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ABSTRACT

Corporations are increasingly weighing in to advocate for one-side or the other in cultural and political debates. As these types of corporate social advocacy become increasingly common, much is still unknown as to how they affect consumer perceptions of the organization, attitudes regarding their relationship with the organization, and their future purchase or behavioral intentions.

This study aims to address this gap.

Utilizing a survey conducted in late spring-2019, this study assesses public perceptions of corporate political engagement/corporate social advocacy and their subsequent attitudes towards the organization and future behavioral intentions.

Analysis revealed that corporate social advocacy does have significant beneficial impacts on the organization-public relationship and stakeholder intentions to strengthen the relationship, however these benefits are only felt when stakeholders perceive the activity as an authentic expression of the organization's character and as genuinely capable of helping address injustices in society.

Implications for theory and research are discussed.

CONSUMER ATTACHMENT AND CORPORATE SOCIAL ADVOCACY: LEVERAGING
POLITICAL BEHAVIORS TO BOLSTER ORGANIZATION-PUBLIC RELATIONSHIPS

by

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Dissertation

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“This lonely and motionless figure knew a secret which was hidden from the others.
The miracle was that he had been allowed to do a miracle.”

- T.H. White, (1959, p. 543)

Staring across a half-empty coffeeshop in Oklahoma, wind-swirling and rain driving against pane glass, the sting of sudden fall in the air, it’s difficult to even begin to reflect on a journey now drawing closed. It’s been far too many years, too many miles, too much life. Gray hair is creeping at the edges, and what were once laugh-lines are evolving into wrinkles.

At the beginning of this program, at a reception hosted by my eventual dissertation chair, Dennis Kinsey, I found myself speaking with Dennis and two other faculty members, all, save for me, varying states of bald. I made some sort of joke, and Dennis leaned in and rubbed his head, retorting, “You know what the difference is between you and us, right? We’ve all finished our dissertations.”

The professors laughed. I laughed.

I shouldn’t have.

The person who began this program seems a stranger to the person completing it.

There is a natural inclination, I suppose, to wax nostalgic at moments like this, as one attempts to distill far too much time into far too few pages, to derive from the years some sort of pithy moral from a hazy past.

Perhaps it is best to keep things simple.

To my committee members, Dennis Kinsey, Joon Soo Lim, Hua Jiang and Laura Machia, as well as our late additions, the illustrious Roy Gutterman and defense chair Jeff Stanton, please know you have my profound gratitude. From your patience and flexibility to your willingness to pour far more time into a single Ph.D. student than he had any right to expect, please know you have my deepest thanks.

To Amy Arends, who saved my bacon more times than either of us can recount, there aren't enough souvenir coffee cups from whatever-state-I-just-flew-in-from in the world to express how much I appreciate you, all you do for the program and all you did for me.

To my incredible wife, Xiaochen Zhang, thank you so much for your willingness to be a tireless sounding board and to put up with the frustrations, travel schedules and frantic, last-minute revisions that invariably attend any project that I'm involved with.

To my semi-surprise co-author, Isaac, thanks for throwing some perspective on things. The aspirations of a dissertation pale in comparison to my dreams of a lifetime as your dad.

Reflecting now, it's odd how full-circle the adventure has come. How strangely reminiscent cold rain and the slightly burnt taste of a latte are of my time in Syracuse.

I suppose more than anything else it's a reminder that, although I've a few more wrinkles and few more grays than when I started, this isn't so much an end to the doctoral program as it is the time for the next adventure... (And I still have my hair, so take that, Dennis!)

Angela? Isaac? Let's go...

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1. INTRODUCTION

Organizations have long sought to influence the policies, procedures and laws of their countries-of-operation (Hillman, Keim, & Schuler, 2004). Given the government's regulatory position, ensuring and maintaining a beneficial operating environment via lobbying, agenda-setting and other, traditional outreach modes has long been a critical function of corporate communications teams (Dodd, 2018; Dodd & Supa, 2014). These forms of corporate political activity have long been a facet of the organizational communicator's toolkit (Dougall, 2008). Increasingly, however, corporations are engaging in an alternative form of political participation: corporate social advocacy. Unlike corporate political activity, which emphasizes ensuring a beneficial regulatory or political environment and thus serves ancillary corporate objectives, corporate social (or at times, confusingly, corporate *political* advocacy) refers to how organizations engage in the political process for non-ancillary reasons (Higginbotham & Dodd, 2018; Wettstein & Baur, 2016), throwing their weight behind one side or the other of proposed legal or policy changes that do *not* directly affect corporate activity.

Anecdotal evidence abounds that modern stakeholders increasingly consider these non-ancillary factors in their decisions to partner with (or purchase from) organizations (Wettstein & Baur, 2016). From decisions to boycott Mozilla products after it was revealed that then-CEO Brendon Eich had donated to a Californian effort to ban same-sex marriage (Friedersdorf, 2014) to consumer pressure (led by activist group, Color of Change) on organizations to revoke sponsorship of 2016's Republican National Convention (Reuters, 2016),

evidence is emerging that consumer decision-making is increasingly predicated on support (or disapproval) of organizations' non-ancillary political activities (Sen & Battacharya, 2001).

Indeed, according to recent research by PR firm Edelman, 64 percent of consumers expect corporate CEOs to "take the lead on change rather than waiting for government to impose it" (+/- .6%) (Edelman, 2018, p. 29), with 84 percent expecting CEOs to "inform conversations and policy debates on one or more issues" (Edelman, 2018b). Clear majorities of consumers expect organizations (and corporate leadership) to take on leading roles outside of business and in the public arena.

However, while increasing attention is being paid to how corporate social advocacy (or these corporate political efforts *outside* of ancillary business activities/interests) affects stakeholder perceptions and behaviors, this research largely exists as a disjointed and atheoretical network of isolated points, bound by a phenomenological label, corporate social advocacy (CSA) (Hoover, 2001). However, while corporate social advocacy provides useful nomenclature (at least when parsed from interrelated research such as corporate political activity/advocacy) and a normative justification for corporate participation in political debates, it thus far has not presented any sort of theoretical framework unpacking the *why* of this trend, the mechanisms by which it affects the organization-public relationship, or presenting practitioners and researchers with any sort of stable roadmap forward.

Yet this is not to say that such opportunities don't exist. Organization-public relationship theory (Hon & Grunig, 1999), one of the classic theories of public relations, may bear fruit when applied to the emerging dynamics of corporate social advocacy. CSA could potentially signal

organizational willingness to invest in the relationship, metaphorically cultivating the organization-public relationship and encouraging reciprocal investments among the public. Yet the variables of the OPR, such as trust, control mutuality, satisfaction and others, though empirically linked to consumer behavior, may function as intermediary variables within the CSA context, rather than antecedents. This is to say that, rather than static precursors to consumer behavior, CSA may precede and bolster OPR, subsequently encouraging consumer behaviors.

One possible mechanism for this relationship may be found in the attachment theory (Bowlby, 1988) of developmental psychology. It is contended here that the attachment theory may function as a useful antecedent to the OPR, enabling practitioners and theory to explicate how and under what conditions the OPR may flourish, encouraging future consumer behaviors.

Historically, empirical logjams in public relations literature and theory, such as the one currently stalling corporate social advocacy, have generally been addressed by borrowing either piecemeal or whole cloth from other social scientific disciplines. Indeed, one of the seminal theories of the field, organization-public relationships (Bruning & Ledingham, 1999) is an almost direct appropriation from the literature of interpersonal relationships. This paper proposes to do the same, via the introduction of three complementary theoretical elements to a survey exploration of CSA's impact on the organization-public relationship: via an examination of predictors of public perceptions of CSA efforts and antecedents of such perceptions.

One element oddly lacking in the extant CSA literature is the role of belief congruity in shaping stakeholder perceptions of corporate social advocacy. For example, conspicuously missing from Edelman's trust barometer is the precise nature of the "change" that stakeholders

are comfortable with. Is the change assumed to be congruent or incongruent with stakeholder *a priori* beliefs or partisan leanings? Attitude congruity has been demonstrated to be one of the most robust predictors of attitudes in psychological research (Osgood & Tannenbaum, 1955; Posner & Schmidt, 1993), yet thus far it has not been integrated within the corporate social advocacy literature.

A second opportunity for explicating the impacts of corporate social advocacy on organization-public relationships may arise in the form of stakeholder-specific perceptual factors, such as issue involvement or perceived authenticity. Involvement has long been demonstrated as a critical mediator in how individuals interpret incoming information (Petty & Cacioppo, 1981). The same may also be true in corporate social advocacy contexts, with relative involvement shaping stakeholder perceptions of, and reactions to, corporate social advocacy efforts. Similarly, as organizations become increasingly involved in social issues and topics, the public has grown increasingly wary of “color”-washing, or artificial organizational gestures related to an issue or topic (Laufer, 2003; Bartel Sheehan & Tusinski Berg, 2018). For corporate social advocacy to be perceived and responded to favorably, it must be perceived as genuine, and not merely a cynical ploy attempting to leverage issue salience for profit’s sake.

