characteristics used to explain new events in a well-known dramatic form. Events such as

the Watergate scandal during President Nixon's term and the Whitewater-gate scandal during President Clinton's term are examples of fantasy types that use *–gate* as a symbolic cue to indicate government corruption and cover-up (Cragan & Shields, 1998).

Structural Terms. A *rhetorical vision*, a group's perception of its past, present, and future, is the highest structural term of SCT. These visions form the assumptions on which the group is based and give structure to its sense of social reality. In addition, a rhetorical vision engages large numbers of individuals in a common symbolic reality. Rhetorical visions are constructed from fantasy themes that chain out in a variety of contexts: face-to-face group interactions, speaker-audience settings, in audiences of television viewers, and public communication. A rhetorical vision is a summation of fantasy themes and fantasy types that helps construct an overall view and framework for the symbolic reality of the group. Fantasy themes are woven into the rhetorical vision and as such provide the dramatic structure for the vision. (Bormann, 1972; Shields, 1981). "The American Dream" is an example of a rhetorical vision within American society. The American Dream is the goal of prosperity that we believe we will attain if we work hard, stay determined to meet our goals, get a college education, and obtain a good job. We are also influenced by negative rhetorical visions. The supposed abuse of the welfare system by single mothers with numerous children is a pervasive theme in American politics. This type of rhetorical vision is used as a scare tactic to create division between individuals and to perpetuate cultural stereotypes. Political parties use this rhetorical vision as campaign reform rhetoric.

Participation in a rhetorical vision creates a symbolic consciousness that encourages group members to act on behalf of a group or an organization and leads to

overt behavior that can be traced back to the vision. Group participation in the creation of rhetorical visions must be ongoing and successful if the group is to sustain itself, grow, and survive change (Lesch, 1994). An example of a rhetorical vision created by P.R.I.D.E. is the group's mission: "to educate, promote, and support drug-free youth who care for the safety and health of self, peers, family and community" (www.prideyouthprograms.org). The rhetorical vision begins with the fantasy theme within P.R.I.D.E. of the group's repeated dialogue about the "good" and the "bad" issues inherent in their vision of helping to create drug-free youth. Group members see themselves as the "good" characters who try to persuade younger youth to adopt and maintain a drug-free lifestyle. The peer pressure that surrounds youth is personified as an evil force against which P.R.I.D.E members must educate other youth. This specific fantasy theme builds into the larger rhetorical vision for the group with the expectation that it will sustain itself within the group and chain out into the community.

Bormann asserts that all rhetorical visions are functions of one, or a blend, of three archetypal master analogues: righteous, social, and pragmatic. A rhetorical vision based on a righteous master analogue emphasizes the correct way of doing things and is concerned with the dialectical tensions of right or wrong, appropriate or inappropriate, just or unjust, and superior or inferior. A rhetorical vision with a social master analogue emphasizes relationships with its attention to attributes that include trust, loyalty, brotherhood, and humanness. A rhetorical vision with a pragmatic master analogue stresses attributes such as expediency, efficiency, simplicity, practicality and minimal emotional involvement (Cragan & Shields, 1995, p. 42; Stone, 2002). P.R.I.D.E.'s

rhetorical vision and its mission statement, fits the social master analogue, because they

are statements about supporting others to lead drug-free lives:

> Vision: A world where safe, drug-free youth are equipped to lead healthy,
> productive lives.

> Mission: To educate, promote, and support drug-free youth who care for safety
> and health of self, peers, family and community.

Outlined by Bormann (1972) as a linear process, rhetorical visions advance

through the three phases of consciousness-sharing group communication: consciousness-

creating, consciousness-raising, and consciousness-sustaining. A multitude of studies

have focused on visions that follow this process. Study topics include the Cold War

(Bormann, Cragan & Shields, 1996; Cragan, 1981; Cragan & Shields, 1977), unmarried

mothers and father-daughter relationships (Endres, 1989, 1994), and the effect of a family

business on family relationships (Cragan & Shields, 1981). Other studies of rhetorical

visions have focused on emerging social visions such as women's rights (Huxman, 1996;

Kroll, 1983) and prime-time television (Brown, 1976). Cragan and Shields (1992)

explored the use of rhetorical visions in corporate planning. They examined a company's

marketing, advertising, and sales marketing messages, using symbolic convergence

theory as a framework. By using SCT to examine the company's existing rhetorical

visions, they were able to help the organization create a new corporate image and

identity.

P.R.I.D.E. Viewed Through the Lens of SCT

SCT is a grand theory that uses both rhetorical methods and social scientific

methods of communication (Oetzel, Burtis, Chew-Sanchez, & Perez, 2001). It has both

the interpretive sensitivity of the former and the explanatory power of the latter. Both

quantitative and qualitative methods are used to analyze symbolic convergence processes in groups (Frey & Gouran, 1999). More recently, researchers have used SCT in applied communication contexts. As such, communication researchers have applied SCT to diverse communication contexts, such as organizations (Cragan & Shields, 1992; Endres, 1994), social movements (Foss, 1979; Kroll, 1983;), and small groups (Bormann, 1990; Cragan & Wright, 1991, 1999). The individuals in these groups form unique rhetorical communities. A rhetorical community is a "group of people who identify themselves with a common rhetorical vision (symbolic reality) that gives them a common goal and sense of purpose by which they organize their actions" (Ehrenhaus, 1981). Because P.R.I.D.E. is a rhetorical community of teenagers advocating an anti-substance message, for purposes of this study, it is most valuable to examine studies of specific rhetorical communities.

Studies of Rhetorical Communities. In a 1977 essay, Bormann suggested the presence of common themes that are found in most rhetorical communities, such as the dialectical tension between "good" and "bad." To support this assertion, Bormann traced the fantasy theme of *fetching good out of evil* from its Puritan origins to its use in the Revolutionary War and the Civil War. For the colonists in the Revolutionary War, the evil of war became a "purging and cleansing experience out of which the chosen people emerged once again free, happy, and right with their God" (Bormann, 1977, p. 134). In a similar manner, according to Bormann, Lincoln suggested in his speeches during the Civil War that Americans were God's chosen people who needed to repent of their sins, and who would emerge from the conflict with a deeper sense of unity and a stronger nation. Bormann points out that Lincoln's speeches were meant for the entire country,

and at the conclusion of the conflict both sides, north and south, would return to the principles of democracy upon which America was based. Bormann (1977) argued that "recurring patterns of mythic dimensions common to a given culture's rhetoric" (p. 131) can be found throughout its culture. According to Bormann, fantasy themes develop best in rhetorical settings that encourage public sharing. A result of this sharing is that members of rhetorical communities have a stake in the symbolic construction of the group's rhetorical vision.

In the context of a recovery group, Ford (1989) analyzed the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous and discovered that the theme of fetching good from evil was evident in their materials. Ford concluded that the public confession of "I am an alcoholic" illuminated an individual's repentance and the desire to turn bad into good. Within Alcoholics Anonymous, becoming part of the community is critical to the alcoholic's success and to sustaining the larger group's rhetorical vision.

Chesebro et al. (1973) analyzed the small group communication of radical leaders and their followers in a series of studies about social movements. Using interviews, the researchers found that chaining was central to members' motivation to promote the group's cause. They also found that members felt committed to join in a cause in which they believed would have an enormous impact on society. In a similar study, Hensley (1975) studied the rhetorical vision of the Disciples of Christ from its beginnings. The group's primary fantasy theme centered on the Bible and the concept of millennialism, the belief that the kingdom of God was about to be established in America. Analyzing the group's rhetoric using historical documents, Hensley concluded that their vision included

themes of motivation and commitment vital to attracting new members to join the movement and commit to the group's rhetorical vision.

In a study of rural physician recruitment, Barton and O'Leary (1974) sought to understand why recruitment was unsuccessful in different rural areas. They analyzed fantasy themes in an unsuccessful campaign used to recruit physicians to six rural communities. Asked by representatives from the six communities to analyze the problem, Barton and O'Leary selected the Tavistock psychological group therapy technique and combined it with SCT to address the problem. They met with their clients and conducted Tavistock sessions that helped clarify the fantasy themes used by the communities to recruit physicians. Then they conducted face-to-face surveys of 472 households to learn about community fantasies regarding rural life and medical care. Three fantasy themes emerged from a comparison of the themes of both groups and the researchers concluded that the fantasy themes of the rural community members and the fantasy themes of the physicians were incompatible. They made recommendations on how to foster agreement between the two groups.

Also in the context of health communication, Cragan and Shields (1995) studied a group of dentists who were discussing the decline of their practices due to a saturation of dentists in their area. One dentist said, "The days of drill, fill, and bill are over . . . I should have gone to medical school and specialized in plastic surgery. Then I could cut, suck, and tuck for $3,000 a whack" (p.35). Cragan and Shields reported that the statement chained out, because other dentists in the group laughed, got excited, and added on to the first statement. The researchers showed how the fantasy theme indicated a "larger symbolic reality" shared by members of the dental profession in which members

understood mutual concerns as a large group. This finding fits with Bormann's (1972) assertion that as group members respond emotionally to the group's conversation they publicly proclaim a commitment to a specific attitude and join in the symbolic reality of the group.

In a third health communication study, Bormann et al. (1995) analyzed symbolic cues that played a role in reducing teen tobacco use. They organized six focus groups and interviewed 63 middle school and high school students who used tobacco on a daily basis. Focus group transcripts were analyzed using SCT as a guiding theory. The researchers found three rhetorical visions among the teen tobacco users in regard to the meaning of tobacco use in their lives: the adventuresome jock in control of his world; the bored and drifting middle school male; and the family-oriented teenager testing limits and searching for ties. Bormann et al. used the rhetorical visions of the participants to make recommendations about the health communication campaign planned by the Minnesota state health department. In turn, campaign planners turned the rhetorical visions into scenarios for public service announcements on television.

Using SCT to Understand Small Group Processes in P.R.I.D.E.

SCT "does not provide for prediction and control . . . but it does allow for understanding after the event and for anticipating possible developments" within a rhetorical community (Bormann, 1996, p. 112). To analyze the presence of symbolic convergence in rhetorical communities, researchers identify and analyze fantasy themes that represent a common experience for the group, that shape a shared perception of reality, and that can be found in the group's artifacts. Bormann (1990) explains that fantasy themes always put a spin on the facts, which are thus slanted, ordered, and

interpreted (p. 107).   When analyzing a rhetorical community's discourse and written

materials, Bormann advises researchers to take the following steps:

- Collect materials related to the manifest content of the communication: video or

  audio tapes, manuscripts, participant interviews, or direct observations.

- Look for patterns of characterizations of heroes and villains and storylines that

  persist within the group that include recurring settings or ideas.

- Examine the elements of the dramas within the group's rhetorical vision by

  observing how members of the group are characterized, how outsiders are

  characterized, and which values are inherent in these characterizations.

- Look for the typical scenarios within the rhetorical visions. Notice which actions

  are praised, sanctioned or condemned.

- Examine the meanings that are inherent in the dramas. Notice which emotions and

  motives are embedded in the rhetorical vision.

- Finally, consider how the fantasy themes work to convert outsiders to the group.

  Do they work to promote a sense of community and cohesion among group

  members?

Criticisms of SCT

Although many researchers have used SCT as a lens for studying different

rhetorical communities, there has been a lull in the use of the theory during the past

decade due, in part, to criticism of its heuristic value. Criticism of the theory falls into

three main categories: fantasy themes/rhetorical visions, explication, and application.

Criticisms of Fantasy Themes/Rhetorical Visions. One of the main criticisms of fantasy themes is knowing whether or not a theme has successfully chained out to the public (Farrell, 1980; Williams, 1987). Williams also (1987) questions the length of time that must pass between the delivery of a speech or speeches before a fantasy theme or rhetorical vision can be accurately identified. He also questions whether a fantasy theme or rhetorical vision can be attributed to a specific group if it is similar to another speech or speeches of which the public is already aware.   SCT has made a "real and significant contribution to the critical literature by succeeding in its goal to group together aspects of discourse and social reality that might otherwise have been overlooked" (Farrell, 1980, p. 312). However, Farrell has difficulty with the way in which researchers decide that a group has created a rhetorical vision. He sees a "critical disengagement" taking place because he concludes that the rhetorical vision is ultimately viewed as a separate output of the group. Similar to Farrell, Grainey (1983) does not believe that rhetorical visions are stand alone products of a group. He believes that they are linked to the larger community of which the group is a part. In an opposite criticism, Mohrmann (1982) sees no connection between the occurrence of chaining within the group and the behavior that is the outcome of the chaining that Bormann believes results from the larger rhetorical vision of the group.

Gunn (2003) believes the key limitation of SCT is the analysis of fantasy themes. In Gunn's view, SCT is a theory about rhetorical invention that ignores the contribution of individuals and favors the collective which affects the development of fantasy themes. Gunn adds that SCT presents the development of fantasy themes as a small group process, as one that begins with a loss of self-consciousness among group members and

culminates in the creation of fantasy themes. However, Gunn believes that fantasy themes are determined more by the individual than the group. In other words, although the individual is experiencing an excited state and contributing to the creation of the group's fantasy theme, at the same time the individual is self-monitoring and choosing what to share with the group. In defense of the small group process, Bormann, Cragan, and Shields (2003) argue that fantasy themes are only discoverable through analysis of the group's communication. They believe that meaning, emotion, values, and motive for action are present in the group communication, not individual motives.

Criticisms about Explication. Other critics who try to apply SCT's concepts to a group's communication find them to be unclear. Farrell (1980) argues that " . . . there has not yet been a clear explanation of what 'chaining out' really means within the social sphere " (p. 312). Williams (1987) asks how to conduct a fantasy theme analysis, because he believes that the steps are not clearly explicated. He adds that there are no guidelines for the number of speeches that must be analyzed or group interactions that must be observed to complete a fantasy theme analysis. Williams also asks how a researcher determines if a fantasy them has caught on with a particular audience, and then decides the period of time that should pass before he or she expects a fantasy theme to take hold with a particular audience and chain out. He adds that a well-rounded content analysis of a group or organization's materials must be completed to detect whether chaining out has occurred for the group. Although Eadie (1982) agrees with other critics such as Mohrmann (1982), Grainey (1983), and Williams (1987) that SCT needs more explication and guidelines, he highlights the strengths of SCT: the focus is on the

message in a specific situation which makes it easier to make inferences about groups based on the conversation taking place.

Criticisms about Application. Mohrmann (1982) denounces the application of SCT as a "critical maze," one that invites "mechanical application" (p. 110). He adds that it is difficult to apply the theory because the path from "fantasy themes to fantasy types to rhetorical visions is each a drama in its own right" (p. 129). However, Cragan and Shields (1981) who built on Bormann's original theory, delineate three major steps to analyzing a fantasy theme: 1) collect messages relevant to the group under study; 2) analyze the messages for competing rhetorical visions; 3) analyze each vision for its dramatic structure, major scenarios, and specific issues.