Finally, interpersonal relationship literature is increasingly recognizing that positive relationships aren’t merely ends in and of themselves but also constitute the means for the pursuit of extra-relational goals (Feeney, 2008). Supportive partners encourage the successful pursuit of personal goals, and perceptions of this support drive satisfaction with the relationship (Feeney, 2008). These effects of goal instrumentality (that is the utility of a relational partner in supporting the pursuit of non-relational goals) have significant bearing on

relationship satisfaction and host of subsequent behavioral intentions (Fitzsimons & Shah, 2008). Such a framework may bear fruit when applied to the organization-public relationship, as well. Similar effects of instrumentality may also be a factor in how supportive corporate social advocacy may bolster the organization-public relationship.

Utilizing a survey methodology, this study aims to examine antecedents and outcomes of corporate social advocacy on consumer decision-making, developing a deeper understanding of how CSA congruence may drive approach behaviors among consumers. Implications for both theory and practice will be discussed.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This paper seeks to shed light on the impacts of corporate social advocacy on consumer attitudes regarding the organization public relationship and future behavioral intentions. The following section is an examination of the extant literature of the organization-public relationship, the changing nature of interpersonal-relationship research, and the potential for integrating existing public relations constructs within the field of personal relationship literature. It is intended to make a conceptual argument that corporate social advocacy fulfills a similar relationship-satisfaction function to the goal-supportiveness from the interpersonal literature.

2.1 ORGANIZATION-PUBLIC RELATIONSHIPS

It was in response to Ferguson's 1984 call for a renewed focus on relationships between consumers and organizations that public relations research saw a flowering of research centered on how communications can be leveraged to create, cultivate and maintain long-term relationships between consumers and corporations (Ledingham & Bruning, 1998; Ledingham, Bruning, & Wilson, 1999).

While some theorists took a descriptive/normative approach to the problem from a practitioner perspective, such as in Grunig's excellence theory (Grunig, 1992; Grunig, Grunig, & Dozier, 2006), others observed that from the stakeholder perspective, the organization-public relationship mimicked interpersonal relationships, with public relations practitioners functioning as intermediaries (or perhaps marriage counselors) between the two partners, the

organization and stakeholders or citizens affecting or affected by organizational activities (Toth, 1995). Public relations scholars began to parse interpersonal relationship literature, hypothesizing relational antecedents potentially predicting robust relationships between organizations and their publics (Broom, Casey, & Ritchie, 1997; Broom & Dozier, 1990; Grunig, Grunig, Sriramech, Huang, & Lyra, 1995).

Ledingham, Bruning, Thomlinson and Lesko incorporated these theoretical precepts with an integration of research in interpersonal relationships, marketing and social psychology, emerging with a series of dimensions defining successful relationships between an organization and its publics and creating a model of the healthy organization-public relationship (1997). A total of 17 items defining successful OPRs were created and validated (Ledingham & Bruning, 1998). Of these 17, 4 were pulled from the interpersonal relationship literature (with the remaining 13 pulled from marketing and social psychological literature) and identified as essential to stable organization public relationships: investment, commitment, trust, and comfort with relational dialectics (Ledingham & Bruning, 1998; Ki & Shin, 2006).

Investment refers to the amount of time, energy, and effort dedicated to building the relationship. From an organizational perspective this refers to investment in public relations efforts, including stakeholder outreach in non-commercial (that is, non-profit/non-ancillary) engagement and organizational listening (Hon & Grunig, 1999; Jo, 2006; Ki & Hon, 2007). Commitment refers to the willingness of the partner (or partners) to endure relational difficulties and yet maintain the relationship. In an organizational context this can include crises (Coombs & Holladay, 2001) or the emergence of new, potentially beneficial competitors which must then be fended off by organizational efforts (Fournier, 1998). Trust refers to the sense

that those in the relationship can rely on each other. In an organizational sense, this can refer to both organizational behaviors (Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Aleman, 2001; Hess & Story, 2005; Sisson, 2017) or organizational ability/product performance (Ledingham & Bruning, 1998; Jo, 2006). In the organization-public relationship trust is the belief that the organization can, in fact, deliver on its promises of product quality, ethical behavior and social acceptability (Hon & Grunig, 1999; Ledingham & Bruning, 1998; Sisson, 2017). Finally, comfort with relational dialectics refers to a mutually acceptable understanding of the forces potentially pulling the relationship apart. Drawn directly from Woods' interpersonal relationship work (Woods, 1985), three dialectics affect comfort within the organization public relationship, as well: autonomy/connection; novelty/predictability; openness/closedness (Ledingham & Bruning, 1998).

In later research, Hon and Grunig presented a similar cluster of indices predicting public satisfaction with the organization-public relationship: trust, control mutuality, commitment, satisfaction, communal relationship and exchange relationship (1999). While commitment and satisfaction track closely with their operationalizations in Ledingham and Bruning's work, and control mutuality is conceptually similar to "comfort with relational dialectics," Hon and Grunig's differentiated trust as consisting of three subvariables, integrity, dependability, and competence (Hon & Grunig, 1999, p. 3), and differentiated the nature of the relationship (communal vs. exchange). Hon and Grunig proposed that establishing a communal relationship, or one wherein the organization provided benefits to the stakeholder out of a concern for their welfare (rather than any fiduciary responsibility) should function as the gold standard of public relations relationship cultivation. Exchange relationships, or quid-pro-quo systems wherein one

party extended benefits to the other either in reciprocation for past activity or in anticipation of future benefits were seen as less important than communal relationships (Hon & Grunig, 1999, p. 3; Hung, 2005; Ki & Hon, 2007).

A summation of this previous research yields six variables hypothesized to predict stakeholder attitudes towards the organization: trust, satisfaction, commitment, control mutuality (Sisson, 2017a), communal relationship and exchange relationship (Ki & Hon, 2007). The specified model, validated by Ki and Hon, establishes these six variables as antecedents of attitude towards the organization, which in turn is used to predict stakeholder behavioral intentions (decisions to remain in or abandon) the organization-public relationship.

The relationship management component of the organization-public relationship theory invoked these antecedents to predict public satisfaction with the relationship and the subsequent likelihood of remaining in relationship with the organization (Ledingham & Bruning, 1998). The model has been validated in a variety of industrial sectors including: political parties and PACs (Sweetser, English & Fernandez, 2015; Sweetser & Tedesco, 2014), community governmental relations (Bruning, Langenhop, & Green, 2004; Wise, 2007), finance and business-to-business (Ki, 2013; Taylor & Doerfel, 2005), education (Mohammed, 2014) and the nonprofit sector (Bortree, 2010; Pressgrove & McKeever, 2016; Saxton & Waters, 2014; Sisson, 2017a; Waters, 2015), and in a variety of relational contexts such as international/intercultural settings (Gilligan, 2011; Huang, 2001; Hung, 2005; Hung & Chen, 2009), socially mediated relationships (Saffer, Sommerfeldt, & Taylor, 2013; Saxton & Waters, 2014; Sisson, 2017; Sweetser, 2010; Waters, Burnett, Lamm, & Lucas, 2009), and during times of corporate crisis (Brown & White, 2011; Coombs & Holladay, 2001; Gillespie & Dietz, 2009).

Past research has demonstrated that positive organization-public relationships are predictors of both attitudes towards the organization (Bruning, 2002) and behavioral intentions (Ki & Hon, 2007). This research seeks to add to the current literature via an additional hypothesis, linking organization-public relationships with current purchase behaviors and product-attitudes.

The organization-public relationship is still one of the dominant constructs within public relations, and yet the paradigm has yet to pivot and address the rise of corporate social advocacy and its impacts on relationships between the consumer and the brand. This research intends to examine how evolutions in corporate social responsibility/corporate social advocacy are shifting the freighting and significance of the organization-public relationship.

2.2 CORPORATE SOCIAL ADVOCACY

Early definitions of corporate advocacy emphasized strategic efforts to manage or inhibit government regulations to ensure a beneficial operating environment. Heath contended that corporate advocacy was “arguments on issues contested in the public dialogue in an attempt to create a favorable, reasonable, and informed public opinion which in turn influences institutions’ operating environments” (1980, p. 371). Early corporate advocacy, much as Heath’s definition suggests, was narrowly delimited to topics or issues directly connected to corporate ancillary activities or traditional business management (Hoover, 1997). However, as the corporate social responsibility paradigm gained traction (Carroll, 1999), corporate advocacy began to evolve as well (Lin, 2018).

While corporate advocacy used organizational communicators to weigh in on public policy, ensuring optimal operating environments (Hillman, Keim, & Schuler, 2004; Waltzer, 1988), and corporate social responsibility argued that corporations had an obligation for ethics in day-to-day operations (Bhattacharya, Korschun, & Sen, 2009; Du, Bhattacharya, & Sen, 2010), corporate social advocacy proposed that corporations had an ethical obligation to use their political muscle to advocate for social or regulatory changes unrelated to daily operations (Wettstein, 2010).

Although much of the early literature in corporate social advocacy is highly normative, businesses have noticed and begun to respond to the cultural and capital benefits from weighing in on issues salient in public discourse (Baur & Wettstein, 2015; Crable & Vibbert, 1983; Bhattacharya, Korschun, & Sen, 2009; Orlitzky, Schmidt, & Rynes, 2003). Developments in corporate anthropomorphism (Cheney, 2009; Wen & Song, 2017), stakeholder expectations (Clarkson, 1995), and operational environments (Wood, 1991), however, have emphasized the clear communication of both CEO and organizational attitudes on social issues via engagement on non-ancillary political debate (Cochran, 2007; Goldzwig & Cheney, 1984).

Differentiating corporate social advocacy (or corporate political advocacy) from Heath's corporate advocacy construct, Wettstein and Baur define the phenomenon as "voicing or showing explicit and public support for certain individuals, groups, or ideals and values with the aim of convincing and persuading others to do the same" (2016, p. 200). Building their case via corporate advocacy during California's debate around Proposition 8, which sought to outlaw gay marriage, Wettstein and Baur observe that many organizations, such as Ben & Jerry's and Google weighed in in opposition to the bill based on corporate values or ethics, rather than

from a business-case standpoint (2016). A particularly useful articulation of the construct is proffered by Dodd and Supa, who contended that corporate social advocacy must address issues that are not relevant to the organization's ancillary activities and controversial, potentially isolating some stakeholder groups while at the same time bolstering attitudes among activist groups (2014; 2015).

In a famous confrontation during an annual meeting with an investor angry about an unfolding boycott over the company's position on gay marriage, then-CEO Howard Schultz famously retorted, "Not every decision is an economic decision...it's not an economic decision to me. The lens in which we are making that decision is through the lens of our people. We employ over 200,000 people in this company, and we want to embrace diversity. Of all kinds" (Allen, 2013, para. 3).

Despite the increases in corporate social advocacy efforts, questions still remain about how such efforts are perceived by the public, particularly given its linkages with other forms of corporate-opportunistic issues management, such as lobbying (Dodd & Supa, 2014; Lin, 2018). Despite increasing research on the topic, significant questions still remain about public perceptions of corporate social advocacy. As Dodd and Supa observe, "Voluntary engagement in controversial issues may create a legitimacy gap among stakeholders" (2015, p 288). Building on Suchman's work on legitimacy (1995), Dodd and Supa acknowledge that before corporate social advocacy can yield beneficial results, it must first be recognized as a legitimate organizational activity by consumers. Yet despite this concern, current work only tangentially examines the impact of perceived legitimacy on stakeholder perceptions of CSA.

Suchman contended that organizational legitimacies could be differentiated into several categories, but of particular note for this research is the variation of what he described as *temporal texture* (Suchman, 1995, p. 583). Suchman contended that legitimacies could be episodic (temporary) i.e. focused on particular organizational behaviors or continual (permanent), i.e. oriented towards the organization's fundamental existence (1995). Similarly, the legitimacy of corporate social advocacy can be approached via a similar lens. On the one hand, it can be a specific organizational activity (episodic) or anchored in the fundamental nature of the organization itself (continual). From an episodic perspective, the legitimacy of corporate social advocacy may be anchored in the perceived legitimacy of other corporate ethical activities, such as corporate social responsibility. Based on the legitimacy propositions of Suchman and Boyd (1996), it is proposed that:

H1: Legitimacy of CSA is positively correlated with the perceived legitimacy of CSR.

H2: Legitimacy of CSA is positively correlated with CSA authenticity.

Compounding the effects of legitimacy, the corporate social advocacy may be intrinsically related to the nature of the organization itself in what Alhouti, Johnson, and Holloway described as "authenticity" (2016). A key component of perceived authenticity is perceived motives. Scholder Ellen, Webb, and Mohr, for instance, found that stakeholder attitudes towards CSR efforts were undercut when those efforts were perceived as self-serving (2006). If CSR is perceived as a marketing or brand positioning ploy (i.e. inauthentic), individuals subsequently perceive the organization less favorably, undermining the relationship bolstering effects of the CSR in the first place. It stands to reason that such an effect should be present in CSA, as well. If the corporate advocacy is seen as a marketing ploy, rather than a sincere

expression of organizational ideals or beliefs, the CSA is less likely to bolster the organization-public relationship.

H3: Perceived CSA Authenticity is positively correlated with OPR.

One potential salve for the limitations of inauthenticity or perceived selfish motives, however, may come in the form of perceived social cost. Nike's campaign featuring embattled former NFL-quarterback Colin Kaepernick, for example, was launched amidst a maelstrom of public backlash (Abad-Santos, 2018). Angry consumers burnt shoes, cut the logos off socks, and both company-supportive (and schadenfreude-driven) reactions quickly took social media content featuring reactions to the campaign viral ("Colin Kaepernick: Nike Suffers," 2018).

It is contended here that these sorts of activities, counter-advocacy activism among consumers, boycott threats, or violence against goods or products linked with the organization constitute a form of penalty or social cost in the mind of the consumer. Collectively, these social costs represent negative impacts of the CSR/CSA activity on the organization in the public sphere. While problematic, it is possible that such negative effects could inoculate the public against perceiving the CSR/CSA campaign as window-dressing or self-serving. The company is incurring a penalty for their activism. They've got some "skin in the game" regarding the issue. The activity *must* be sincere.

In reaction to these perceived social costs, consumers may be motivated to defend the position-congruent brand against the threat of counter-advocacy activism. In Nike's case, for instance, the social costs further incited a secondary wave of supportive reactions (Abad-Santos, 2018; "Nike Sales Defy," 2018) as pro-Kaepernick consumers rallied to support the star and the brand. Increasing evidence explores the "boycott," the conceptual inverse of boycott

behaviors, wherein consumers are motivated to purchase (rather than avoid) an organization's products in order to signal their support for an embattled brand (Friedman, 1996).

It is proposed here that these "boycott" behaviors amongst position-congruent consumers are amplified by the perceived cost incurred by the organization for their political stand. When consumers in ideological agreement perceive the organization as incurring a social cost (either fiscal losses in the form of reduced sales due to boycotts or losses of social capital in the form of consumer disapproval) they are motivated to perceive the advocacy as more authentic and to defend the organization through purchase behaviors.

The integration of the literature of the organization-public relationship, authenticity, and attachment yields the following hypotheses.

H4: Perceived social cost is positively correlated with perceived CSA authenticity.

H5: The relationship of perceived social cost with perceived authenticity is moderated by legitimacy.

H6: Perceived social cost is positively related with perceptions of the organization-public relationship.

H7: Perceived CSA authenticity mediates perceived social cost and legitimacy of CSA's effect on perceived quality of the organization public relationship.

It should further be considered that, despite Schultz' insistence that Starbucks' decision was ethical, rather than economic, there may very well be a "business" case to be made for corporate social advocacy as a business opportunity (Dodd & Supa, 2015). Public relations' organization-public relationship framework was predicated on appropriated theory from interpersonal literature of nearly 2 decades ago, yet more recent developments in theory and research in interpersonal relationships, when juxtaposed against organization-public

relationships, may indicate that corporate social advocacy has a significant role to play in bolstering relationships with stakeholders and building the business.

2.3 EVOLUTIONS IN INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS RESEARCH

If, as the organization-public relationship literature contends, relationships between organizations and their publics mimic those between individuals, then it stands to reason that emergent research and changing beliefs about the nature of interpersonal relationships may bolster public relations literature, as well. In the ensuing decades since public relations literature split forth from interpersonal relationship significant shifts have occurred within the field (Reis, Aron, Clark, & Finkel, 2013). Significantly within the contexts of organization-public relationships are developments within the field of attachment theory, the recognition of partner perception as goal-instrumental as a critical component of relationship satisfaction and behavioral intentions (Fitzsimons & Shah, 2010). It is proposed that attachment and instrumentality have significant bearing on the logic of corporate social advocacy as an integral part of relationship-building between organizations and publics.

2.4 ATTACHMENT THEORY AND PERSONAL GOAL SEEKING

Bowlby argued that healthy psychosocial development was reliant on the presence of a “secure base provided by our attachment figure(s)” (1988, p. 62). The fundamental assertion of attachment theory is that humans are driven to explore and interact with the environment, developing a sense of self through the capacity to affect change on the environments we inhabit (Bretherton, 1992). However, given that interactions with the environment inherently present risks or the potential for dangers and assorted negative outcomes, even at the infancy

stage we are reliant on strong, supportive attachments with caregivers to proffer a “safe haven” in the event of danger or risk (Feeney, 2004).