Taking a different approach to criticism of SCT, Mohrmann (1982) and Gunn (2003) see a similarity between SCT and Freud's dream analysis theory. Freud believed that fantasies and dreams were always deceptive because they concealed personal motives through myth and symbols. Both critics add that researchers who use SCT cannot discover the presence of individual motives in large groups of people based on the fantasy theme analysis of a subjective researcher. In a later article, Bormann et al (2003) responded to the Freudian comparison and rejected it by saying that "rhetorical fantasies are not Freudian fantasies . . . and the Freudian vocabulary is not SCT's vocabulary" (p. 368). Bormann et al. (2003) responded to the Freudian comparison by stating that the use and definition of the word *fantasy* as used in SCT differs from common usage.

Bormann (1983) has stated that "fantasy theme analysis as a humanistic method of rhetorical criticism when combined with the general theory of communication (symbolic convergence) . . . provides a way for unifying the humanistic and social

scientific studies of rhetoric and communication" (p. 433). Williams (1987) urges the critic using SCT as a rhetorical criticism tool to analyze public response to proceed cautiously. He says that fantasy themes have to be identified first and the resultant rhetorical vision has to be constructed. Second, the intended audience must be identified. Then there must be evidence that chaining out has occurred. The last step in the process is for the researcher to interpret.

   Responding to the Criticisms. Despite the criticisms of SCT, I believe that it is an appropriate lens by which to study P.R.I.D.E. Before I answer the criticisms of the theory, I think it is useful to make clear the philosophical assumptions of SCT. SCT is a sociocultural theory that examines individual identity in the small group context (Littlejohn & Foss, 2007). Overall, SCT is a communication theory that helps researchers make sense of and understand reality for a group of individuals. It is neither right nor wrong when compared to similar symbolic theories, but simply a lens by which to understand communication in a specific context. As Shields (2000) says, SCT is a general communication theory that offers an explanation of how communication creates fantasies that effect human action. SCT works in any situation and accounts for those communicative processes that influence small group life.

   In spite of the criticisms about fantasy themes and rhetorical visions, I believe that SCT can be applied to any group situation to analyze the communicative processes that influence small group life. In highlighting fantasy themes as weaknesses of the theory, critics make the occurrence of fantasy themes sound as though they are deliberate public communications of a group. I do not think this is the intention of the originators of the theory. As proponents of SCT have repeatedly stated, fantasy themes arise *naturally* from

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a group's interaction. However a rhetorical vision may be intentionally designed after the fantasy themes have taken hold within a group. Another criticism of fantasy themes and rhetorical visions is the definition of *fantasy* as used in SCT. Although Bormann et al. (1994) launch a strong defense of why SCT is not a Freudian theory it might be interesting to apply the theory in this way to gain a deeper understanding of rhetorical visions and why they motivate group members to act.

The next area of criticism of SCT centers on criticism of explication. In spite of these criticisms, I believe that SCT offers clear definitions of its technical terms. The theory encompasses 6 assumptions and 15 technical terms most of which are summarized in this case study. In an example of one of several publications on SCT, Cragan and Shields (1995) provide detailed explanations and examples of how to analyze group communication using SCT. The foundation of SCT relies on qualitative methods such as content analysis of group communications, analysis of interviews and focus groups for themes, and the use of descriptive statistics. Some researchers use Q-sort to gather data in a different way, but this is rarely used anymore. However, it is not sufficient to merely apply the theories terms to the group communication; the researcher must consider context and culture. In addition, because SCT is a sociocultural theory that subscribes to the idea that reality is constructed by language, it is heavily influenced by the research protocols and is highly interpretive.

The criticisms about application can apply to any theory, whether it is criticism of the terms, heuristic value, scope, or parsimony. Application of any theory depends heavily on the researcher's skills. When analyzing a group's communication using SCT, I think it is especially important to ensure that group members' perspectives are reflected

in the fantasy themes and rhetorical visions generated by the group. These perspectives should become apparent as I look for themes and patterns in P.R.I.D.E.'s communication texts.

In conclusion, SCT has a broad theoretical scope because it has a strong research base of studies that move beyond simple explanation to complex, introspective explanations about group communication in different contexts. Using SCT as a framework, a careful, introspective analysis of P.R.I.D.E.'s texts should lead me to deeper insights about the group's communication.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY: A SINGLE CASE STUDY OF P.R.I.D.E.

The most important aspect of this study was forming relationships with P.R.I.D.E members and sponsors. Without the relationships I could not have done this study. The P.R.I.D.E. members invited me into their world and let me observe them and interact with them. As a researcher, it was crucial for me to understand the context in which the members interacted with one another. Once I established this bond, I began to consider the iterative process of my study. Figure 1 outlines my plan.
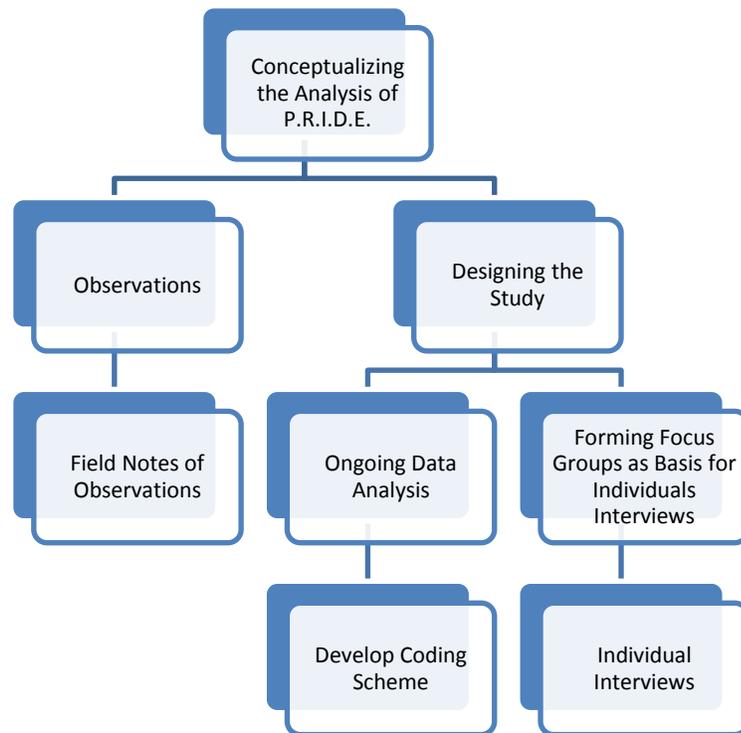
Figure 1. The planning process of analyzing P.R.I.D.E.

I began my project by observing P.RI.D.E. members in their high school club environment. The club met after school in the cafeteria or library. Therefore, it did not have its own setting, but rather one that was dictated by availability and always temporary. I gained access to the club through two of the club's faculty sponsors. The P.R.I.D.E. sponsors graciously allowed me and another graduate student to work with the club. I met the sponsors one year before beginning the study through my graduate assistantship with Tobacco Free Memphis (TFM). Part of TFM's mission was to educate school-age students about the dangers of tobacco use, which is how I came to Houston High School. We visited P.R.I.D.E. a few times after the initial visit, and our friendship formed.

The participants in this study were members of the America's P.R.I.D.E. club at Houston High School, a public school in Germantown, Tennessee. The club is composed of boys and girls who range in age from 14 to 18 years old. On average, 40 students attended each meeting, and three faculty members served as club sponsors. Student officers led the weekly P.R.I.D.E. meetings, which tended to be noisy and chaotic, but always productive. Meetings lasted 1 hour and 15 minutes and followed a written agenda: announcements, club business, and a special speaker or activity. During presentation season, which was in October and November, then again in spring, all of the meeting time was devoted to performance practice. It was in this environment that I made my observations, talked informally with students, and set times for private interviews.

Rationale for Study Design

To explore my research questions, I used a descriptive single case study approach to studying the P.R.I.D.E. club. A *case study* is "an exploration of a 'bounded system'

over time through detailed, in-depth data collection, involving multiple sources of information rich in context" (Creswell, 2006). Yin (2008) argues that case study methodology offers us unique ways to study people and data if we use a rigorous approach and a structured plan. Yin adds that "case studies are the preferred strategy when "how" or "why" questions are being posed, when the investigator has little control over events, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context" (p. 1). This study of the P.R.I.D.E club fits these criteria.

One strength of the case study is the use of multiple sources of materials relevant to the group, such as documents and artifacts (Yin, 2008). P.R.I.D.E has several sources of material, such as the national website, an information packet of recruiting materials written for both students and parents, scripts of their live productions, club meeting minutes, an annual conference, their high school newspaper, and the school district newspaper.

Although it is preferable to do multiple case studies for comparison purposes, the use of a single case study is justifiable under certain circumstances: if the case represents the critical test of a theory, if it is a unique or rare event, or if it is a revelation (Yin, 2008). A single case study of P.R.I.D.E. is warranted; as the only P.R.I.D.E. club in the district, it can best be described as a unique group. A single case study of P.R.I.D.E. may also serve as a beginning point of a larger study of P.R.I.D.E.'s effectiveness on its intended audience.

Study Process/Data Collection

      Rationale for Data Collection. Yin (2008) recommends collecting evidence for case studies from six major sources: interviews, documents, archival records, direct observation, participant-observation, and physical artifacts. Because the six sources that Yin mentions are complementary, I used the following research methods to collect data: observations, focus groups, semi-structured interviews, and artifacts of P.R.I.D.E., which include print and audio-visual materials. In Figure 2, I have listed each method and what I hoped to gain from using it in the study.

Observations
- Learning about the natural interactions between club members
- How members planned presentations

Focus Groups
- Learning about persuasive language used by members when talking with peers about substance abuse.
- Using as a basis to begin case study of P.R.I.D.E.

Semi-Structured Interviews
- Understanding individual experiences with P.R.I.D.E. and its meaning for members
- Learning about how presentations are planned

Textual Analysis
- Conducting a rhetorical analysis of materials
- Looking for common themes based on coding scheme

Figure 2. Reasons for choosing different research methods

      Observations.

      Purpose. My goal in choosing observation as a data collection tool was to understand the ways in which group members interacted with one another and as a group and to observe the process of planning for presentations. Because one of my research goals was to understand how the members planned their presentations, I decided it would be beneficial to observe them during the brainstorming stage of planning. As I began to

watch them engage in their small group interactions I began to have more questions about how group processes influenced their planning. I wondered how they decided which topics to use in their presentations, which group members made the decision, if they considered their audience when choosing their topics, and why they chose certain topics instead of others. While engaging in direct observation of P.R.I.D.E., I tended to be a passive observer of what was happening around me. Conversely, when I engaged in participant-observation, at times I assumed roles within the P.R.I.D.E. setting, such giving feedback about skits or helping the club advisors with meeting tasks.

When I began the observations, I wanted to be viewed as a normal part of the meetings so that the students and teachers would lose some of their self-awareness about my presence. After a few weeks of attending meetings, the students expected me. When I entered the room students walked up to me and greeted me. Some gave me hugs and some asked me how I was. They always invited me to eat snacks with them, and some of the students asked me for college advice. Many of the students, who were seniors, talked to me about their college choices and possible academic majors. We became acquainted through these informal conversations. After about three months, I was pulled into the club meetings and asked for my opinions and advice. That is the point at which my role changed from being an observer to being a participant-observer. It was a gradual process, but once the role change occurred I knew that I had gained members' trust and moved from being an outsider to an insider.

Location. I observed club members at their weekly meetings from August, 2008 to May, 2009 and kept a field log of my thoughts. My observations were broad because I observed macro and micro organizational processes such as decision-making about

presentations and club activities, the club organizational process, interpersonal

relationships between members and faculty sponsors, and conversations about club

business. In addition, I observed rehearsals for live productions, a practice for a middle

school audience, and informal events such as social and fundraising events.

Focus Groups. My use of focus group methodology allowed me to explore RQ2,

understanding the persuasive strategies P.R.I.D.E. members use in their presentations and

identifying which strategies are implicit in their scripts, brochures, and other textual

materials. Focus groups are favorable contexts for participants to disclose information

like this because the environment encourages a chaining of shared perceptions that bond

group members. The chaining and bonding experiences sometimes lead to fantasy theme

development (Bormann et al., 1995). In the focus groups for this study, the students were

well acquainted with one another, which made participants more comfortable. They

talked a lot and over one another while answering the questions. These exchanges led to

shared memories about the club and about talking to friends and family members about

substance abuse. These conversations seemed to strengthen the bond among group

members.

Purpose. The purpose was threefold: to learn about the persuasive language that the

club members use when educating their audiences and peers about tobacco, drug, and

alcohol abstinence, to identify persuasive strategies used during interpersonal interactions

with peers, and to form a basis for the case study.

Recruiting. The first step in my study was to form initial, exploratory focus groups

composed of 6-8 male and female participants. I recruited participants during April 2008

and conducted the focus groups in May 2008. Each focus group participant received a $15 gift card.

Sampling. Using a non-random, purposive sample drawn from the total membership of the club, I assigned participants to one of three focus groups based on their length of time as P.R.I.D.E. members. I did this because in a purposive sample, participants are non-randomly selected based on a specific characteristic (Frey, Botan, & Kreps, 2000). The characteristic I was interested in was length of membership in P.R.I.D.E. To address my research questions, it was important for me to understand why P.R.I.D.E. members chose the material for their presentations and why they used certain interpersonal persuasive strategies over others. To meet the first goal, I assigned club members to separate focus groups because I wanted to gain a different perspective from newer members and from longer-term members. I assigned members this way to eliminate some of the anticipated power differences between newer members and longer-term members.

Focus group protocol. With the permission of the participants, I made an audio recording of the focus group interviews using a digital recorder and an Apple iPod Nano with voice recorder capability. Two of my colleagues served as focus group moderators. One of the steps in beginning a focus group discussion is to read scripted protocol aloud to the participants (Krueger & Casey, 2000). In each of the three focus groups a moderator read aloud a scripted protocol before beginning the focus group questions (Appendix A). The purpose was to give participants an idea about the topic of the questions and assure them that their answers would be confidential. Examples of focus group questions are listed in Figure 3.

Introductory Question: What motivated you to join the P.R.I.D.E. group?
Transition Question: Think about when you first became a member of P.R.I.D.E. Describe your first time telling another student or an audience why they should not use drugs, alcohol, or tobacco.
Key Question: Which strategies worked best?

Figure 3. Examples of focus group questions

Semi-Structured Interviews

Purpose. At the root of interviewing is the researcher's interest in understanding the experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience (Seidman, 2006). My purpose in interviewing individual P.R.I.D.E. members was to understand the personal meaning attached to belonging to P.R.I.D.E.; to identify persuasive strategies used in their presentations; and to understand how the group decided what information and means of presentation (drama, comedy, skit, etc.) to use for their audiences. The interviews were based on what I learned in the focus groups and were used to answer RQ1, which was to understand the ways in which P.R.I.D.E incorporates constructs of entertainment-education in their presentations. A copy of the interview guide is included in Appendix C.

Recruiting. Organizing and conducting the interviews was challenging. It was more difficult to recruit members for the individual interviews than it was for the focus groups because I did not offer an incentive. Also, I had to interview club members during their meetings, so getting them to break away from the meeting took some work. Although I assured them about the purpose of the interview, many of the students seemed nervous talking to me about their club. However, the nervousness usually dissipated about halfway into the interview. In the focus groups, the members were excited to be in

a group together and talk about the club. They were also motivated by the gift card. I had no trouble recruiting for these groups.

  Selection criteria. By the time I conducted member interviews regular club attendance was around 40 members per meeting. Using a volunteer sample, I interviewed club members who offered to be interviewed. Researchers should be wary when using volunteers because they may differ from non-volunteers in several ways: volunteers tend to have greater intellectual capabilities and may be motivated to be interviewed to gain approval and be liked more. They also tend to be more social than non-volunteers (Frey, Botan, & Kreps, 2000). I addressed these concerns by asking club sponsors to encourage the more quiet, introverted members to volunteer for interviews. In all I interviewed nine current members, one past member who is now a P.R.I.D.E. trainer, and one of the club sponsors, for a total of eleven interviews.

  Design of the interviews. Of these eleven interviews, I interviewed 3 boys, 7 girls, and the club sponsor, who is female. The average length of time as a P.R.I.D.E. member was 2.7 years, excluding the sponsor. On average, interviews were 15 minutes long and were conducted in either an empty classroom across the hall from the P.R.I.D.E. meeting or in a study room in the school library. Sample interview questions are listed in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Sample interview questions

Artifacts

Purpose. The purpose of collecting artifacts was to gain a more complete rhetorical understanding of the group's communications by seeking out themes. I looked for continuity between P.R.I.D.E's spoken and written messages by identifying themes in all of the materials. Yin (2008) is vague in his description of physical artifacts, but gives examples that include technological devices, works of art, and other physical or cultural evidence (p. 96). However, Creswell (2006) is more descriptive in his definition of artifacts: audio-visual materials such as photographs, email, videotapes, and traces of physical evidence.

Collection. I collected documents and audio-visual materials from the club. Analyzing these artifacts was essential to answering RQ1, which was to understand the ways in which P.R.I.D.E incorporates constructs of entertainment-education in their presentations; and RQ2, understanding the persuasive strategies P.R.I.D.E. members use in their presentations and which ones are implicit in their scripts, brochures, and other textual materials.

Documents. Documents come in many forms, including letters, memorandums, meeting agendas, announcements, meeting minutes, administrative documents,

newspaper clippings, newsletters, blogs and other online forms of communication. For this case study, I analyzed the club's meeting agendas, scripts for live performances, recruitment materials, and P.R.I.D.E.'s national website. The local P.R.I.D.E. club does not have a separate website.

Using documents as data sources has obvious strengths: they are easy to view; they evolve naturally out of a group's interactions, and they may cover long periods of time which can give a researcher an in-depth historical perspective about a group of individuals. Conversely, weaknesses of using documents include limited access, reporting bias by the author of the document, biased selectivity by the researcher, and difficulty in retrieval (Yin, 2008). One advantage of using P.R.I.D.E. documents was that they were easy to access. I had access to meeting agendas from P.R.I.D.E. meetings, the national website, and videos of some of the group's performances. The meeting agendas gave me a structured view of P.R.I.D.E. that mostly reflected their group mission. A disadvantage to using documents, other than the website, for this particular study was that they were not very detailed. I examined rhetorical devices in each document and looked for themes similar to those that emerged from the interviews and focus groups.

Audio-visual materials. I collected and analyzed two videos of P.R.I.D.E. performances. Using audio-visual materials has obvious strengths: it is a recording of a performance in which we can see costumes, watch a story play out, and view audience reaction. They are also somewhat easy to obtain given our culture's easy access to recorded material. Conversely, analyzing audio-visual materials has its weaknesses: biased selectivity by the researcher and the way in which the organization is portrayed in the video.

Data Analysis

Hsieh and Shannon (2005) describe qualitative content analysis as a research method that is a subjective interpretation of the content of text through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns (p. 1278). I used their approach to manage and analyze my data. Sorting through the data, reading it and rereading it helped me become familiar with it. I also gained different insights into the material with each reading (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Tesch, 1990). Formally, the analysis of data involves three phases (i.e., Creswell, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Warner & Karner, 2010): making sense of the data, analyzing it for themes and generating codes, and interpreting the data.

Observations. To address RQ 1, which was to understand the ways in which P.R.I.D.E incorporates constructs of entertainment-education in their presentations, I observed the club in its natural setting. My field log is a chronological record of dates and times spent observing and notes about access to meetings and participants. I also recorded decisions that I made about the best way to collect data, changes in my thinking about the research and the research questions, and my reactions to club events and individuals. Figure 5 is a sample field note from October 2008:

> *The club officers tried to start the year out on a positive, but disciplined note. When announcing the practices for the performances, the club officer said, "A big thing in PRIDE is commitment."*

Figure 5. Field note excerpt

I analyzed my field log using the codes later generated from the focus groups and interviews. My field log was written during a nine-month period and reflects words such

as *commitment,* and *group dynamics,* as well as my thoughts about individual

commitment to the P.R.I.D.E. club.

  Focus Groups. I read each transcript from the focus groups several times looking

for common themes, or pattern coding (Miles & Huberman, 1994), which would be used

as a basis for my interview questions. The first reading was to gain an overall feeling

about the content and make sense of what the participants disclosed to me. I was able to

do member checking of the transcripts with most of the participants so that they could

confirm what they said and how I interpreted their words. However, some members had

already graduated or were unavailable. Later, with the help of two coders who are

colleagues, we completed another reading of the transcripts and discussed possible

coding categories and themes.

  Coding the Transcripts. My colleagues and I coded the transcripts for inferential

codes based on *meaning units.* A meaning unit can be words, sentences, or paragraphs

that are related to each other because of content and context (Graneheim & Lundman,

2003; Miles & Huberman, 1994). For this case study, meaning units were 2-3 consecutive

sentences that expressed an idea. Figure 6 is an example of a remark made by a

participant, which contains coded meaning units that signify the idea contained within the

phrase.

> **Participant:** You just can't come out and tell them that they're messing up or they won't listen to you. (Code: Indirect Communication)

Figure 6. Excerpt of focus group transcript showing the division of an idea into individual meaning units

Coders received copies of the transcripts and coded them using the initial coding scheme that I developed based on the early readings of the data. Afterward we met and discussed themes and codes and talked through our disagreements about them. We refined the coding scheme by reading through the transcripts as a group, discussing the codes and themes, redefining some of them and then applying them to the transcripts. In this way, we reached apparent coder agreement. (However, I failed to calculate inter-coder reliability.) Each of the themes and subsequent categories were labeled numerically so as to assign codes to the transcripts. The final coding scheme contains three themes (Appendix B). Next, I coded all the focus group transcripts using NUD*IST 6.0, a qualitative software program. A schematic of the codes is illustrated below in Figure 7.
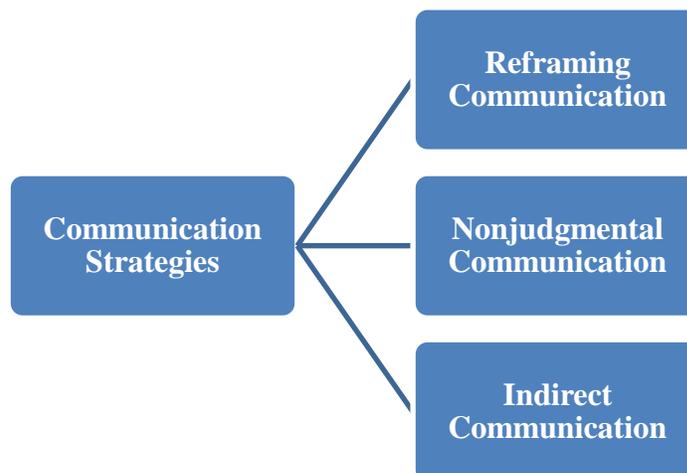
Figure 7. Schematic of Focus Group codes

Interviews. In addition to the observations, I also used the interview transcripts to explore RQ1. My process for coding the interviews was the same as for the focus group data, in that I read each transcript several times, looking for common themes. (However, the themes and coding schemes developed from each data set were different and addressed different questions.)

During the first reading of the transcripts, I gained an overall feeling about the content and began to make sense of what the participants disclosed to me. I was able to do member checking of the transcripts with some of the participants so that they could confirm what they said. However, others had already graduated and were unavailable. Later, with the help of two additional coders, we completed another reading of the interview transcripts and discussed possible coding categories and themes. The second step was to analyze the interview transcripts for themes and to generate an initial hierarchical coding scheme.

Coding the Transcripts. We coded the transcripts for inferential codes based on *meaning units.* Figure 8 is an example of a remark made by a participant, which contains coded meaning units that signify the idea contained within the phrase:

Participant: You come in here and everybody's gonna welcome you. Like everybody's gonna be happy/ (Code: reference to feeling of inclusion) and you're gonna make some real good friends. (Code: reference to friendship)

Figure 8 . Excerpt of interview transcript showing the division of an idea into individual meaning units

The interview coding process proceeded in the same manner as coding for the focus groups. In this case, however, I did calculate inter-rater reliability. Using the

formula recommended by Miles and Huberman (1994) I arrived at 95% intercoder

reliability for 20% of the data. The final coding scheme contains three themes and 14

separate codes (Appendix D). Next, I coded all the transcripts, again using NUD*IST 6.0

Figure 9 is a schematic of the interview coding scheme:
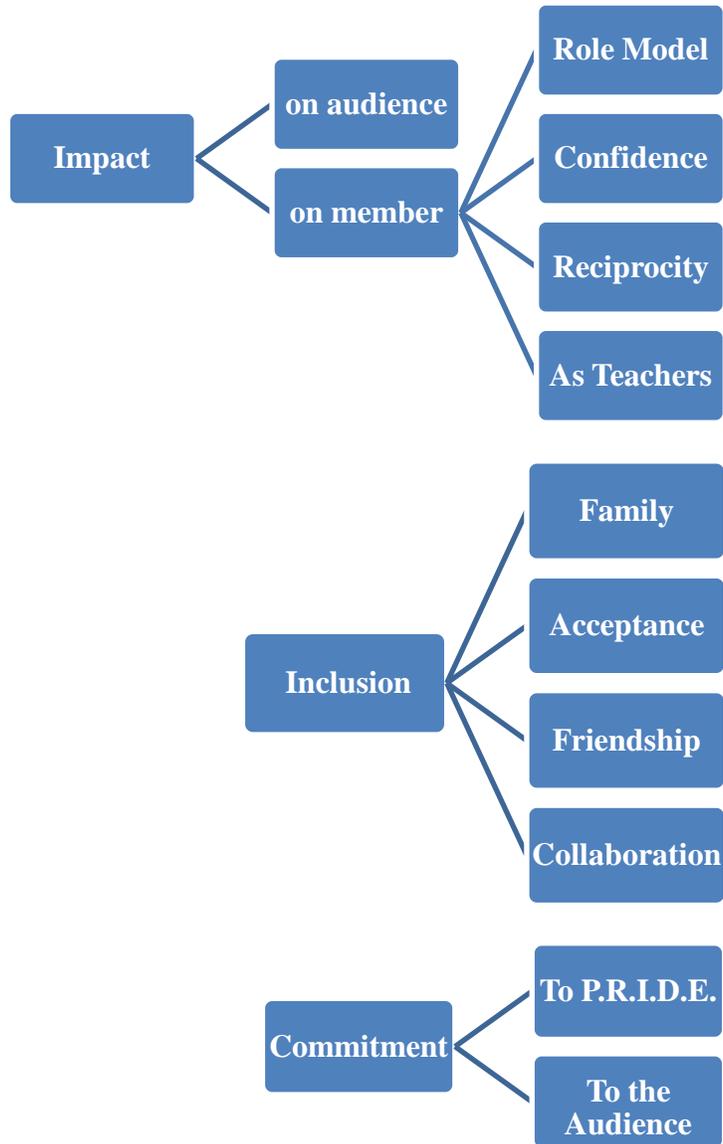
Figure 9. Schematic of interview coding scheme

Artifacts. My analysis of P.R.I.D.E. artifacts gave me insight into both of my research questions. I analyzed the club's scripts, brochures for potential members, videos of presentations, and the national P.R.I.D.E. website. I applied the focus group and interview coding schemes to the artifact data, again using meaning units as my unit of analysis. Figure 10 is an example of text from a brochure, which contains coded meaning units that signify the idea contained within the phrase:

> **Text:** P.R.I.D.E. members are role models to the youth of their community. They set examples for their friends and families. (Code: Impact on Member: Role Model)

Figure 10 . Excerpt of brochure text showing the division of an idea into individual meaning units

Validity

Qualitative studies and quantitative studies differ in terms of generalizability. In fact, generalizability is not applicable to qualitative, inductive studies. In quantitative studies the researcher's chief concern is to be able to generalize from the sample under study to the larger population. Qualitative epistemology is based on the idea that actors create their social worlds that are specific to time and place (Warren & Karner, 2010) To understand these worlds, it is important to establish trust between the researcher and the participants and for the researcher to have a complete understanding of the participant's context. It is also important that the data are representative of the group from which they are collected.

Some ways to enhance the credibility of a qualitative study is through member checks of the data, prolonged engagement with the participants and their context, and triangulation of the data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Accomplishing these three steps added to the trustworthiness of my study. Huberman and Miles (1994) also propose standards to help qualitative researchers judge the quality of their conclusions using comparable quantitative terms and qualitative terms. They suggest applying the concepts of objectivity/confirmability, reliability/dependability, internal validity/credibility/authenticity, external validity/transferability/fittingness, and utilization/application/action orientation and guidelines to apply to the data.

The basic issue with objectivity/confirmability is the researcher's neutrality and freedom from bias, or, honesty about any biases that may exist. Miles and Huberman (1994) and Guba and Lincoln (1981) propose that researchers ask themselves two questions when making conclusions: do the conclusions depend on the participants and their world rather than on the researcher's perspective? Following these questions, to check objectivity/confirmability, a researcher might confirm whether the study's general methods and procedures are detailed, and whether someone else can follow the sequence of how data were collected, processed, transformed, and displayed for drawing a specific conclusion.