Healthy attachments to these figures foster a willingness to explore and encourages behavioral and psychological development, whereas unhealthy or unstable attachments are linked to a host of psychological, behavioral, and relational difficulties. This “secure base” function of secure attachment relationships (Bowlby, 1998; Feeney, 2007; 2007) encourages self-efficacy and independence by fostering an awareness that, in the event of failure, a supportive network will be waiting behind. As Fraley observes, “the attachment system essentially ‘asks’ the following fundamental question: Is the attachment figure nearby, accessible and attentive?” (Fraley, 2018, np).

In early research on the differentiation, Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters and Wall (1978) noted three potential outcomes of the attachment model. If the parent or caregiver provides adequate, responsive support, the child develops a *secure* attachment style and are quicker to respond positively (or be soothed by) the parent or caregiver during times of distress. If the parent or caregiver is inconsistent or unpredictable in offers of support, the child develops what is described as an *anxious/ambivalent* attachment style, creating risk-averse and anxious behaviors in response to parental attention (Ainsworth & Bell, 1970). If the parent or caregiver frequently ignores attempts towards supportive contact, the child grows cold, detached, and nonrelational (Bowlby, 1988). Later research (Main & Solomon, 1990) identified a fourth category, *disorganized* attachment, a result of abusive or unpredictably hostile reactions from parents or caregivers. In the disorganized attachment style, the infant (and eventually the

adult) exhibit a host of neurotic, antisocial, and even self-destructive tendencies (Paetzold, Rholes, & Kohn, 2015).

Attachment theory, however, has proven significant far beyond the constraints of childhood/developmental research. Bowlby had originally contended that attachment was a lifelong process, referring to it as a “cradle to the grave” (1988, p. 62) process, however it was a seminal 1987 study by Hazan and Shaver that empirically demonstrated “attachments” were the fundamental unit of interpersonal connection throughout the lifespan, although labelled slightly differently in everyday life. Socioculturally, they argued, “attachments” were a clinical reconceptualization of a thing more generally called “love” (Hazan & Shaver, 1987).

Hazan and Shaver’s argument launched an entire body of interpersonal relationship literature examining how attachment styles through adulthood predicted willingness to engage in risk-taking and exploration (Elliot & Reis, 2003), personal satisfaction (Fraley & Davis, 1997), and relational stability (Fraley, 2018). Fraley and Davis (1997) argued that stable attachments among young adults were remarkably similar to those between infants and caregivers, with transference of core relational constructs from caregivers to peers occurring in early adulthood. Their research on young adult relationships identified mutual care, mutual trust, and intimacy¹ as positive predictors of attachment transference from childhood caregivers to peer friendships and support networks.

¹ One dilemma here is some ambiguity in cause and effect, possibly a result of the typical survey methodology used in attachment research. Do care, trust, and intimacy predict attachment, or are they outputs of securely attached relationships? Fraley and Davis (1997, p. 137) argued for the former, however, much of the ensuing literature has been ambiguous about which comes first.

In short, attachment styles first developed through observations of children with caregivers were illustrated to repeat themselves in adult, romantic relationships as well. The question, though, is if relational attachments can be observed in childhood relationships, and later in adult/romantic relationships, can they also be observed in organization-public relationships and if so, what would such attachments look like?

2.5 WHAT DOES “ATTACHMENT” LOOK LIKE IN ORG-COMM CONTEXTS?

It is contended here that robust attachments in the organization-public relationship literature would track closely to Hon and Grunig’s (1999) measures of the organization-public relationship. Attachment theory contends that secure relationships in adulthood are predicated on mutual trust, mutual care, and intimacy (Fraley & Davis, 1997; Fraley & Shaver, 2000; Hazan & Shaver, 1987). Organization-public relationship theory contends that secure relationships between organizations and publics are predicated on control mutuality, trust, satisfaction, commitment, and relationship type (communal vs. exchange) (Hon & Grunig, 1999; Ki & Hon, 2007). In short, what Hon and Grunig referred to as robust organization-public relationships may simply be organization-public attachments specified in positive intimacy, perceived control mutuality, commitment, mutual care, communalism, trust, and satisfaction.

2.6 RELATIONSHIPS AND GOAL-SEEKING: INSTRUMENTALITY, INVOLVEMENT, AND BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS

One of the critical elements of the secure-attachment relationship is the function of the partner as a “secure base” to which the child (or partner) can return in the event of negative outcomes (Bowlby, 1990). Significantly, interpersonal relationship literature has demonstrated

convincingly that relationships are (at some level) utilitarian for both parties, consistent with Bowlby's proposal (1990). For Feeney, this conundrum is elucidated in the "dependency paradox" (2007, p. 268) wherein secure, mutually supportive relationships encourage partners to take greater risks and independence. Dependency encourages independence.

While paradoxical, the observation is also consistent with Bowlby's contention that secure attachments were necessary because they foster this same sense of agency. The healthiest relationships foster independence and bolster partner confidence to explore and interact with the world. The question, then, is what does "exploration" look like in adults?

According to Feeney (2004; 2007), adults "explore" through the pursuit of personal life goals, with relational partners providing either a "secure base" or "safe harbor" (2004, p. 632) of support. A small but robust body of literature supports this argument, demonstrating that satisfaction with interpersonal relationships is partially contingent on perceptions of the partner as goal-supportive (Brunstein, Dangelmayer, & Schultheiss, 1996; Ruhlman & Wolchik, 1988).

These assertions have been supported by more recent research on the interactions of personal goal pursuit, perceived partner supportiveness, and relationship satisfaction (Fitzsimons & Barch, 2003; Fitzsimons & Fishbach, 2010). In particular, Fitzsimons and Shah referred to this phenomenon as "goal instrumentality" (2008).

Instrumentality (or "goal congruency") refers to whether or not an individual or object is perceived as beneficial (or detrimental) to the pursuit of one's intrapersonal goals (Fitzsimons & Shah, 2008; Lazarus, 2002). Building on Lewin's precept that "objects will be perceived

positively or negatively depending on the extent to which they support or hinder needs” (Lewin, 2013; Light & Fitzsimons, 2014), research has discovered that the relative utility or support of a relational partner to an individual’s personal goal pursuits has limited but significant effects on how that partner is observed, evaluated, and treated (Fitzsimons & Shah, 2008; Kruglanski, Shah, Fishbach, Friedman, Chun, & Sleeth-Keppler, 2002).

The lens shaping (or perhaps activating) perceptions of instrumentality has been goal salience, or the relative significance of the specific goal in the individual’s thinking or prioritization (Fitzsimons & Fishbach, 2010). As specific goals are prioritized and pursued, instrumentality as a key attribute of relational partners is similarly prioritized. If goals are salient, individuals prioritize instrumentality in relationship evaluations, an effect that dissipates if/when the goal is achieved or loses salience (Fitzsimons & Shah, 2008). When specific goals are primed or salient, perceptions are filtered through relevance towards pursuit of that goal (Bruner & Goodman, 1947; Fitzsimons & Shah, 2008; Gollwitzer, Heckhausen, & Steller, 1990). This goal priming process, however, closely mimics another construct on salience, attitude and perception, issue involvement (Krugman, 1967). While goal salience is largely an individual process (although past research has demonstrated a “goal contagion” effect between intimate partners), issue involvement is essentially a macro-level version of the same construct. Rather than individualized (like goals), issues are sociological.

Issue involvement, or the perception of a topic as personally relevant or intrinsically important (Petty & Cacioppo, 1979; 1981), is a significant factor in how individuals interpret new information (Maheswaran & Meyers-Levy, 1990), much as interpersonal relationship

literature has demonstrated goal-priming/salience. From this lens, issue involvement may perform a similar function to goal salience in driving motivated cognitions or perceptions.

Past research has, however, demonstrated that not all involvements are created equal (Einwiller & Johar, 2013; Pfau et al., 2010). More recent evidence suggests that involvement can be differentiated into three categories: outcome-relevant (OR), value-relevant (VR), and impression-relevant (IR) (Cho & Boster, 2005; Johnson & Eagly, 1989; Marshall, Reinhart, Feeley, Tutzauer, & Asher, 2008). Literature has described outcome-relevance (OR) as congruent with Petty and Caccioppo's early involvement work (Pfau et al., 2010) and similar in form and function to overall issue salience. Conversely, values-relevance (VR) has been described as perceptions of the issue as fundamentally interconnected with an individual's value systems similar to ego involvement (Johnson & Eagly, 1989; Pfau et al., 2010). Finally, impression-relevance (IR) describes those issues or attitudes that, while not significant to the individual, are "socially accepted by significant others" (Pfau et al., 2010, p 2).

Past research utilizing the three types of involvement has had ambiguous results. While Marshall et al. found that OR and VR involvements were significant predictors of future behaviors, IR involvement was not (2008). Similarly, Pfau et al. discovered that while OR and VR involvement have significant impacts on perceptions and resistance to attitude change, whereas IR involvement has no significant effect (2010). This research seeks to understand whether or not the different types of involvement have statistically significant effects on perceptions of corporate social advocacy.

H8: Issue involvement is positively correlated with perception of corporate social advocacy.

H9: Issue involvement is positively related with perceived quality of the organization public relationship.

H10: Issue involvement is positively related with future a) purchase intentions and b) positive WOM intentions.

Within the interpersonal literature, involvement in the form of goal-salience has been demonstrated to have significant effects on what Fitzsimons and Shah (2008) refer to as “instrumentality” or the perceived utility of relational partners in pursuit of individual goals. has been demonstrated to affect a host of relationship evaluations (Fitzsimons, Finkel and vanDellen, 2015; Hofmann, Finkel, & Fitzsimons, 2015; Hui, Finkel, Fitzsimons, Kumashiro, & Hofmann, 2014; Vohs & Finkel, 2006) including: relationship satisfaction and commitment (VanderDrift & Agnew, 2014), partner evaluation (Fitzsimons & Fishbach, 2010), and perceptions of “closeness” or proximity within the relationship (Fitzsimons, Finkel, & vanDellen, 2015; Fitzsimons & Fishbach, 2010).

It is contended here that the triptych of goal salience, instrumentality, and relationship assessment also intersect in the issue involvement, corporate social advocacy, and the organization-public relationship.

2.7 TO APPROACH OR AVOID: RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION AND BEHAVIORAL INTENT

Fitzsimons and Shah (2008) found that a host of relational variables were affected by the perceived instrumentality of partners by goal-primed individuals. Of particular note, however, were their findings on behavioral intentions subsequent to perceived goal instrumentality. The authors contended that relative instrumentality led to one of two outcomes for goal-primed individuals. With instrumental others, individuals were primed to

approach, to invest time or resources into the relationship. With non-instrumental others, individuals were primed to avoid or cut off investment of resources into the relationship.

In interactions with organizations, however, partners have fewer options for relational investment behaviors than they do interpersonally.

Two of the primary modes for approach behaviors in context, however, are purchase behavioral intentions (Cornwell & Coote, 2005; David, Kline, & Dai, 2005) and positive word-of-mouth intentions (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremler, 2004; Hong & Rim, 2010; Hong & Yang, 2009).

Friedman (1999) argued that consumers have two sets of behavioral opportunities in response to attitudes about corporate behavior/consumer advocacy. In the classic model, consumers can boycott, or avoid purchasing a company's products or services as a way of punishing the organization for negative deeds. Conversely, "buycotting" describes consumers prioritizing purchasing a corporation's products or services as a way of rewarding or recognizing the organization for positive deeds. Much of the extant literature emphasizes the political aspects of "boycott" behavior (Adugu, 2014; Fischer, 2007), yet buycotting may be relational, as well.

While boycotts are certainly politically driven purchase decisions, it is contended here that the act of purchasing one organization's products or services (over another) is a conscious choice to relate with the one organization in preference to their competitors. It is political, yes, but it is also inherently relational. It is a conscious decision to bolster the consumer relationship

with one organization over its competitors. It is an opportunity for the consumer to draw closer or to cultivate exclusivity with the organization as a relational partner.

Conversely, while purchase decisions may bolster the relationship and strengthen the connection of the public with the organization, word-of-mouth is an opportunity to express that relationship to the rest of the world (Litvin, Goldsmith, & Pan, 2008). While organizations and research naturally focus on purchase intentions and purchase behaviors when it comes to assessing consumer satisfaction with the organization, products or its services, word-of-mouth is to inextricably link one's reputation or public persona with that of the organization.

Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremmler (2004) note that one key motivator for electronic word-of-mouth is the desire to bolster self-worth through association with the organization. It is the public affirmation of the relationship to glean positive esteem via association with the company or its products. It is fundamentally relational, much in the way public expressions of interpersonal relationships serve to strengthen commitment to the relationship by linking the public reputations of both partners.

This study contends that both behaviors are examples of *approach* behavior, opportunities for consumers to strengthen their relationship with the organization via proactive behavior.

H12: The relationship of issue involvement with future purchase intentions is moderated by perceived goal instrumentality.

H13: Perceived quality of the organization public relationship mediates issue involvement and perceived goal instrumentality's effect on a) purchase intentions and b) positive WOM.

CHAPTER 3. HYPOTHESES/RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on a review of the extant literature, the following hypotheses and research questions were generated regarding the relationship of corporate social advocacy, perceptions of instrumentality, behavioral intentions and the organization-public relationship.

Based on the argument that CSA is an evolution of CSR and the logic of actional legitimacy, it stands to reason that:

H1: Legitimacy of CSA is positively correlated with the perceived legitimacy of CSR.

H2: Legitimacy of CSA is positively correlated with CSA authenticity.

Integrating the literature of authenticity, attachment, and interpersonal relationships, it is contended that:

H3: Perceived CSA Authenticity is positively correlated with OPR.

H4: Perceived social cost is positively correlated with perceived CSA authenticity.

H5: The relationship of perceived social cost with perceived authenticity is moderated by legitimacy.

H6: Perceived social cost is positively related with perceptions of the organization-public relationship.

H7: Perceived CSA authenticity mediates perceived social cost and legitimacy of CSA's effect on perceived quality of the organization public relationship.

Finally, based on the literature of issue involvement, instrumentality, and behavioral intentions, it is proposed that:

H8: Issue involvement is positively correlated with perception of corporate social advocacy.

H9: Issue involvement is positively related with perceived quality of the organization public relationship.

H10: Issue involvement is positively related with future a) purchase intentions and b) positive WOM intentions.

H11: Instrumentality moderates the relationship of issue involvement with perceived quality of the organization public relationship.

H12: The relationship of issue involvement with future purchase intentions is moderated by perceived goal instrumentality.

H13: Perceived quality of the organization public relationship mediates issue involvement and perceived goal instrumentality's effect on a) purchase intentions and b) positive WOM.

CHAPTER 4. METHODS

Given the relative prevalence of several ongoing corporate social advocacy initiatives, that extant empirical studies (such that exist) have largely relied on experimental manipulations (Dodd & Supa, 2015) and the nature of the proposed hypotheses, a survey methodology was elected to explore the topic. This chapter offers an overview of the selected method, the design, participants, procedure and data analysis approach.

4.1 SURVEY METHOD

Because the primary objective of this study is to assess correlations of various components of organization-public relationships and corporate social advocacy in practice, a survey methodology was selected to explore the proposed hypotheses and research question. Unlike other forms of quantitative analysis such as experiments, surveys aim to generate data that faithfully reflect the statistical evidence of phenomenon across the general population (Babbie, 2013). Given the current knowledge about corporate social advocacy's effects, a better understanding of its effects in practice will critically advance the state of the field.

This emphasis on generalizability, however, does come with some disadvantages. Of particular note is that, while surveys can highlight correlations between different variables or phenomena, they cannot, necessarily, establish causality between the items under review (Fowler, 2013). However, given the current state of ambiguity regarding the practical effects of corporate social advocacy in practice, generalizability was deemed more significant than causality, thus the survey method was elected.

4.2 PROCEDURE

To assess these hypotheses, a survey of American consumers was conducted during Spring 2019. A survey was created via online survey site Qualtrics. Preliminary testing was conducted using a small, student sample at a public university in the Midwest to assess scale reliabilities, relative demandingness of the instrument, and overall quality of the survey. Results indicated satisfactory reliability of the scales and uncovered a few minor issues² in the design which were rectified before final recruitment.

Recruitment for the main survey was conducted via Amazon's Mechanical Turk (henceforth mTurk) as described below.

4.3 RECRUITMENT

Recruitment of participants was conducted during spring 2019 via Amazon's mTurk online consumer panel service. While mTurk is not as sexy as other forms of survey panel recruitment, past research has nevertheless found mTurk respondents to represent naturally occurring demographics adequately (Huff & Tingley, 2015) and to perform at least as well as other forms of data collection such as subject pools (Hauser & Schwarz, 2016) and online panels (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011) in terms of data quality and manipulation checks.

Using mTurk, a total of 600 respondents were recruited during the months of May and June 2019. To ensure accurate data, respondents were filtered by location (United States), sufficient experience with mTurk of at least 100 HITs performed (mTurk refers to responses as

² Largely typographical errors, one issue with scale anchoring.

“Human Intelligence Tasks” i.e. “HITS”) and a past approval rate of at least 95%. Respondents were permitted to participate in the survey one-time utilizing mTurk’s distribution mechanics and Qualtrics’ option to reject duplicate IP addresses. Each participant was offered \$1.75 for participation in the 14-minute (Qualtrics estimated) survey, translating to approximately \$7.50 per hour, slightly better than the federal minimum wage and compliant with mTurk policies.