The second issue, reliability/dependability/auditability, focuses on whether the researcher is consistent in his or her use of methods and coding. Questions in this area center on the clarity of research questions, the researcher's role, coding, and intercoder reliability. The next issue, internal validity/credibility/authenticity, is about the findings of the study. Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest that the researcher ask if the findings of

the study make sense, if the findings are credible, and if they make sense to the individuals being studied. Kvale and Brinkman (2009) also emphasize the process of validity as one that should "permeate" the entire research project and one that consists of checking, questioning, and theorizing, not as a strategy for establishing scientific validity.

External validity/transferability/fittingness refers to whether the conclusions of a study have larger applicability (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Lincoln and Guba (1985) call this aspect "fit." Questions that apply to this aspect of validity are looking for ways to replicate the study and making sure that the study includes a thick description of the participants. The last issue that Miles and Humberma (1994) encourage the researcher to be mindful about is to understand what the study can do for its participants. Do the finding and conclusions encourage participants and decision-makers to take action to make improvements, if needed, for themselves?

Verification. To gain a deeper understanding about enhancing the credibility of my case study, I reviewed Creswell's (2006) eight data verification procedures used in qualitative studies: 1) prolonged engagement and persistent observation; 2) triangulation; 3) peer review; 4) negative case analysis; 5) clarifying researcher bias; 6) member checks; 7) rich, thick description; and, 8) external audits. When doing a case study, Stake (2008) emphasizes the value of member checks and triangulation. *Triangulation* is a process in which the researcher clarifies meaning through a convergence of data sources and methods (Creswell, 2006; Stake 2008). Stake (2008) says that "a case study . . . gains credibility by thoroughly triangulating the descriptions and interpretations, not just in a single step, but continuously throughout the period of study" (p. 120). Denzin (1970) lists four types of triangulation: 1) data sources, the use of different data sources in the study;

2) investigator, the use of different investigators; 3) theory, the application of different theories or constructs to the data; and, 4) methodological, the use of different methods to answer the research question. For my study I triangulated data using focus group data and individual interview data. I also used different investigators during the coding phase of the data, which helped free the study from particular biases by triangulating the data with two other investigators. I achieved the last type of triangulation, methodological, through observation, conducting content analyses of different P.R.I.D.E. publications, and analyzing recorded performances on DVD.

Protection of Participants

IRB Approval. Before beginning my research, I received IRB approval from the University of Memphis and permission from the Assistant Superintendent of Planning and Student Services at Shelby County Schools. Appendix E contains the approval letters from each organization.

Assent and Consent Forms. Before conducting the focus groups and the interviews, I received written assent from participants and informed consent from their parents, using IRB-approved assent/consent forms. (Appendix E). Each focus group participant received a $15 bookstore gift card. Individual interviewees did not receive any compensation.

Confidentiality. One issue I emphasized to the participants was the need to uphold confidentiality concerning other participants' opinions while participating in the focus groups. In addition, I stored the audio files from the focus groups and individual interviews on my computer, which is password protected. After transcribing all of the individual and focus group interviews, I erased the audio files from my computer's hard

drive. Additionally, I shared the transcripts only with two coders. I assigned numbers in place of participants' names to the transcripts for anonymity.

In the next chapter I will discuss my findings about the entertainment-education constructs and persuasive strategies, based on the data analysis of the focus group transcripts, interview transcripts, and club artifacts.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

As I collected data during this study, I kept Gubrium and Holstein's (1997) "leading

questions" of *what* and *how* in mind. Gubrium and Holstein see these questions as the

focus of qualitative research and recommend that researchers ask themselves questions

such as "what is happening, what are people doing, and what does it all mean to them," as

they gather data for their study. Thinking about these questions during my study of

P.R.I.D.E. guided me as I collected and later sorted through the data generated by the

study. First I will discuss my findings from the bulk of my data, which is the individual

interviews, followed by a discussion of the entertainment-education constructs and

persuasive appeals found in the data, as they apply to my two research questions.

Interview Findings

I analyzed the interview transcripts and textual materials, which gave me insight

into the research questions. During this qualitative analysis specific themes emerged from

the interview transcripts. The most recurrent theme and the one that I will discuss in this

chapter, was Impact, which I divided into two categories: 1) impact on members and 2)

impact on the audience. The Members category included expression of the emotional,

psychological, and behavioral impacts of being a P.R.I.D.E. member. Both of the

categories within this theme had 130 coded references and represented 33% of the total

codes. Overall, the Impact on Members' category had the most references, with 91

references. Four categories of this theme emerged, presented here in order of highest to

lowest frequency: 1) members as role models (35 references), 2) feeling of confidence

(22 references), 3) members as teachers (19 references), 4) feelings of reciprocity (15

references). Table 1 shows definitions and examples of coding categories for interview

transcript themes, and Table 2 shows the frequency of the codes.

Table 1

Definitions and Examples of the theme of Member Impact from the Interview Transcripts

Impact – Member	Definition	Example
Role Models	A responsibility to behave or act out what you say you believe in as a P.R.I.D.E member.	"It [P.RI.D.E.] separates you from everyone else in a good way."
Confidence	Members expressing a gain in self-confidence from being a P.R.I.D.E. member.	"It's good with your confidence. Even if you mess up, everybody always supports you."
Teachers	P.R.I.D.E. members teaching their audiences the P.R.I.D.E. message.	"We incorporate what we learn in our meetings into our presentations."
Reciprocity	Members feel a desire to give back to P.R.I.D.E. because it has benefited them	"The best way to help yourself is by helping others, like in P.R.I.D.E.

Table 2

Frequency of Codes for Member Impact Interview Transcript Themes

Coding Category	Frequency
Role Models	35
Confidence	22
Teachers	19
Reciprocity	15

Impact on Members

Members as role models. The theme, Members as Role Models, was found in

text where members indicated that being a P.R.I.D.E. member came with a responsibility

to act out their beliefs as a P.R.I.D.E member. A member who is now a national

P.R.I.D.E. trainer stated this theme succinctly when he said, "We lead by example. That's

always been my big motto – that we lead by example – 'cause you can't tell people what

to do if you're not doing the right thing." Another member, when asked what it meant to

be a P.R.I.D.E. member, said,

> I think it means that I have to hold up a certain level. I'm a role model. And if I slip up and I'm bringing this message and I do something wrong, then my little brother might be like, "well my sister does this." So for me to be a P.R.I.D.E. member means that when I'm out in public, people will be like, she's a P.R.I.D.E. member.

An officer in the club also viewed being a role model in a slightly different way. In

addition to modeling what she considered to be "P.R.I.D.E. behavior," she also said,

> *Participant 1:* You want these kids to be able to know that there is someone there to talk to them. Any time after the show they can come talk to us, they can email us, and we always give out Facebook information.

> *Participant 2:* We want everybody to know that there is somebody who feels the same way you do or have.

Not only did this member have a strong desire to model behavior, but she was also

determined to be a mentor and friend to younger adolescents. This extends the

relationship beyond the public sphere of P.R.I.D.E.'s message to the interpersonal level.

These members seem to feel some public pressure and personal pressure to act as

role models for P.R.I.D.E. They feel that it is their responsibility to uphold P.R.I.D.E.'s

message and not merely belong, but to fully engage in its ideals. As one first year

member said, "It [P.R.I.D.E.] influences me to be, not only to get the message across, but

also to be a better person." Another member echoed this remark: "It means to me that,

first of all, I have to carry myself well in the community, well in where we go to perform,

and even in just daily life, you know?" In attempting to break free from the stereotypical

view of high school students as smokers and drinkers, another club member said, "It shows that not every high schooler is the same."

In addition to finding this theme in the interviews, I found it in the club's promotional materials and on the national website. An example comes from the local club's recruitment pamphlet: "P.R.I.D.E. members are roles models to the youth of their community. They set examples for their friends and families." P.R.I.D.E. members consider being role models a responsibility. In the club meetings, the president's favorite phrase was "It's all about responsibility people!"

Confidence. This theme focuses on members' expressing a gain in self-confidence from being a P.R.I.D.E. member. Members expressed feelings of assurance, confidence, and strength due to being a part of the P.R.I.D.E. group, performing in public, and developing leadership skills. This member expressed the positive effects of belonging to a group of peers and feeling insulated against outside pressure from negative influences because of the confidence she felt from belonging to the club: " We don't have to do stuff that's against what we planned to do to be popular. And it really helps to have a group of other people your age that are doing the same thing, or living the same lifestyle." A second-year member echoed this sentiment:

> To me, it just gives me the self-confidence that I have, knowing that because of the choices I choose of being drug-free and alcohol free that there are other people at my school that I can go to and have fun without alcohol and drugs . . . it's a support system.

As for the performance aspect of gaining confidence, members felt if they "mess up" during a show that their fellow P.R.I.D.E. members would support them; they felt free to have fun and not worry about making a misstep while performing. "It gives kids a good outlet to meet other kids who are like them. It gives you good leadership skills."

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This confidence gives members the foundation to be role models, teachers, and the

feeling of reciprocity that they develop in wanting to contribute to P.R.I.D.E.

Members as teachers. For Members as Teachers, I found text that indicates the

way in which members see themselves as teaching their audiences about the P.R.I.D.E.

message. P.R.I.D.E.'s mission also states as its goal for its members: "To educate,

promote, and support, drug-free youth who care for the safety and health of self, peers,

family and community." A club officer, referring to a family member who had killed

herself, said this about talking to her audience: "We wanted to let them know the signs of

it, how you can help people, what you can do, and also how to deal with it. Because I've

had a family member commit suicide; I've had two friends commit suicide, and I know

how it feels." All of the members who referred to teaching had a personal connection to

the issue they were talking about, whether it was drugs, alcohol, suicide, or another type

of abuse. The desire to teach and help others came from painful experiences.

They made comments such as the following:

> *Participant 1:* I want them to know how to deal with it, because I didn't have
> anybody to help me.

> *Participant 2:* Like my brother is a recovering alcoholic. He's almost a year
> sober, which is a good thing. And I think I joined P.R.I.D.E.
> because of my brother. He's probably one of the main reasons that
> I joined P.R.I.D.E., and why I'm so active about not doing it,
> because it just messes up your life so much.

> *Participant 3:* I want to make sure that I making some sort of difference, as long
> as I am doing what I am doing with P.R.I.D.E.

> *Participant 4:* My brother, he went down the wrong path. That's why I wanted to
> join P.R.I.D.E. because I saw all the things that went wrong with
> that. And to be able to tell people you know why it is bad and
> saying you know it's not just fun, but there are consequences.
> Maybe they will listen.

Reciprocity. I defined reciprocity as text that shows members' desire to donate their time and resources to P.R.I.D.E. because of the personal benefits they have derived from being part of the group. The idea of reciprocity is also reflected in the national organization's mission statement. The way that club members express reciprocity is by their desire to start P.R.I.D.E clubs in middle schools, which is their way of "paying it forward." One P.R.I.D.E. member said, "[P.R.I.D.E.] influences me to be a better person, and when I go to elementary schools, like I go to my sister's school, I think it goes both ways." This expression demonstrates a mutual feeling of influence from the club to the audience and from the audience to the club. The club knows that they are influential because of their age and status as P.R.I.D.E. members. The audience influences them by giving them a positive response and telling others about P.R.I.D.E.'s message. The P.R.I.D.E. trainer said, "Now I get to give back to this organization that has given me so much. Anything I can do for them I will gladly do."

P.R.I.D.E.'s website included a few examples of reciprocity. One example is the *Youth of the Year Awards,* which are presented to members who have "demonstrated unconditional support and loyalty to their P.R.I.D.E. team or prevention group through drug education, community service, community outreach, and drug-free activities." The anomaly in the website, however, is the letter written by the President/CEO of P.R.I.D.E. He begins his letter by stating that he has been "involved in law enforcement for over 30 years." Then he tells his audience how he got started in P.R.I.D.E. and a little about his personal life. He does not touch on any of the P.R.I.D.E. themes and it seems as if he views P.R.I.D.E. as a vehicle to enforce drug and alcohol laws, rather than instilling confidence and generosity in the teens.

In addition, the national website seems to exist almost solely for the purpose of recruiting participants to the annual conference. There are some links to national drug abuse control agencies, links to local P.R.I.D.E. teams, educational links, and resources for different topics. However, the most recent resource is eight years old, even though the website is updated at least annually.

Impact on audience. The other category in this theme, Impact on Audience, had 33 coded references, and represented 8% of the total codes. Table 3 shows definitions and examples of coding categories for interview transcript themes.

Table 3
Definition and Example of the theme of Audience Impact from the Interview Transcripts

Coding Category	Definition	Example
Impact *Impact on Audience*	Text in which P.R.I.D.E. members' expressed their perceptions about the effects of their presentations on the audience's response	"It really makes people think 'wow,' it could happen to me."

This code reflects text in which P.R.I.D.E. members expressed their perceptions about the effects of their presentations on their audiences. These comments reflect a strong hope that the club's presentations will make enough of an impact on the audience so that they change their thinking and behavior about substance abuse. The comments also express club members' desires to protect their younger audience from the negative consequences of substance abuse:

Participant 1: You really feel like you're making a difference.

Participant 2: It means being able to make a change. It's giving somebody the opportunity to learn . . . a different way, a different route from their peers.

Participant 3: So like maybe if you put your all into it and really get this message across to a kid, something bad won't happen to that kid. They're not gonna get into a car with a drunk friend or they're not going to do these drugs and mess up their lives.

One P.R.I.D.E. member recalls a time after a show when a 4th grade student

approached her afterwards to talk about a skit the club had performed that day:

She came to us to talk about the angel and devil skit and she said, "You have to listen to your right angel because she's always right and she'll tell you what to do." And she told us about how it reminded her of how you have to do good things and you don't have to do bad things that other people say to do. And even if she is the only one out of all the show we've done, and it affected her, it's worth it. In addition to the themes that emerged from the interviews, I also saw evidence of two metaphors: P.R.I.D.E. as a family and P.R.I.D.E. members as missionaries. These themes are discussed in the next section.

Metaphors

After listening to the interviews, reading the transcripts from both the focus

groups and the individual interviews, then reading the national P.R.I.D.E. website, I saw

two themes emerge: P.R.I.D.E. is a family and P.R.I.D.E. members are missionaries.

P.R.I.D.E is a Family. The overall feeling of belonging in this group reminded

me of a close-knit family. I discovered this metaphor through my observations,

interviews, and casual conversations with club members; they emphasized "family" again

and again. One member said, "It's a bonding experience. It's like a family, basically."

Another member talked about the "drama" (conflict) that club members engage in, but

added that they "love each other anyway." I found that one reason this metaphor may

exist within the club is that the national organization is trying a new leadership structure

in its clubs. Instead of having traditional officer positions – president, vice-president, etc.,

the national organization is encouraging the structure of "family units" within the clubs. Members are assigned to family units that typically have 5 or 6 members. Each group has a mother, father, sisters and brothers. The structure is *flat*, meaning that no group member has more authority than any other, and that the family unit makes all decisions. So not only is the national organization formalizing the idea of family within P.R.I.D.E., but the members are informally creating a family within the club through their friendships and activities in the club.