After securing the responses (600 completed surveys), visual inspection was conducted for repeated or patterned responses as well as two attention check questions embedded in the survey. Responses that failed the attention check items or indicated a clear pattern of response were rejected, leaving a total of 554 completed surveys, a 92.3% completion rate.

4.4 INSTRUMENTATION

Survey flow is crucial to effective instrumentation, as improper structuring of questionnaire can prime respondents (Fowler, 2014) or otherwise bias responses. To avoid attitudes towards the organization or specific CSA activity from priming, respondents were asked to report their attitudes on CSA writ large prior to moving on to selecting an organization they’d like to discuss for the remainder of the study.

The survey consisted of an IRB page requiring consent, followed by survey questionnaire instrument. Upon passing informed consent, participants were directed through the following survey.

4.5 MEASUREMENT

The following section presents the measures of the survey in narrative form. A full sample of the instrument is presented in the appendix, along with reliabilities for each construct.

4.5.1 Actional Legitimacy

Given that the literature approaches two phenomena, corporate social responsibility and corporate social advocacy, as conceptually similar, actional (episodic) legitimacy was measured via two scales, one on corporate social responsibility legitimacy, the other on corporate social advocacy legitimacy. Based on the literature review, there are few (if any) effective quantitative scales regarding perceived legitimacy of corporate social activities, subsequently a measure was adapted for this study by building on extant corporate social responsibility measures created by PR firm Edelman (2018). Legitimacy was divided into two sub-scales, corporate social responsibility (CSR) and corporate social advocacy (CSA).

The CSR subscale consisted of 9-items (2 items reversed) on a seven-point Likert scale (1= "Strongly Disagree" to 7= "Strongly Agree") and emphasized general contribution to the civic good via corporate behaviors such as, "Companies should do more to make the world a better place," or "Companies owe their customers more than just a reliable product. They should make the world better, too." Overall, the scale proved satisfactorily reliable ($M = 5.23$, $SD = 1.18$, $\alpha = .927$).

The CSA subscale consisted of 12-items on seven-point Likert scale (1= "Strongly Disagree" to 7= "Strongly Agree"). Twelve items were selected due to Edelman's bifurcation of

corporate and corporate-leadership political behaviors (2018b). For example, respondents were asked their agreement on statements such as “Companies have an ethical obligation to push for social change,” or “When government leaders fail to act on social problems, corporations should act first.” Ten items emphasized corporate activities, while two focused on the political behaviors of corporate leadership. Analysis revealed the scale to be sufficiently reliable for utilization in the study ($M= 4.293$, $SD= 1.21$, $\alpha=.918$).

4.5.2 Organization Selection

After completing the scales regarding their attitudes on legitimacy, participants were prompted to self-select “a particular company that [they had] strong thoughts or attitudes about” from a list of candidates. The list was created from a group of companies who’ve engaged in highly-publicized efforts on corporate social advocacy: Starbucks (action on marriage equality, LGBTQ rights), Nike (recent “Dream Crazy” campaign featuring former NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick was seen as stand on Black Lives Matter), Levi’s Jeans (gun control), Gillette (Advertising campaign alluding to the #MeToo movement), Patagonia (recently filed a , Apple, or an “Other” category with the option to add their own preference via text-entry. Most respondents selected one of the listed options, however, of those who chose “other,” Amazon was the primary response with a total of 9 selections.

Table 4.1. Respondent Organization Selection

Organization	Count	%	Cumulative %
Starbucks	172	31.0	31.0
Nike	102	18.4	49.4
Levi's	37	6.7	56.1
Gillette	50	9.0	65.1
Patagonia	22	4.0	69.1
Apple	126	22.7	91.8
Other	45	8.1	99.9

The participants were instructed to keep the selected corporation in mind when answering the rest of the survey. Furthermore, the selected corporation's name was also pipetexted into the instructions of the survey for each participant for the remainder of the survey.

Upon choosing an organization, respondents were asked a short series of questions regarding purchase frequency and satisfaction with products created by the organization. Purchase frequency was anchored on a 5-point scale, while product quality and price questions were anchored on 7-point scales.

4.5.3 Organization-Public Relationship

Perceptions of organization-public relationship quality was measured via the full version of Hon and Grunig's relationship scale (1999). Hon and Grunig proposed that the OPR was best understood through six sub-scales, each measured across a 7-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (7). Reliability analysis revealed the sub-scales to be sufficiently reliable for inclusion in the analysis: trust ($M= 4.94, SD= 1.18, \alpha=.934$), control mutuality ($M= 4.66, SD= 1.38, \alpha=.939$), satisfaction ($M= 5.22, SD= 1.27, \alpha=.926$), commitment

($M= 4.41$, $SD= 1.28$, $\alpha=.946$) and communal relationship ($M= 4.77$, $SD= 1.4$, $\alpha=.918$). Exchange relationships were not incorporated in the survey instrument.

4.5.4 Corporate Social Advocacy Efforts

Following the OPR scale, participants were prompted to choose a CSA campaign that they associated with the organization in question. Participants could choose from 5 pre-written items (Bigotry against LGBTQ rights, police violence against people of color, gun violence, toxic masculinity/sexism, or environmental protection) or “other” which opened to a text-box allowing their own responses.

Table 4.2. Respondent Issue Selection

Issue	Count	Percent	Cumulative %
Bigotry against LGBTQ Rights	91	16.4	16.4
Police violence against men of color	86	15.5	31.9
Gun Violence	33	6.0	37.9
Toxic Masculinity/Sexism	66	11.9	49.8
Environmental Protection/Climate Change	209	37.7	87.5
Other	69	12.5	100

Of the “other” category, fair trade practices ($n = 6$), immigration ($n = 6$), digital privacy ($n = 7$) and racism ($n = 8$) were the most frequently cited.³ For the purposes of analysis (and in keeping with the extant zeitgeist) racism and police violence against men of color (#BlackLivesMatter) were collapsed into a single issue.

³ As well as one respondent who was very concerned about Nike’s policy of “hating America” but was dropped during data cleaning.

It should be noted, however, that not all advocacy campaigns are created equal. Some, such as Nike’s “Dream Crazy” or Gillette’s “Best a Man Can Be” campaigns rely largely on throwing the corporate marketing and advertising juggernaut behind social causes the organization wishes to align itself with. Others, such as Patagonia’s environmental activism or Apple’s pro-LGBT efforts (an association bolstered in no small part by CEO Tim Cook being one of the most prominent LGBT business leaders in the United States), are largely organic or integral to the organization’s basic operational ethos. Still other organizations, such as Starbucks, don’t necessarily align behind any singular issue but rather have multiple advocacy efforts unfolding simultaneously at any given time. Further muddying the waters, some of these campaigns are more closely related with traditional social responsibility efforts than true corporate social advocacy.

Generally, however, respondents were fairly accurate in associating organizations with specific, flagship advocacy campaigns. The following table proffers a cross-tabulation of which social issues respondents affiliated with which organizations.

Table 4.3. Respondent Organization X Issue Selection Crosstab

Company	LGBTQ Rights	Police violence against people of color	Gun Control	Toxic Masculinity	Environmental Conservation	Other	Total
Starbucks	42	17	12	9	78	14	172
Nike	5	64	1	9	14	9	102
Levi's	3	1	11	1	18	3	37
Gillette	4	0	0	38	6	2	50
Patagonia	0	1	0	1	20	0	22
Apple	31	2	7	6	57	23	126
Other	6	1	2	2	16	18	45
Total	91	86	33	66	209	69	554

After selecting a topic that they perceived the company as advocating for, respondents were asked questions regarding their perceptions of the advocacy's: authenticity, congruity with their prior beliefs, and potential instrumentality, as well as their involvement with the issue at hand. Following questions regarding the CSA itself, respondents were asked about the perceived social cost and their behavioral intentions. Two attention check questions were also included.

4.5.5 Authenticity, Congruity, & Instrumentality

CSA congruity was measured via four single-item questions such as "On the issue of [blank], [company] and I agree with each other." Analysis revealed that the congruity measures were sufficiently reliable for utilization later in the study ($M= 4.98$, $SD= 1.75$, $\alpha=.971$).

Perceptions of CSA authenticity were measured via Alhouti et al.'s (2016) eight item authenticity scale ($M= 4.9$, $SD= 1.42$, $\alpha=.953$). Instrumentality was measured via an adaptation of Feeney's "perceptions of partner support" scale (2004) ($M= 4.56$, $SD= 1.59$, $\alpha=.952$).

4.5.6 Issue Involvement

Issue involvement was measured via Pfau et al.'s three component (outcome relevant, value relevant, impression relevant) involvement scale. Reliability analysis revealed outcome relevant involvement (4 items, $M= 4.04$, $SD= 1.95$, $\alpha=.968$), value relevant involvement ($M= 5.27$, $SD= 1.5$, $\alpha=.931$), and impression relevant involvement ($M= 4.67$, $SD= 1.81$, $\alpha=.949$) to all be sufficiently reliable for further use.

For further analysis, it was elected to collapse all three involvement subscales to create a singular, composite involvement scale. As a result, a composite involvement scale was

assessed for reliability (12 items, $M = 4.66$, $SD = 1.57$, $\alpha = .96$). Based on reliability of the composite scale, the involvement items were collapsed for inclusion in hypothesis testing.

4.5.7 Behavioral Intentions (Approach Or Avoidance)

Based on the limitations of how consumers can bolster their relationship with the organization, positive behavioral intentions were divided into two subcategories: purchase and positive word-of-mouth intentions.

The purchase intention subscale consisted of five items such as, "I am more inclined to buy [company]'s products to show my support for them." Scale analysis revealed the items to be sufficiently reliable for further analysis ($M = 4.32$, $SD = 1.73$, $\alpha = .932$).

Supportive word-of-mouth intention was measured via three items such as, "I would tell my neighbors to buy from [company] to show our support for them." Analysis revealed the word-of-mouth intention scale to be sufficiently reliable for further exploration ($M = 2.99$, $SD = 1.77$, $\alpha = .885$).

4.5.8 Demographics

Following the scale on behavioral intentions, respondents were finally asked a series of demographic questions before being issued their mTurk compensation code. Questions emphasized education, ethnicity, income, religion, and political preferences, along with whether the respondent was currently or had been previously employed by the organization they selected.

CHAPTER 5. FINDINGS

5.1 SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

Before approaching the primary hypotheses, assessment of the sample was conducted on demographic factors. 277 respondents described themselves as male (50.0%) with 270 describing themselves as female (48.7%), 5 describing themselves as nonbinary or transgender (.9%) and two non-responses (.4%). Ethnically, the respondent pool was predominantly Caucasian (n = 444; 80.1%) with 7.9% describing themselves as African American (n = 44), 5.4% as Asian (n = 30) and 4.5% as (n = 25) Hispanic/Latino. Five described themselves as Native American (.9%), and a further 6 (1.1%) preferred not to respond.

Politically, the respondent set predominantly self-described as Democrats (n = 249; 44.9%) followed by Republican (n = 174; 31.4%). The next largest groups were those of no particular preference (n = 98; 17.7%) and members of third parties, Libertarians (n = 16; 2.9%) and Green Party (n = 4; .7%).

Economically, 76.4% of respondents worked full-time (n = 423) with an additional 12.5% (n = 69) working part time. 5.8% were unemployed (n = 32) with a further 3.8% retired (n = 21). Annual household income was well-distributed but clustered around incomes of \$20,000-\$39,999 (n = 140; 25.3%) and \$40,000-\$59,999 (n = 140, 25.3%). 9% (n = 50) earned less than \$20,000 per year with 16.2% earning between \$60,000 and \$79,999 (n = 90), 11.6% earning between \$80,000 and \$99,999 (n = 64), and 12.7% earning \$100,000 or more (n = 70).

Before engaging in final data analysis, and to better develop a sense of how the variables of the study fit together, a correlation table was created involving all of the primary

variables. As indicated below, preliminary assessment indicated fairly robust, albeit rudimentary, correlations between many of these core constructs.

TABLE 5.1 Construct Correlation Table

		CSR	CSA	OPR	AUTH	INSTRU	INVOLV	COST	PURCH INTENT	WOM INTENT
CSR	Pearson	1	.715**	.210**	.378**	.409**	.447**	-.282**	.340**	.210**
	Correlation									
	Sig.		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
CSA	Pearson	.715**	1	.250**	.421**	.498**	.501**	-.250**	.432**	.357**
	Correlation									
	Sig.	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
OPR	Pearson	.210**	.250**	1	.718**	.610**	.216**	-.410**	.632**	.406**
	Correlation									
	Sig.	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
AUTH	Pearson	.378**	.421**	.718**	1	.813**	.470**	-.424**	.775**	.542**
	Correlation									
	Sig.	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
INSTR	Pearson	.409**	.498**	.610**	.813**	1	.539**	-.472**	.758**	.574**
	Correlation									
	Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
INVOL	Pearson	.447**	.501**	.216**	.470**	.539**	1	-.256**	.524**	.378**
	Correlation									
	Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
COST	Pearson	-.282**	-	-	-	-.472**	-.256**	1	-.289**	-.112**
	Correlation		.250**	.410**	.424**					
	Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.008
PURCH INTEN	Pearson	.340**	.432**	.632**	.775**	.758**	.524**	-.289**	1	.779**
	Correlation									
	Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
WOM INTEN	Pearson	.210**	.357**	.406**	.542**	.574**	.378**	-.112**	.779**	1
	Correlation									
	Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.008	.000	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

5.2 HYPOTHESIS TESTING

To test the hypotheses, linear regressions and PROCESS were used. PROCESS is a regression-based mediation and moderation analysis modeling tool for SPSS (Hayes, 2013).

To test H1, a linear regression was conducted. Legitimacy of CSR was entered as independent variable and legitimacy of CSA was entered as dependent variable. As expected, legitimacy of CSA is positively associated with legitimacy of CSR ($\beta = .72, t=24.02, p < .001$) ($R^2=.51, F(1, 552) = 577.17, p < .001$). Therefore, H1 was supported.

To test H2, a linear regression was conducted. Legitimacy of CSA was entered as independent variable and authenticity was entered as dependent variable. As expected, legitimacy of CSA is positively associated with authenticity of CSR ($\beta = .42, t=10.91, p < .001$) ($R^2=.12, F(1, 552) = 119.12, p < .001$). Therefore, H2 was supported.

To test H3, a linear regression was conducted. Perceived quality of the OPR was entered as independent variable and CSA authenticity was entered as dependent variable. As expected, quality of the OPR was positively associated with the authenticity of CSA ($\beta = .72, t=24.21, p < .001$) ($R^2=.52, F(1, 552) = 585.92, p < .001$). Therefore, H3 was supported.

To test H4, a linear regression was conducted. Perceived cost of the CSA was entered as independent variable and CSA authenticity was entered as dependent variable. Counter to predictions, perceived cost of the CSA was negatively associated with the authenticity of the CSA ($\beta = -.42, t= -11.01, p < .001$) ($R^2=.18, F(1, 552) = 121.13, p < .001$). Therefore, H4 was not supported.

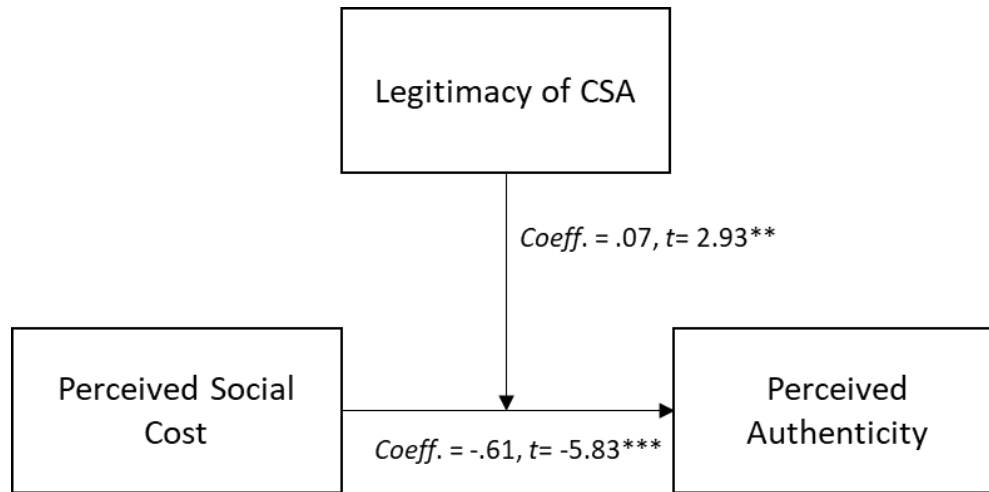
H5 was tested with PROCESS model 1 (the simple moderation model). Perceived social cost was entered into the model as independent variable, perceived authenticity was entered as dependent variable, and legitimacy of CSA was entered as moderator. PROCESS results revealed that, while perceived social cost negatively predicted perceived authenticity (*Coeff.* = $-.61$, $t = -5.83$, $p < .001$) (*LLCI* = $-.82$, *ULCI* = $-.41$), the interaction effect between perceived social cost and perceived CSA legitimacy positively predicted perceived authenticity (*Coeff.* = $.07$, $t = 2.93$, $p < .01$) (*LLCI* = $.02$, *ULCI* = $.12$) ($R^2 = .30$, $F(3, 550) = 77.46$, $p < .001$). In other words, perceived legitimacy of CSA moderated the relationship between perceived social cost and perceived authenticity. See Table 5.2 and Figure 5.2.1. Thus, H5 was supported.