P.R.I.D.E Members are Missionaries. A second metaphor to describe the club is to see them as missionaries. During my observations of the club, I noticed that members expressed dedication and responsibility not only toward their audience, but also toward the P.R.I.D.E. message. It made me think of them as missionaries who have a special calling or assignment that they are determined to complete. This metaphor was also used as individuals expressed their "calling" to spread the P.R.I.D.E. message. One of the club members said, "We are going and reaching children and teenagers with our message." Others offered,

> *Participant 1*: But you go around and help people. You teach people and you're kind of like missionaries who spread the word – except we are spreading the word about being drug-free.

> *Participant 2*: We are hoping to get a message out.

> *Participant 3:* I think the best way to help yourself is by helping others.

Applying Findings to My Research Questions

The next step in my analysis was to connect the interview and focus groups findings to entertainment-education constructs and persuasive strategies that I identified in the literature. I used this strategy to explore my specific research questions.

Research Question 1: Entertainment-Education Constructs. One communication strategy that the club members used to educate their audience was to adapt popular media to fit their message. A P.R.I.D.E. officer said, "We use shows and singing and dancing and modern things and modern issues that will hold the audience in, and in that way teach them new things." In the past the club has used storylines and portrayed characters from the *Harry Potter* movies, the movie *Hairspray*, and the *Hannah Montana* television series. In addition, they have used popular songs by changing the lyrics to fit their message. These adaptations demonstrate entertainment-education in the way that professional writers incorporate their message into television shows, radio shows, music, and textual materials. The difference, though, is that entertainment-education writers compose an original story for television or radio (depending on the location), and the P.R.I.D.E. club uses available media platforms and adapts them to the perceived needs of their audiences. The similarities are that both are adapting the message to their audiences and using entertainment-education constructs.

From my review of the entertainment-education research, which is outlined in Chapter 1, I recognized five major constructs in the literature: emotional involvement, audience identification with characters, self-efficacy, perceived realism, and fear appeals. To explore RQ1, I analyzed interview transcripts and textual materials, looking for these constructs.

RQ 1: How does P.R.I.D.E. incorporate constructs of entertainment-education (emotional involvement, identification with characters, self-efficacy, perceived realism,

and fear appeals) in their presentations to persuade peers to abstain from using alcohol, tobacco, and drugs?

> *1a:* How do members incorporate each of the constructs into planning, scripting, and performing their presentations?
>
> *1b:* Which constructs do they use most often?
>
> *1c:* How do they contextualize each construct in their presentations?

Ultimately, there were 59 coded references of entertainment-education constructs, and represented 16% of the total codes, presented here in order of highest to lowest frequency: 1) perceived realism (21 responses), 2) self-efficacy (13 references), 3) fear appeals (10 references), 4) emotional involvement (9 responses), and, 5) audience identification (6 responses). Table 4, on the following page, shows definitions and examples of coding categories for entertainment-education constructs. Table 5 shows the frequency of codes for the constructs.

Table 4

Definitions and examples of coding categories for entertainment-education constructs

Coding Category	Definition	Example
Perceived Realism	A narrative in which the audience feels that the events in the story could happen to them.	"We put personal experiences into the presentations for the audience."
Self-Efficacy	An individual's ability to exercise control over choices and events that affect his or her life and then act to achieve the desired behavior.	"They have to make the change by themselves."
Fear Appeals	Messages that are used to scare audiences into taking a course of action or adopting a certain behavior.	" . . . a kid popping up from a tombstone and telling a story of how he did drugs and died. "
Emotional Involvement	The audience becomes absorbed in and aroused by the unfolding story.	A P.R.I.D.E. script that encourages emotional involvement based on storyline or characters.
Audience Identification	The way in which audience members see characters as individuals with whom they could engage.	A P.R.I.D.E. script that features teen characters.

Table 5

Frequency of codes for entertainment-education constructs

Coding Category	Frequency
Perceived Realism	21
Self-Efficacy	13
Fear Appeals	10
Emotional Involvement	9
Audience Identification	6

Perceived realism. Perceived Realism is defined as a narrative in which the

audience feels that the events in the story could happen to them (Kincaid, 2002). When

P.R.I.D.E. members discussed skit ideas, they drew on their life experiences. In turn,

these experiences influenced the scripts that they wrote. The inclusion of these

experiences lent an air of perceived realism to the presentations. As one member said,

> *Participant 1:* There are things from our personal lives that we reflect upon. My
> grandfather was a heavy drinker and smoker. . . by using the information and
> talking about the effects, we can construct the aftermath of drugs. That's what we
> try to depict, but you know you don't want to go overboard, but you don't want to
> minimize the effects either.
>
> *Participant 2:* The most lasting impact would have to be the more serious side of
> what we do in our skits. Like when, it's not always a fairy tale at the end, and it's
> not always happily ever after, when we show that you really can die and this
> really can be you if this is what you decide to do.
>
> *Participant 3:* For instance, if someone has like alcoholic parents, it's hard for
> them to say "My parents are alcoholics." It's kind of a good outlet because they
> kind of put their emotions into the skit and into the show. They want to convey to
> these children that it's not a good thing to do.

From the interview transcripts, I sensed a struggle for balance in presenting the

facts about substance abuse, but also a reluctance to cross over into fear appeals. In the

artifacts, especially the scripts, when perceived realism was present, it was usually tied to

a fear appeal. For example, the skit *Moonlight Ride* tells the story of two teenagers who

die in a car wreck because they are driving while intoxicated. Because the two main

characters are teenagers, it is difficult to miss the perceived realism or the fear appeal in the storyline. Another skit, *Second Chance,* tells the story of a teenage boy who shirks his responsibility caring for his little brother after school in favor of going to a party where he gets high on drugs and alcohol. The little brother gets hit by a drunk driver and almost dies.

Self-Efficacy. Based on the Bandura's definition (1977, 1986), self-efficacy is defined as an individual's ability to exercise control over choices and events that affect his or her life and then act to achieve the desired behavior. I found the construct of self-efficacy only in the scripts and nowhere else in P.R.I.D.E.'s materials. In each of the skits that I analyzed, self-efficacy was the solution to whatever problem the character faced. It is interesting to note that this construct is not reflected in P.R.I.D.E.'s mission or vision, but is one that the club members use in their presentations. An example from the *Saturday Night P.R.I.D.E.* script illustrates this construct.

In the *Box Skit* a boy (Ryan) enters the stage and looks at an enormous box that is sitting center stage. After looking for it moment, he decides to step inside. Several characters come and go and the boy asks each one of them for advice on how to get out of the box. One of them advises him to use a magic crystal and the other tries to manipulate him. The last character on stage has the solution:

P.R.I.D.E. Member:	Excuse me, but I couldn't help but notice that you have a pretty big problem on your hands.
Ryan (the boy):	Yeah. But don't bother helping. No one else could help me. I'll never get out of this thing.
P.R.I.D.E. Member:	Okay, but have YOU tried getting yourself out? Come on. If you have the willpower and determination, you can do anything. I'll be here to support you. (At this point, the boy discovers that he can get himself out of the box).

Another excerpt from *Be an Individual,* demonstrates how self-efficacy triumphs over peer pressure:

Individual: Look at them! Don't you think they look pretty ridiculous?

New Kid: Yeah, but I want real bad to be part of the crowd.

Individual: Well I'm happy with myself, the way I am. I don't have to do what the crowd does to fit in. I like being myself. I like being an individual.

New Kid: You mean I don't have to do what they're doing?

Individual: Of course not! Be you!

New Kid: Okay.

Both of these examples of self-efficacy are presented as simple solutions to complex problems, when in reality it is not so easy to enact.

Fear appeals. Fear appeals are used to frighten audiences into taking a course of action or adopting a certain behavior (Witte, 1998). Fear appeals are more likely to produce desired results in the audience when the severity of the threat is convincing and personal, and includes information that gives the audience a sense of self-efficacy (Witte, 1998). Although fear about a health issue may cause some individuals to avoid messages about the topic, entertainment-education may help to downplay this response through the use of narratives.

My discussion about Perceived Realism shows how this construct is connected to fear appeals in the P.R.I.D.E. scripts. A P.R.I.D.E. member described a skit that uses fear appeals in this way: "One was really weightier about people abusing drugs, set in a cemetery with a kid popping up from a tombstone telling a story of how he did drugs and

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died." The more fear involved, the "weightier" P.R.I.D.E. members perceived the message to be for their audience. For the club, fear appeals were contextualized using death. However, on the national P.R.I.D.E. website, I found the opposite message. On the application for the annual *P.R.I.D.E. Challenge* at the national conference, teams were encouraged to use positive prevention messages rather than "scare tactics." On the website, the national organization emphasizes this as a "philosophy." They call it the "P.R.I.D.E. Youth Programs philosophy of positive prevention."

    Emotional involvement. In this construct, the audience becomes absorbed in and aroused by the unfolding story. As audiences become emotionally involved in a story they tend to identify more strongly with the characters and allow themselves to be transported into the story (Kincaid, 2002). This construct showed up in the scripts written by the P.R.I.D.E. club. The storylines they chose were intended to evoke emotional involvement among audience members. Using familiar stories, such as the *Harry Potter* series, and changing the storyline created emotional involvement and concern about the character among audience members.

    In a P.R.I.D.E. adaptation of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* that was recorded on a DVD, Harry developed a drug dependency problem. His friends, Hermione and Ron, helped him to overcome his problem. As I watched and listened to the DVD of this performance, the middle school audience was very quiet during the scenes in which Harry was using drugs. When Hermione and Ron entered the stage, the audience members shouted out pleas such as, "Help Harry!" and "Harry is on drugs!" It seemed that the audience was emotionally involved in the story and felt a sense of urgency or anxiety about the story.

When I watched and listened to another DVD presentation of *Saturday Night P.R.I.D.E.,* some similar reactions happened among the audience. I was also present at the live performance of this show and when a serious skit about drugs was staged, the audience was more quiet and focused on the action. I plan to follow up and measure audience response and intention in a future study of P.R.I.D.E.

Audience identification. Audience Identification is defined as the way in which audience members see characters as individuals with whom they could engage (Kincaid, 2002). In professional entertainment-education productions, this means using established the same characters in serialized dramas to convey a serious message. As I mentioned earlier in this section, P.R.I.D.E. adapts familiar stories to fit their message. In one presentation, nine princess characters from different Disney movies were used to voice P.R.I.D.E.'s message. The main author of this presentation explained his strategy:

> For this year's show there wasn't a big Disney movie out, so we went with a classic approach. It's something that everyone knows – the Disney characters – the princesses. So we use either something popular at the time or something that is a classic.

Using Disney storylines and adapting them to the P.R.I.D.E. message makes it easy for the elementary school audience to identify quickly with the story. After a show at an elementary school, a P.R.I.D.E. member told me that audience members approached her and said, "I don't wanna do drugs." The P.R.I.D.E. member concluded that the audience members must have identified with the characters in the play. She said, "I remember that because you want them to identify with the characters in the play." Thus, the P.R.I.D.E. members make a conscious effort to include characters and themes in their presentations that will facilitate audience identification. She continued by saying, "We want everybody to know that there is somebody who feels the same way you do or have."

Research Question 2: Persuasive Strategies. To draw conclusions about RQ2, I analyzed the focus group transcripts and club artifacts.

RQ2: What persuasive strategies do P.R.I.D.E. members use in their presentations?

2a: Which persuasive strategies do they explicitly discuss?

2b: Which persuasive strategies are implicit in the scripts, brochures, and other textual materials?

To identify some of the interpersonal persuasive strategies used by P.R.I.D.E. members, I first analyzed the focus group data, from which three strategies emerged: reframing communication, nonjudgmental communication, and indirect communication. I wanted to learn how the P.R.I.D.E. members adapted these interpersonal persuasive strategies into strategies for larger audiences.

The most recurrent theme in the focus group transcripts was the need for rhetorical sensitivity during conversations with peers about substance abuse, with 63 coded references and represented 19% of the total codes. Three categories of this theme emerged, presented here in order of highest to lowest frequency: 1) The use of reframing (11 responses), 2) The use of non-judgmental communication (9 references), and, 3) The use of indirect communication (4 references). Table 6, on the following page, shows definitions and examples of coding categories for focus groups, and Table 7, on the following page, shows the frequency of each coding category.

Table 6

Definitions and Examples of Coding Categories for Focus Groups

Coding Category	Definition	Example
Reframing	The process of redefining events and experiences from a different point of view	"It's the different perspective you can show them."
Non-judgmental Communication	Communication in which the club member refrained from verbally and non-verbally expressing a negative opinion of the substance abuser and his or her behaviors.	" Don't judge them no matter what."
Indirect Communication	The need to take a less forward approach to discussing the issue of substance abuse with a peer.	" You can't just come right out and tell them that they're doing the wrong thing. You have to think about how to say it nicer."

Table 7

Frequency of Each Coding Category for Focus Groups

Coding Category	Frequency
Reframing	11
Non-judgmental Communication	9
Indirect Communication	4

Reframing. Participants in all three focus groups discussed different, and what they perceived as effective communication strategies when talking to a peer who was abusing alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs. The most frequently discussed strategy that they mentioned was positive *reframing*, which is the process of redefining events and experiences from a different point of view (Beebe, Beebe, & Ivy, 2010). Members used reframing as a way to persuade peers that their substance abuse not only affected them, but their friendships, their families, and their future health.

As a club member said, " . . . for instance, smoking - if you can bring about a different way of looking at something you can become more open-minded and see how it could affect you differently." Another member said,

> And one of the things that I think works, is if you know them on a deeper level then just seeing them for the first time, is that how doing drugs will not only hurt them, but their family as well. They may think that only because they're smoking it only affects them – but no – it affects the way they treat their family, the way their family looks at them, and feels for them.

The club used reframing as a persuasive strategy to impress upon their peers the impact of substance abuse on their families and friends. Reframing was evident in each script and DVD that the club produced. It was the most popular communication strategy from the focus groups.

Non-judgmental communication. Non-judgmental communication refers to communication in which the club member refrained from verbally and non-verbally expressing a negative opinion of the substance abuser and his or her behaviors. Club members in the focus groups talked about the need to avoid condemning individuals for their behavior, to prevent them from becoming defensive. The emphasis in this theme is about preserving the relationship while maintaining personal boundaries about acceptable

and unacceptable behavior. One participant said, "We try not to let it affect the friendship because you want to help them and you have to continue to be their friend and try and support them. But you have to try and change what they are doing in some way, and not judge them."

Another member offered this advice based on her attempts to talk to someone about substance abuse: "As soon as you start insulting someone about a choice they've made, they are immediately going to tune you out." This member went on to say that she had attended a communication skills workshop during the national P.R.I.D.E. convention and had learned about "good and bad" ways to talk to substance abusers. A third member summed up the need for non-judgmental communication in this way: "Get to know them [the substance abuser] and don't judge them – no matter what."

Indirect communication. In this discussion, club members talked a lot about how kids don't like "to be bossed around," or "told what to do." Indirect communication is about the need to take a less forward approach to discussing the issue of substance abuse with a peer. One of the national conference attendees had also attended the communication workshop I mentioned earlier in this section. She learned the following communication strategy:

> Never come out and tell them [the substance abuser] that you want to talk to them about drugs. You need to be careful when you talk to people, because we [P.R.I.D.E.] are very, very excited and passionate about being drug-free, and we truly believe that our hearts are in the right place. It's how you approach the situation. People will try to put up a brick wall.

Another member said, "I would have to say that we can't tell them something that drastic without coming off as pushy."

Participants demonstrated their need not only to be rhetorically sensitive in all of the conversations that revolved around these three themes, but their responses also strongly suggested that P.R.I.D.E. members felt a need to preserve *face* for themselves and the other person.

Common Threads in all Three Themes and the Concept of Face. Three common ideas underlying the focus group themes were generally accepted ideas about substance abusers, the freedom to choose, and maintaining face. Many of the comments contained recovery principles language, such as that found in 12-step recovery programs for families and friends of substance abusers, like Al-Anon or Codependents Anonymous. Sample comments include the following:

> You almost need to accept them for who they are
> I can't change you . . .
> You can't change someone. They have to see it within themselves.
> In the end it has to be their decision.

The comments taken from the transcripts of the focus groups express two overarching themes: acceptance on the part of the P.R.I.D.E. member and self-efficacy on the part of the substance abuser. Individuals who subscribe to the principles of recovery tenets (Beattie, 1992) believe that it is the substance abuser's decision to quit alcohol or drugs and that no one else can make the change for him or her. The decision to change must come from within to be successful. Another tenet of self-efficacy is the notion of the friend or family setting healthy boundaries. One member said,

> Well, some of my friends do drugs and drink and when I talk to them about it they kind of push me off and say "let's not talk about it. I don't want to talk about it." What I found is just acceptance and just tell them, "I'm not gonna do it and just don't try to get me into it." And I just try to make them aware of what can happen.

This statement also implied a dissonant feeling on the part of the speaker. It sounded like "I want to be your friend, but I can't because I don't behave like you do." This dissonance showed the ways in which these teen club members have absorbed a cultural attitude toward substance abuse, but at the same time showed the complexity of their feelings when talking about these issues with their peers and friends.

The other common thread among the three themes was maintaining face for club members and the other individual in the conversation. *Face* is a metaphor for the public image that individuals display to others (Goffman, 1967). Face-negotiation theory (1988, 1991, 2004) expanded on Goffman's original idea by adding that face "entails the presentation of a civilized front to another individual," and that face is negotiated during interpersonal episodes. One of the assumptions of face-negotiation theory is that certain acts threaten an individual's projected self-image. After reading the comments in each of the three themes from the focus groups, I saw how the idea of face emerged from the discussions. During the discussions in which the themes of reframing, non-judgmental communication, and indirect communication emerged, I noticed that although club members expressed a strong desire to maintain individual face, they also expressed concern for maintaining face of the other person. All three focus group themes came back to the desire to maintain face because they are strategies designed to talk to a substance abuser, but also help that person maintain some sense of dignity.

Emotional, Logical, and Ethical Appeals. Persuasive strategies reflected 80 coded references and represented 19% of the total codes. The three strategies that I coded for are presented in order of highest to lowest occurrence: 1) Emotional Appeals (50 responses), 2) Logical Appeals (21 references), and, 3) Ethical Appeals (9 references).

Table 8 shows definitions and examples of coding categories for persuasive appeals, and

Table 9 shows the frequency of the codes.

Table 8
Definitions and Examples of Coding Categories for Persuasive Appeals

Coding Category	Definition	Example
Emotional Appeals	Persuasive statements that evoke a positive or negative emotional response from the audience.	"Maybe tell a story about the negative repercussions of drug use to get them to listen."
Logical Appeals	Persuasive statements that rely on examples, statistics, testimony, and facts	"You have to back up what you're saying with facts."
Ethical Appeals	Based on an audience's perception of the speaker's goodwill, credibility, and dynamism	"Elementary kids are still pretty young, so they look up to us and think "Oh, whatever they're doing is cool."

Table 9
Frequency of Codes for Persuasive Appeals

Coding Category	Frequency
Emotional Appeals	50
Logical Appeals	21
Ethical Appeals	9

Emotional appeals. Emotional Appeals are defined as persuasive statements that

evoke a positive or negative emotional response from the audience. A club member

recounts the first time she performed with P.R.I.D.E. and the emotional response from the audience: "We were doing a show and telling the audience that drugs are bad and everyone got really excited. It was really a rush and really exciting to think that all these kids were excited about being drug-free."

Another club member described the club's use of an emotional appeal based on the average age of the audience. The club tried to appeal to the vanity of middle school and high school students by talking about the . . . "appearance effects: teeth are yellow, smell like smoke, etc. It's like, "do you want to be avoided because you smell and taste like smoke?" This appeal might also be viewed as a logical appeal, but I think that the appeal to individual vanity makes it more of an emotional appeal.

Another example of how emotional appeals are woven into the club's presentations is through guest speakers. The club frequently invited guest speakers who testified about their negative experiences with alcohol or drugs. A club member talked about how a former substance abuser made an impact on her with his testimony: "Like they started doing cocaine or they were an alcoholic. And usually they will end by saying that they lost everybody: their friends, all their family. They hit rock bottom and realized "wow," it's just not worth it." What happens next is that the club may use the testimonial as a basis for a skit and try to evoke an emotional feeling from the audience.

Sharing personal testimony about events in their lives is a use of emotional appeals in which club members tell about how they endured, triumphed over, or coped with substance abuse in their family. The club frequently uses emotional appeals by weaving them into skits within the larger presentation, but ending on "something lighter so that they [the students] won't be sad when they go back to class." An example of this

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is when the club sings "The Storm Won't Last Forever," which was written by another

P.R.I.D.E. club for the national conference. It is a theme song for all of the clubs.

Quoting from the national P.R.I.D.E. website (www.prideyouthprograms.org), the song's

message is as follows:

> We all feel alone and overwhelmed with our problems from time to time.   The
> song tells us that we have friends and other caring people who will help us cope
> with our problems if only we let them. We don't need to suffer alone, and we
> must never turn to drugs or alcohol to escape. Drugs and alcohol will only
> magnify any problem we have. We can get help from a trusted friend, a relative, a
> kind neighbor, a church worker, or a guidance counselor. And no matter how bad
> things might seem, if we seek help and wait out the storm, the sun will shine
> again.

A typical follow-up to this type of song is a comedy skit or a crowd energizer. The club

intends for the audience to reflect on their lives a few minutes, but not so deeply that they

feel morose.

The club does not always aim for sad emotional appeals though, and their scripts

reflect this choice. One member said, ". . . whether it's a good laugh or makes you cry is

one way to connect with the audience." Another said, "You can always use drama within

a comedy. Tyler Perry does it all the time." To which another member added, "Comedy

always works."

Logical appeals. Logical Appeals are persuasive statements that incorporate

examples, statistics, testimony, and facts into a statement. Between the skits that make up

the larger P.R.I.D.E. presentation, a P.R.I.D.E. member will step forward and give the

audience information about specific drugs mentioned in the skits they were performing

that day. As one member said, "You know, it was serious, it gave statistics." Conversely,

club members used logical appeals when persuading potential members to join: "Maybe

they'll want to join P.R.I.D.E. and then they can learn all that stuff for themselves and

help other people." One member gave this reason for joining P.R.I.D.E and about how she liked the logical, fact-based appeal of persuading other people not to indulge in substance abuse: "To be able to tell people you know why it is bad and saying you know it's not just fun, that there are consequences." Another member said, "But then you can't be too serious and just throw facts, facts, facts. You've got to gauge your audience."

This idea of gauging your audience, or audience adaptation, was prevalent throughout the individual interviews. Club members emphasized the importance of choosing material based on the audience's average age. One club member said, "Children have such short attention spans. I know because I was little once. But it's a lot better to have it be short if it's dramatic. If it's long it's got to be really, really funny." This idea of ideal presentations based on age was a consensus among club members.

To enhance their logical appeals, club members looked for credible information on sites such as the Food and Drug Administration websites, the National Institutes of Health, and the Centers for Disease Control. They also watched informational videos and checked out information from other credible sources. The consensus stated by one member was, "I mean you can tell me don't drink alcohol, but I mean if you can't back anything up with facts, then I'm not going to listen." So the club members knew that there was a need for balance in presenting emotional material and to present material in a more rational, less manipulative manner.

The scripts also contained logical appeals, but overall, emotional appeals dominated. Many of the logical appeals were presented as appeals to self-efficacy or self-empowerment. For example, in the introduction of one of their shows, four P.R.I.D.E. officers explained the four pillars of P.R.I.D.E.: community outreach, drug education,

community service, and drug-free activities. These four pillars were explained using examples. After this short presentation, the club started their show. This presentation gave audience members a small bit of information about how P.R.I.D.E. functions, but was meant more as an invitation to join rather than to educate about substance abuse. These same types of logical appeals were also found in the local club's promotional materials.

Ethical appeals. Ethical appeals are based on an audience's perception of the speaker's goodwill, credibility, and dynamism. This was a common concern among club members:

> *Participant 1:* I have to carry myself well in the community, where we go to perform, and even in daily life, you know? The idea of being an ethical speaker is not for show; it is a lifestyle.

> *Participant 2:* We don't want to be perceived wrong . . . we have to be very careful about how we are portrayed, because we don't want anybody getting the wrong idea that we are just doing this for college applications or just to make ourselves look good.

> *Participant 3:* Making sure that we correctly represent the facts to the audience, so later on when if like, let's say that you're talking to your sister and she says, "ha!" that doesn't happen, then the kid thinks that we've made up a side effect. I don't want to misrepresent it kids ask their parents or they'll think we are wrong and later the kids will be like "maybe it's not bad." So we are always very careful with the information that we put out there and the way it should be put out there.

I found most of the ethical appeals in the club's scripts and other materials. Club officers introduced themselves to the audience, then told the audience about the four pillars of P.R.I.D.E.: community outreach, drug education, community service, and drug-free activities. The statement of the group's missions helped to affirm their collective credibility before the performance started, thus increasing the chance that the audience would listen to their message.

Connecting the Findings

The goals of research were to identify the constructs and use of entertainment-education in P.R.I.D.E.'s presentations; to identify persuasive strategies in P.R.I.D.E. presentations; and to understand the influence of small group processes on P.R.I.D.E.'s message. The most frequently used entertainment-education strategy was perceived realism, followed by self-efficacy and fear appeals. Using data obtained from focus groups as a basis for semi-structured interviews, I found that club members used three main persuasive strategies when talking with peers about substance abuse: reframing, non-judgmental communication, and indirect communication. My next step was to find out how club members contextualized these persuasive strategies in their presentations.

When I compared the focus group themes, interview themes, and metaphors, I realized that they shared a commonality: Impact on an interpersonal level and impact on an intrapersonal level. These concepts are outlined in Table 10:

Table 10. Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Impact

Interpersonal Impact	**Intrapersonal Impact**
Focus Group Themes: - Reframing - Non-judgmental Communication - Indirect Communication Concern with maintaining face for self and other; use of substance abuse recovery language for other.	*Interview Theme of Impact:* - Members as Role Models - Confidence - Members as Teachers - Reciprocity
Interview Theme of Impact: - Impact on Audience	*Metaphors:* - Members as Missionaries - P.R.I.D.E. as a Family

Altogether, these findings reflected the impact of belonging to P.R.I.D.E as experienced by its members. In turn, this impact or commitment was contextualized in

their presentations and had a major impact on how they responded to the club's message and how they chose to enact it. In addition, it seemed that these feelings of commitment and personal benefit were acted out in their desires to be role models and teachers; it imbued them with a sense of confidence and created the reciprocal feeling they developed for P.R.I.D.E. and its message.

This specific P.R.I.D.E. club was a group of teens who were committed to their organization and have made their local club a little different from the national organization. However, I feel that that this club functioned well and was internally successful because its members were excited about its mission. The success of this club was remarkable because it still is the only P.R.I.D.E. club in the county. There are no other means of local support for this club, unlike many other P.R.I.D.E. clubs in different parts of United States. So for them to function in isolation – and successfully function year after year – is testimony to the impact of the organization on the members.

This cohesive feeling among members also affected the small group processes that influence the club's message. The metaphors were an offshoot of this cohesive feeling and were of particular interest. If members had not felt a sense of family with other club members, then the cohesiveness, forgiveness, acceptance, and closeness they expressed in the interviews would not have existed. If members had not felt like they were spreading an important message, then I could not have characterized them as missionaries.

The only point of digression I found is the mission as stated by the national P.R.I.D.E. organization and what the local club practiced. The national office discouraged the use of fear appeals and yet the local club used them, as they stated in the

individual interviews. This seemed to create a dialectical tension, but no major concern in the group. Finally, it seemed that their use of entertainment-education strategies was not a conscious effort, but rather one that was invoked based on their choice of material. Their use of popular media to facilitate their message seemed, at a glance, to work well for enhancing entertainment-education strategies. However, I do not know if P.R.I.D.E. is successful in influencing its audience with its message.

In the final chapter of this dissertation, I will discuss the implications and limitations of this study. Following that, I will discuss what I have learned about communication from this study, what communication problems or obstacles exist, and how we can contribute to improving P.R.I.D.E.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

The time that I spent with P.R.I.D.E. was a unique experience. Before I met the

P.R.I.D.E. group, I had not had the opportunity to observe such a motivated group of

young people who were passionate about sharing their distinctive message about

substance abuse. This was a group of individuals who believed that their message, and

the way in which it was delivered, mattered. They enjoyed what they did and the love for

their mission was clear to me. I think that they used many good communication strategies

in their presentations, but I also believe that they could have crafted an even better

message using a purposeful, theory-based communication approach to their presentations.

The three most important findings to emerge from this study were the metaphors

that informed how members saw themselves, the club's rhetorical vision, and the

interpersonal and intrapersonal impact on the club members. I saw the metaphors

influencing the ways in which members perceived themselves which influenced the

interpersonal and intrapersonal impact, which in turn informed the club's rhetorical

vision. This shared perception that members have of seeing themselves as a family and as

missionaries creates a shared symbolic reality for them within the P.R.I.D.E. club and as

proponents against substance abuse.

The members' views of themselves as family and as missionaries were explicitly

stated metaphors used by group members. These metaphors suggested a deeper

commitment than that of merely belonging to a social club. It implied a long-term

commitment and a relationship that could withstand conflict, disagreement, separation,

and other interpersonal issues that might arise. It was a feeling of "we're-in-this-

togetherness" that was binding. Belonging to a functional family and having a sense of purpose as a missionary are two bonds that are difficult to break. This sense of bonding was reflected in what I identified as the club's rhetorical vision. They have developed a commitment is to themselves, to the group, and ultimately to the audience and the community. Identifying and examining these two metaphors helped me understand why P.R.I.D.E. members produced the scripts that they used and I saw more clearly how the interview theme of Impact guided their behaviors as a group. Viewing the group as a family unit and as missionaries helped me to understand how to best communicate with them, and in turn helped them achieve their goals of informing others about the dangers of substance abuse. After spending time around the members for a 1 ½ years, I gained insight into what made the group function and stay together, which is a combination of their vision and mission statement: Vision: "A world where safe, drug-free youth are equipped to lead healthy, productive lives." Mission: "To educate, promote, and support drug-free youth who care for safety and health of self, peers, family and community."

Together, the vision and mission have transformed into a unifying rhetorical vision that has been shaped by the members' feelings of belonging to the group. Although membership has changed within the club over time, because of some members graduating and others joining, I believe that the rhetorical vision of the club has fundamentally remained the same. P.R.I.D.E. members recruit like-minded new members to their group to continue their mission, which reinforces their rhetorical vision.

P.R.I.D.E. was bolstered by the community in which it functioned, which included the high school in which it was situated, local middle schools, and their city. These connections to the community were important, because rhetorical visions also

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engage outside individuals in a common symbolic reality that connects them to the original group (Bormann, 1972; Shields, 1981). In other words, outside individuals may strongly identify with the P.R.I.D.E. club's sense of purpose and goals. Included in P.R.I.D.E.'s rhetorical vision is the concept of responsibility that emerged strongly from the interviews. P.R.I.D.E. is more than a social group to its members. Being a member of the group instills a responsibility for educating a younger generation about the dangers of substance abuse. It is the "good" versus the "bad" that Bormann discusses in SCT; the "good" of P.R.I.D.E. versus the "bad" of substance abuse.

When I compared the focus group themes, interview themes, and metaphors, I identified common characteristics among the data: an impact on both the interpersonal and intrapersonal levels for the members. I found interpersonal impact in focus group themes and in the interviews when members discussed the perceived impact of P.R.I.D.E. on the audience. I found intrapersonal impact in the interviews when P.R.I.D.E. members talked about the personal impact of P.R.I.D.E. on their lives, and I found both interpersonal and intrapersonal impact in the metaphors about the club. This finding is outlined in Table 9.

Table 9

Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Impact

Interpersonal Impact	Intrapersonal Impact	Both Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Impact
Focus Group Themes: - Reframing - Non-judgmental Communication - Indirect Communication Concern with maintaining face for self and other; use of substance abuse recovery language for other.	*Interview Theme of Impact:* - Members as Role Models - Confidence - Members as Teachers - Reciprocity	*Metaphors:* - Members as Missionaries P.R.I.D.E. as a Family
Interview Theme of Impact: - Impact on Audience		

Altogether, these themes reflected the impact of belonging to P.R.I.D.E as

experienced by its members. In turn, this impact was contextualized in their presentations

and had a major impact on how they responded to the club's message and how they chose

to enact it. In addition, these feelings of commitment and personal benefit were acted out

in their desires to be role models and teachers; it imbued them with a sense of confidence

and created the reciprocal feeling they developed for P.R.I.D.E. and its message.

P.R.I.D.E. was internally successful because its members were excited about its

mission. The success of this club was remarkable because it is the only P.R.I.D.E. club in

its county. There were no other means of local support for this club, unlike many other

P.R.I.D.E. clubs that are situated around neighboring clubs. So for them to have

functioned in isolation, year after year, was a reflection of the impact that belonging to

the club had on its members. One of the impacts on members was their feelings of being

role models. As one club member said, "It [P.R.I.D.E.] has led me in the right direction in so many ways. Also being a leader on my team."

This cohesive feeling among members also affected the small group processes which influenced the club's message. The metaphors were an offshoot of this cohesive feeling and were of particular interest. If members had not felt a sense of family with other club members, then the cohesiveness, forgiveness, acceptance, and closeness they expressed in the interviews would not have existed. If members had not felt like they were spreading an important message, then I could not have characterized them as missionaries, a group of people bound together in a common mission to spread a specific message to a target audience. One member described P.R.I.D.E. as "a theater troupe with a cause."

Recommendations for P.R.I.D.E.

Taking into account my findings about club members' metaphors of themselves, the interpersonal and intrapersonal impact, and the club's rhetorical vision, the next step I took was to apply the recommendations for entertainment-education to the findings for each research question. As outlined in Chapter 1, communication scholars and researchers with Johns Hopkins University (Piotrow & de Fossard, 2004) identified challenges for entertainment-education writers and made the following recommendations for producing high quality, sophisticated entertainment-education programs:

1. Entertainment-education should be high quality and have emotional resonance for its intended audience. Health messages should be subtly woven into the storyline in a purposeful way.

2. Entertainment-education should be based on research and theory. In addition, it should rely on both qualitative and quantitative research and health data, and should be written for a specific audience and situation.

3. Entertainment-education should be part of an ongoing program series so that audiences can closely identify with the ups and downs of the characters' lives.

4. Entertainment-education should be part of a larger, broader health program that attempts to change social norms and remove barriers to change.

5. Highly effective entertainment-education efforts are combined with other communication channels.

In addition to the Johns Hopkins group, communication scholars and other researchers with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention made recommendations for crafting effective entertainment-education messages (Salmon, 2000):

6. Messages should not lecture to audience members or let the entertainment aspect overshadow the health education aspect.

7. Entertainment-education is enhanced when paired with interpersonal communication.

8. Entertainment-education occurs in a larger social context in which many factors can affect the audience's knowledge, attitudes, practices, and intended behavior changes.

9. Entertainment-education programs often suffer from a perceived lack of urgency concerning the problems being presented.

10. Merely providing helpful information will not automatically result in desired behavior change.

Comparing these recommendations to P.R.I.D.E.'s approach led me to make several

recommendations in tandem with the ten recommendations listed above. First, I pulled

out the recommendations that the club partially achieved, but could use more help in

refining. The first two recommendations on the above list, that entertainment-education

should be high quality and have emotional resonance for its intended audience, and

second, include subtle health messages in the storylines and be based on theory, can be

achieved in several ways. Sometimes P.R.I.D.E.'s storylines are subtle and sometimes

they are obvious. However, the club never loses sight of its message, which is to inform

the audience about alcohol abuse, drug abuse, short-term and long-term health effects of

substance abuse, and the psychological effects on users. One way to produce high quality

presentations is for P.R.I.D.E. to purposefully use entertainment-education constructs in

their presentations. I would offer training workshops to faculty advisors and the club

members. The next step would be to use more subtle emotional appeals in the scripts,

while increasing the use of logical and ethical appeals. This would add more balance to

their presentations. Increasing the use of logical and ethical appeals is important because

the club relies heavily on presenting itself as a credible source of substance abuse

information for the middle schools in which it performs. The last step would be to shape

their presentations and storylines using a theory such as the Theory of Reasoned Action

(Azjen & Fishbein, 1980), which examines subjective norms among teens. A subjective

norm is the social pressure that an individual feels from significant others to perform or

not perform a specific behavior. For P.R.I.D.E., that would be influencing the subjective

norms that their audience holds about substance abuse. Using a theory such as the TRA,

would give P.R.I.D.E. more insight into their audience and help them craft more targeted

messages that could facilitate attitude and behavior change or reinforce beliefs about substance abuse that align with theirs. The most effective way to gain information about subjective norms would be to survey P.R.I.D.E.'s middle school audiences, which I would help them do. TRA is chiefly used to change audience attitudes, subjective norms, and behaviors.

Although P.R.I.D.E. does not currently use any theoretical basis for their presentations, they already incorporate some aspects of TRA into their materials. Their skits may portray teens being influenced by other individuals' behavior or show an actor thinking aloud about what his or her friends might do in the same situation. P.R.I.D.E. only needs to expand the circle of what Azjen and Fishbein (1980) term "salient others," the group of individuals who have an impact on another person's life, to include individuals outside the teen's immediate peer groups. They would also need to develop a survey intended to measure attitude, subjective norms, and behavior intentions about substance abuse.

The sixth recommendation on the list is one that P.R.I.D.E. performs well: presenting their message without lecturing to their audience. P.R.I.D.E. members have good ideas about how to effectively communicate with their audience. One P.R.I.D.E. member said, "You can't be too serious and just throw facts, facts, facts. We have to gauge our audience. And if it's an older audience, you can't be too silly." Another member said that "It is a communication strategy to consider your audience before presenting your material." With more purposefully shaped scripts and entertainment-education messages, the club can continue to hone this skill.

The members' sense of belonging as a family and as missionaries also influences the way in which they fulfill recommendation eight on the list. P.R.I.D.E. recognizes that entertainment-education occurs in a larger social context in which many factors can affect the audience's knowledge, attitudes, practices, and intended behavior changes. P.R.I.D.E.'s scripts target peer pressure and self-efficacy, while also acknowledging attitudes and beliefs about substance abuse and misinformation about the substance abuse. The club sets their skits and longer presentations in different contexts in which teens could be offered illegal drugs or alcohol. The settings are not limited to just one place, but take place in a variety of contexts, such as parties, school, home, and daily travel routes or routines.

The last two recommendations on the list are observations more than they are recommendations. Entertainment-education programs do suffer from a perceived lack of urgency concerning the problems being presented. This lack of urgency is an issue that producers of health message struggle with, as well as the last observation: merely providing helpful information will not automatically result in desired behavior changes.

Although P.R.I.D.E. does a good job of conveying health messages and using credible, easily identifiable characters in their scripts, the club does not use any of the other entertainment-education recommendations:

- They do not purposefully use health communication theories as the basis of their skits
- They do not promote an ongoing series using the same characters.
- They are not part of a larger, broader health program within their local community of the middle schools that they serve.

- They do not use other communication channels such as the internet, comic books, and board games to spread their message.

- However, they have paired entertainment-education with interpersonal communication, with some success, but it needs more refining.

My recommendations for P.R.I.D.E. are based on the above omissions. These recommendations are outlined below:

1. Working with P.R.I.D.E. to develop a theory-based approach to their presentations.

2. Working with P.R.I.D.E. to develop an ongoing series based on their club's mission, using the same characters. This could be accomplished by them establishing a website (provided free by the school district) and writing a series of scripts based on the same characters. They could then incorporate these new characters into their presentations, which would give continuity and coherence to their presentations

3. Encouraging them to collaborate with other health-based clubs in their school, such as Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA). Because both clubs are interested in health issues, they could jointly develop materials about health issues that are relevant to both groups.

4. Encouraging them to pair entertainment-education with interpersonal communication. The club has done this one time, but they need more help in planning these encounters. The one time that P.R.I.D.E. did this, they planned and executed an experiential activity for their audience, in the form of team challenges, which they worked in between skits and short talks. The organization seemed successful because it

broke up the information into smaller chunks for the audience and kept the audience engaged in the material.

Limitations

The first limitation in my study was the use of a single case study. Although a single case study may be seen as a limitation, Yin (2008) says that this methodology offers an effective way to study a unique group of people and data. P.R.I.D.E. is the only one of its kind in Shelby County. Additionally, it has existed for four decades but has never been studied.

The second limitation was a small sample size. Although I was successful in interviewing 40% (n = 30) of the members in the focus groups, I could not recruit as many club members for the individual interviews. The sample size of the interviews was 25% of the club, (*n=10*); however, this number is common in qualitative research and represents a sizable portion of my total group. Miles and Huberman (1994) state that smaller sample sizes in qualitative research make sense because researchers are studying individuals "nested in their context and studied in-depth" (p. 27).

The last limitation was the perceived power difference between the club members and me. I tried to address this early in my research by building relationships with the members, which I had an opportunity to do for a year before I started my study. Getting to know the members did help with the interviews, but I still feel that some of the club members told me what they thought I wanted to hear. If I felt that this phenomenon was occurring, I assured the interviewee of confidentiality and anonymity, and encouraged them to say whatever they wanted to in the interview.

Future Research

This case study has helped shape my research agenda of the study of persuasion in health communication. It serves as a foundation for my future research for me to study specific health messages aimed at teens and to analyze the ways in which they perceive and act upon the reception of health messages. I plan to discuss the finding of my study with P.R.I.D.E.'s faculty sponsors, then the club members. I want to work with the faculty sponsors to set up a series of workshops to implement my ideas. Collaborating with P.R.I.D.E. on workshops would be the next logical step in working on my research agenda.

In future research, I want to study P.R.I.D.E.'s use of popular media to facilitate their message, which seems, at a glance, to work well for enhancing entertainment-education strategies. Using well-known characters and stories, such as Harry Potter, Saturday Night Live, and television commercials helps P.R.I.D.E. engage its audience in its message. However, I do not yet know if P.R.I.D.E. is successful in influencing its audience's behavior using popular media as an entertainment-education strategy. To explore this question, I would like to measure audience response and intention in a future study of P.R.I.D.E.

Second, I would like to study P.R.I.D.E.'s use of fear appeals in their messages. As discussed in Chapter 4, the only point of digression I found in P.R.I.D.E. is the mission as stated by the national P.R.I.D.E. organization and the way in which the local club adheres to the mission. The national office discourages the use of fear appeals and yet the local club uses them.

Contrary to widely held beliefs about the use of fear appeals, the P.R.I.D.E. club may be correct in using fear appeals. Recent research on the use of fear appeals shows that when individuals feel strong self-efficacy, then the impact of fear-based messages strongly affects their behavioral intentions (e.g., Green & Witte, 2006; Mongeau, 1998; Morman, 2000). In order to judge the effectiveness of the club's use of fear appeals, I would need to survey their audiences immediately after presentations, and then again at different time intervals.

When I began my relationship with P.R.I.D.E., I did not realize the impact that knowing this group of energetic students would have on me. Each week I looked forward to observing the club, and never saw my research as a task, but as a fun educational opportunity. As in the best learning environments, I believe that the P.R.I.D.E. students and I learned from one another. For me, I was reminded again of how it felt to be a teenager and deal with peer pressure about substance abuse. For the P.R.I.D.E. members, it is my sincere hope that my dissertation will help them facilitate their dialogue with other students about the issue of substance abuse.

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Protocol

Introduction (once everyone is seated in your group)

Hello and thank you for taking the time to join our discussion of communication strategies that you use as a PRIDE member. My name is _____ and I am helping Elizabeth Stephens conduct focus groups for her dissertation study. (you can point me out if you want). We would like to get some information from you about the type of persuasive language and strategies you use when you are trying to convince another student not to use tobacco. The information that you provide may help improve public health messages aimed at people your age.

You were invited to this group because you are PRIDE members that have experience in talking to other people your age and younger about tobacco. We want to learn about those experiences.

There are no right or wrong answers. We expect you to have different points of view. Please feel free to share your point of view even if it is different from what others have said.

We are tape recording the session because we don't want to miss any of your comments. No names will be included in any of the transcripts from these interviews. Your comments are confidential. Keep in mind that we are interested in negative comments as well as positive comments.

We have name tents in front of us. They help me remember names. If you want to follow up on something that someone has said, you want to agree, or disagree, or give an example, feel free to do that. Don't feel like you have to respond to me all the time. Feel free to have a conversation with one another about these questions. I am

here to ask questions, listen and make sure everyone has a chance to share. We are interested in hearing from each of you. So if you're talking a lot, I may ask you to give others a chance. And if you aren't saying much, I may call on you. We just want to make sure we hear from all of you.

Feel free to get up and get more food if you would like. Let's begin. (Move to question #1).

Questioning Route for a 1 ½ to 2 hour session:

1. *Opening Question:* Tell us what you do for fun when you're not at school.

2. *Introductory Question:* What motivated you to join the P.R.I.D.E. group?

3. *Transition Question:* Think about when you first became a member of P.R.I.D.E. Describe your first time telling another student or audience about why they should not use drugs, alcohol or tobacco.

4. *Transition Question:* What did you learn about talking to these individuals?

5. *Key Question:* Think about now. Which strategies seem to work best?

6. *Key Question:* Which strategies did not work?

7. *Key Question:* What are some of the barriers you experience in getting your message across?

8. *Ending Questions:* If you had a chance to give other P.R.I.D.E. members advice about how to persuade their audience not to use tobacco, what would you tell them?

9. *Ending Question:* Of all the strategies we discussed, which is the most useful to you?

10. *Ending Question:* (read a summary of notes taken). Did I correctly capture what was said today?

11. *Ending Question:* (review purpose of study) Is there anything that we should have talked about but didn't? (allow 10 minutes for this question).

Rhetorical Sensitivity

Coding Category	Definition	Example
Reframing	The process of redefining events and experiences from a different point of view	"It's the different perspective you can show them."
Non-judgmental Communication	Communication in which the club member refrained from verbally and non-verbally expressing a negative opinion of the substance abuser and his or her behaviors.	" Don't judge them no matter what."
Indirect Communication	The need to take a less forward approach to discussing the issue of substance abuse with a peer.	" You can't just come right out and tell them that they're doing the wrong thing. You have to think about how to say it nicer."

Appendix C
Interview Guide

1. What are some words that you would use to describe PRIDE? Its purpose?
   Why?

2. Describe what it means to be a PRIDE member.

   a. Why did you join P.R.I.D.E.?

   b. Who joins P.R.I.D.E.?

3. Describe the planning process of putting together a P.R.I.D.E. presentation.

4. How do you apply what you learn in P.R.I.D.E. to your presentations?

5. What approaches (comedy, drama, etc.) seem to work best with your audience?

   What makes the biggest impact? Why?

Code	Definition	Examples
1. Inclusion	Text that indicates that members perceive that they are part of the P.R.I.D.E. group	"You come in here and everybody's gonna welcome you."
1.1 Family	Text that indicates that membership in P.R.I.D.E. is like being part of a family or personal support system.	". . . it's more of a support group."
1.2 Acceptance	Text that indicates that members feel accepted for being themselves by other P.R.I.D.E. members and do not feel a need to change to belong to P.R.I.D.E.	"I think P.R.I.D.E gives you a home at school where you can be yourself."
1.3 Friendship	Text that indicates that members feel a sense of friendship within the group.	"I made some of my best friends in P.R.I.D.E."
1.4 Collaboration	Text that indicates that the process of scriptwriting for the shows, brainstorming ideas, or deciding what topics to include in a show, is a team effort in which all members feel a sense of decision-making power.	"We write skits. Then we pick the ones that we like the most."
2. Impact	Text that indicates the impact on P.R.I.D.E. members and their perception of the impact on the audience's response.	(see examples for each group)
2.1. On Members	Text that indicates that members express the emotional, psychological, and behavioral effects of being a P.R.I.D.E. member.	"That girl's testimony brought us all to tears. Like it was the sweetest thing."
2.2 On the Audience	Text that indicates P.R.I.D.E. members' perception of the effect of their presentations on the audience's response.	"It really makes people think 'wow,' it could happen to me."
2.1.2 Role Models	Text that indicates that being a P.R.I.D.E. member comes with a responsibility to model good behavior.	" I'm just trying to set a good example."
2.1.3 Confidence	Text that indicates that P.R.I.D.E. members develop self-confidence from being a P.R.I.D.E member.	"I was really an insecure person . . .so that's why I'm really glad I joined P.R.I.D.E. where I can put up a shield."

Code	Definition	Examples
2.1.4 Reciprocity	Text that indicates that members feel a desire to give back to P.R.I.D.E. because it has benefited them.	"Everything you put into P.R.I.D.E. you get back plus more."
2.1.5 P.R.I.D.E. members as teachers	Text that indicates that members see themselves as teaching or educating their audience with the P.R.I.D.E. message.	"You help people, you teach people, and you're kind of like missionaries who go spread the word."
3. Commitment	Text that indicates personal commitment to P.R.I.D.E. or the audience.	"It takes serious dedication, love for children, love for what you are doing. . ."
3.1. Commitment to P.R.I.D.E.	Text that indicates a personal commitment to P.R.I.D.E.'s principles or the P.R.I.D.E. organization.	"gives us an opportunity to tell them [audience] what we were all about and lead them into the drug-free way."
3.2 Commitment to the audience	Text that indicates a personal commitment to help the audience understand the P.R.I.D.E. message.	"and you get to go out there and help other kids on the way too."

Appendix E
Assent/Consent IRB Forms
IRB and Shelby County Schools Approval Letters

Consent Forms for Parents of P.R.I.D.E. Club Members

University of Memphis
Research Consent Form: Parent

Principal Investigator: Elizabeth Stephens
                                           Graduate Student
                                           Department of Communication

Committee: Dr. Pradeep Sopory, PhD
                                           Department of Communication

                                           Dr. Amanda Young, PhD
                                           Department of Communication

                                           Dr. Walt Kirkpatrick, PhD
                                           Department of Communication

                                           Dr. Ken Ward, PhD
                                           Center for Community Health

Introduction: I understand that my child has been asked to participate in a focus group regarding the persuasive strategies used by P.R.I.D.E. group members when talking with peers. The PRIDE coordinators have approved this study. The focus group should take about 1 hour to complete. The focus group discussion will be held Monday, May 5th from 2:15-3:30 p.m., in the circulation library at Houston High School.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to learn about the persuasive strategies used by P.R.I.D.E. members when talking with peers about tobacco use. I want to learn which strategies are most effective and which strategies are least effective. The goal is to learn about which persuasive messages are most effective when talking to another person about tobacco use.

Procedures: Only P.R.I.D.E. members will participate in this study. If you agree to let your child participate in this study, your child will be part of a focus group in which pseudonyms are used. Interview questions will be asked during the focus group. In addition to Mrs. Stephens' presence, Ms. Leanne Smith, the PRIDE coordinator, and two graduate students from the University of Memphis will be present.

By signing this consent form, you also agree to allow Mrs. Stephens to record the focus group sessions.

Confidentiality: Your child will be referred to in this study by a pseudonym, and only Mrs. Stephens will have access to the tapes, notes, and other records of the focus group. All information that your child provides will be identified by his/her pseudonym. After completion of

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the study, the information will be kept for at least five years for reference, but no one will be able to identify your child from his/her responses. The records from this study will be kept confidential within the limits allowed by law.

Potential Risks: There is a slight chance that talking about tobacco use of other people might make your child feel mildly upset. However, the likelihood of this happening is small. If it does happen, Mrs. Stephens will console your child and discontinue his/her participation.

Potential Benefits: Discussing persuasive strategies that teens use when talking to other teens about tobacco use could help them develop more effective ways to talk to one another. However, the outcome of this study may not directly benefit them, but the results will contribute to our knowledge of persuasive messages. In this regard, we may use the results to prepare scholarly publications, but no information will be presented that will identify your child.

Compensation: Your child will receive a gift certificate to a bookstore for his/her participation in this study.

Your Rights: Although we would like for your child to answer all the questions that are posed, he/she has the right to skip questions he/she does not want to answer. Your child also has the right to withdraw at any point during the session

I understand that all information obtained from my child will be strictly confidential. Only Mrs. Stephens will have access to tapes, notes, and any other original records of the focus groups.

The University of Memphis does not have any funds budgeted for compensation for injury, damages, or other expenses. If you need any answers to questions regarding your child's rights as a participant in this study, please contact the Chair of the Committee for the Protection of Human Research Participants at 678-2533. If you have any questions about this study, Mrs. Stephens will be happy to answer them now. Or you may contact her at estephen@memphis.edu.

Please sign this consent form below. Thank you for letting your child participate in this study.

By signing below, you indicate that you have read the above and give your consent to allow your child to participate in this study.

Name of Child (please print)_____

Parent/Guardian's Signature_____
Date:_____

Parent/Guardian Name (please print)_____

Assent Forms for P.R.I.D.E. Club Members

University of Memphis
Research Consent Form: Research Participant

Principal Investigator: Elizabeth Stephens
                Graduate Student
                Department of Communication

Committee: Dr. Pradeep Sopory, PhD
                Department of Communication

                Dr. Amanda Young, PhD
                Department of Communication

                Dr. Walt Kirkpatrick, PhD
                Department of Communication

                Dr. Ken Ward, PhD
                Center for Community Health

Introduction: I understand that I have been asked to participate in a focus group regarding the persuasive strategies used by P.R.I.D.E. group members when talking with peers. The PRIDE coordinators have approved this study. The focus group should take about 1 hour to complete. The focus group discussion will be held Monday, May 5th from 2:30-3:30 p.m., in the circulation library at Houston High School.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to learn about the persuasive strategies used by P.R.I.D.E. members when talking with peers about tobacco use. I want to learn which strategies are most effective and which strategies are least effective. The goal is to learn about which persuasive messages are most effective when talking to another person about tobacco use.

Procedures: Only P.R.I.D.E. members will participate in this study. If you agree to participate in this study, you will be part of a focus group. Interview questions will be asked during the focus group. In addition to Mrs. Stephens' presence, Ms. Leanne Smith, the PRIDE coordinator, and two graduate students from the University of Memphis will be present.

By signing this consent form, you also agree to allow Mrs. Stephens to record the focus group sessions.

Confidentiality: You will be referred to in this study by a pseudonym, and only Mrs. Stephens will have access to the tapes, notes, and other records of the focus group. All information that you provide will be identified by your pseudonym. After completion of the study, the information will

be kept for at least five years for reference, but no one will be able to identify you from your responses. The records from this study will be kept confidential within the limits allowed by law.

Potential Risks: There is a slight chance that talking about tobacco use of other people might make you feel mildly upset. However, the likelihood of this happening is small. If it does happen, Mrs. Stephens will solace you and discontinue your participation if you so desire.

Potential Benefits: Discussing persuasive strategies that you use when talking to another student about tobacco use could help you develop more effective ways to talk to them. However, the outcome of this study may not directly benefit you, but the results will contribute to our knowledge of persuasive messages. In this regard, we may use the results to prepare scholarly publications, but no information will be presented that will identify any individuals.

 Compensation: You will receive a gift certificate to a bookstore for your participation in this study.

Your Rights: Although we would like you to answer all the questions that are posed, you have the right to skip questions you do not want to answer. You also have the right to withdraw at any point during the session

I understand that all information obtained from me will be strictly confidential. Only Mrs. Stephens will have access to tapes, notes, and any other original records of the focus groups.

The University of Memphis does not have any funds budgeted for compensation for injury, damages, or other expenses. If you need any answers to questions regarding your rights as a participant in this study, please contact the Chair of the Committee for the Protection of Human Research Participants at 678-2533. If you have any questions about this study, Mrs. Stephens will be happy to answer them now. Or you may contact her at estephens@memphis.edu.

Please sign this consent form below. Thank you for your participation in this study.

By signing below, you indicate that you have read the above and give your consent to participate in the study.

Signature_____
Date_____

Name (please print)_____

Appendix E
Assent/Consent IRB Forms
IRB and Shelby County Schools Approval Letters

Shelby County Schools Approval for Study

Thu, September 4, 2008 4:49:34 PM
RE: Request to Conduct Research
From: Maura Black Sullivan <msullivan@scsk12.org>
     Add to Contacts
To: Elizabeth Stephens <estephen@memphis.edu>
Cc: Leisa Justus <ljustus@scsk12.org>; "ejones@scsk12.org" <ejones@scsk12.org>;
     Shunji Brown-Woods <sbrownwoods@scsk12.org>

Ms. Stephens,

 Your request to conduct research appears acceptable to me from the parameters that you have laid out. As you continue to complete your paperwork, please forward to Ms. Ellander Jones in my office, ejones@scsk12.org. I have copied the principal of Houston High for her reference,

Thanks,

 Maura Sullivan

 Maura Black Sullivan

Assistant Superintendent Planning & Student Services
Shelby County Schools
160 S. Hollywood
Memphis, TN 38112
(901) 321-2575 fax: (901) 321-2660
email: msullivan@scsk12.org

Shelby County Schools offers educational and employment opportunities without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex or disability.

Shelby County Schools Approval for Study

From: Elizabeth Stephens [mailto:estephen@memphis.edu]
Sent: Thursday, September 04, 2008 3:47 PM
To: msullivan@scsk12.org
Subject: Request to Conduct Research

Ms. Sullivan,

Thank you for calling me back today. I am not where I can get to a phone for a while, so I am emailing you.

I will be submitting a request to conduct research at Houston High School. I received IRB approval from the University of Memphis and have that to give to you. However, I do not have my prospectus completed because I am still in the process of working that out. Is the approved IRB acceptable now? May I send the approved prospectus to you as soon as it is approved - I expect it to be within a month to 6 weeks.

As a doctoral student, I started working with the America's P.R.I.D.E. student group at Houston High School last spring as part of a grant project that I was on at the University of Memphis. We received a state health department grant in the Communication Department to educate adolescents about tobacco use. We connected with the PRIDE club, and worked with them on presentations. I would now like to study their group for my dissertation. The club meets after school and I will not be doing any experimental research with the students. I would like to do a qualitative case study of their group.

Thank you for your time.

Elizabeth Stephens, Teaching Assistant
University of Memphis
Communication Dept.
143 Theatre & Communication Bldg.
Memphis, TN