Table 5.2 H5 Simple Moderation Results

	(Y)			
	Perceived Authenticity			
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>
(X) Social Cost	-.61	-5.83***	-.82	-.41
(W) Legitimacy of CSA	.17	1.95*	-.002	.34
(X) Social Cost × (W) Legitimacy of CSA	.07	2.93**	.02	.12
	$R^2 = .30$, $F(3, 550) = 77.46$ ***			

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Figure 5.2.1 H5 Simple Moderation Model



Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

To test H6, a linear regression was conducted. Perceived cost of the CSA was entered as independent variable and perceived quality of the OPR was entered as dependent variable. Counter to predictions, perceived cost of the CSA was negatively associated with the authenticity of the CSA ($\beta = -.41$, $t = -10.57$, $p < .001$) ($R^2 = .168$, $F(1, 552) = 111.73$, $p < .001$). Therefore, H6 was not supported.

H7 was tested with PROCESS model 7 (the moderated mediation model). Perceived social cost was entered as the independent variable, perceived quality of the organization public relationship was entered into the model as the dependent variable, perceived authenticity was entered as the mediator, and perceived legitimacy of CSA was entered as the moderator. As predicted, the interaction effect between perceived social cost and perceived CSA legitimacy positively predicted perceived authenticity ($Coeff. = .07$, $t = 2.93$, $p < .01$) ($LLCI = .02$, $ULCI = .12$). And subsequently, perceived authenticity positively affected perceived

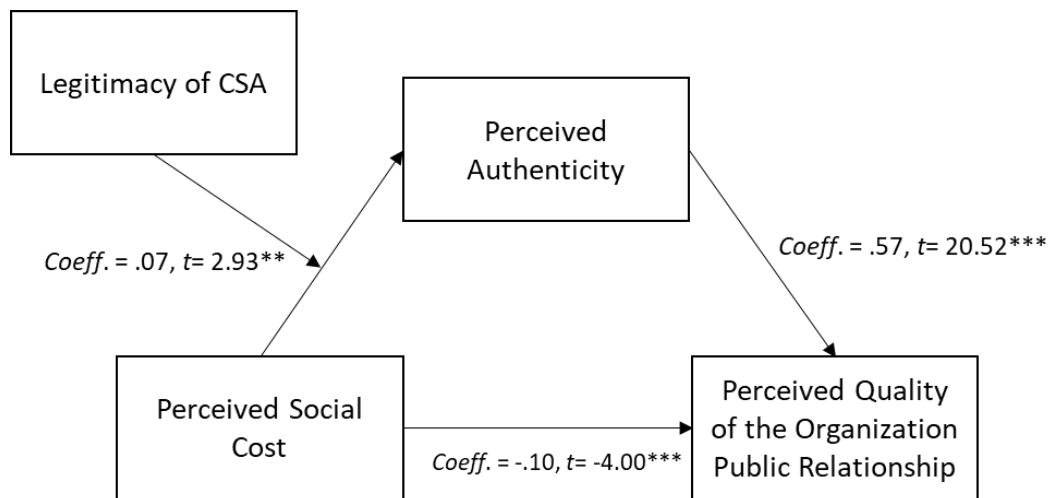
quality of the organization public relationship ($Coeff. = .57, t = 20.52, p < .001$) ($LLCI = .51, ULCI = .62$). See Table 5.3 and Figure 5.3.1. Therefore, H7 was supported.

Table 5.3 H7 Moderated Mediation Results

	(M)				(Y)			
	Perceived Authenticity				OPR			
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>
(X) Social Cost	-.61	-5.83***	-.82	-.41	-.10	-4.00***	-.16	-.05
(W) Legitimacy of CSA	.17	1.95	-.002	.34				
(X) Social Cost \times (W) Legitimacy of CSA	.07	2.93*	.02	.12	-	-	-	-
(M) Authenticity	-	-	-	-	.57	20.52***	.51	.62
	$R^2 = .30, F(3, 550) = 77.46***$				$R^2 = .53, F(2, 551) = 308.90***$			

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Figure 5.3.1 H7 Moderated Mediation Model



Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

To test H8, a linear regression was conducted. Issue involvement was entered as independent variable and legitimacy of CSA was entered as dependent variable. Consistent with predictions, issue involvement was positively associated with the perceived legitimacy of the CSA ($\beta = .414, t = 9.69, p < .001$) ($R^2 = .172, F(1, 552) = 185.47, p < .001$). Therefore, H8 was supported.

To test H9, a linear regression was conducted. Issue involvement was entered as independent variable and perceptions of the OPR was entered as dependent variable. Consistent with predictions, issue involvement was positively associated with perceptions of the OPR ($\beta = .216, t = 5.19, p < .001$) ($R^2 = .05, F(1, 552) = 2.94, p < .001$). Therefore, H9 was supported.

To test H10, a linear regression was conducted. Issue involvement was entered as independent variable and a) purchase intentions and b) word-of-mouth intentions were entered as dependent variables. Consistent with predictions, issue involvement was positively associated with future purchase intentions ($\beta = .524, t = 14.44, p < .001$) ($R^2 = .274, F(1, 552) = 208.43, p < .001$) and positive word-of-mouth intentions ($\beta = .378, t = 9.59, p < .001$) ($R^2 = .143, F(1, 552) = 91.87, p < .001$). Therefore, H10 a and H10 b were supported.

H11 was tested with PROCESS model 1 (the simple moderation model). Issue involvement was entered into the model as independent variable, perceived quality of the organization public relationship was entered as dependent variable, and perceived goal instrumentality was entered as moderator. PROCESS results indicated that, while issue involvement negatively predicted perceived quality of the organization public relationship ($Coeff. = -.26, t = -3.75, p < .001$) ($LLCI = -.40, ULCI = -.12$), the interaction effect between issue involvement and perceived goal instrumentality positively predicted perceived quality of the organization public relationship ($Coeff. = .03, t = 2.20, p < .05$) ($LLCI = .003, ULCI = .06$) ($R^2 = .40, F(3, 550) = 120.04, p < .001$). In other words, perceived goal instrumentality moderated the relationship between issue involvement and perceived quality of the organization public relationship. For highly issue-involved consumers, instrumentality was crucial to bolstering

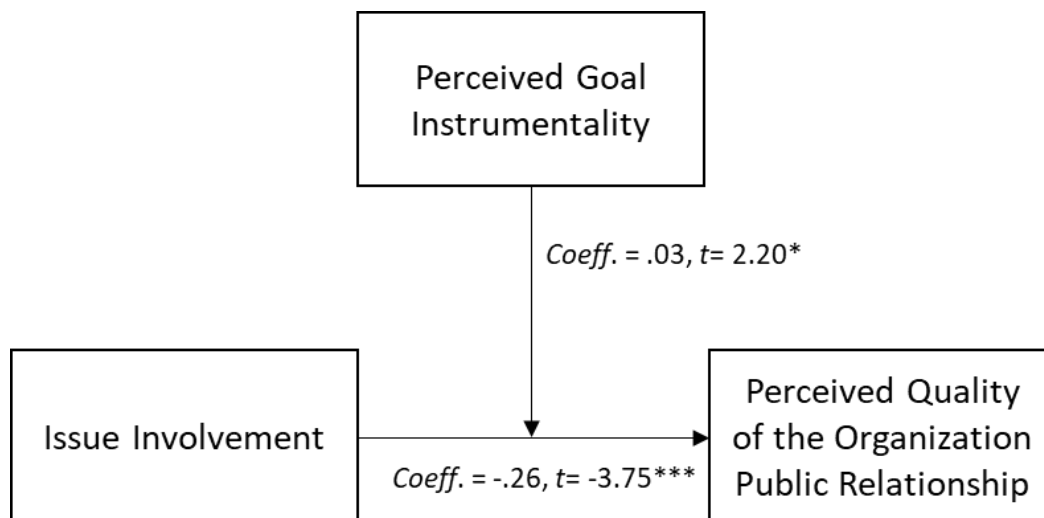
perceptions of the organization-public relationship. See Table 5.4 and Figure 5.4.1. Therefore, H11 was supported.

Table 5.4 H11 Simple Moderation Results

	(Y)			
	OPR			
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>
(X) Issue Involvement	-.26	-3.75***	-.40	-.12
(W) perceived goal instrumentality	.38	4.87***	.22	.53
(X) Issue Involvement × (W) perceived goal instrumentality	.03	2.20*	.003	.06
	$R^2 = .40, F(3, 550) = 120.04***$			

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Figure 5.4.1 H11 Simple Moderation Model



Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

H12 was also tested with PROCESS model 1 (the simple moderation model). Issue involvement was entered into the model as independent variable, purchase intentions was entered as dependent variable, and perceived goal instrumentality was entered as moderator. PROCESS results showed that, while issue involvement did not predict purchase intentions ($Coeff. = .01, t = .15, p = .88$), the interaction effect between issue involvement and perceived goal instrumentality positively predicted purchase intentions ($Coeff. = .04, t = 2.30, p < .05$)

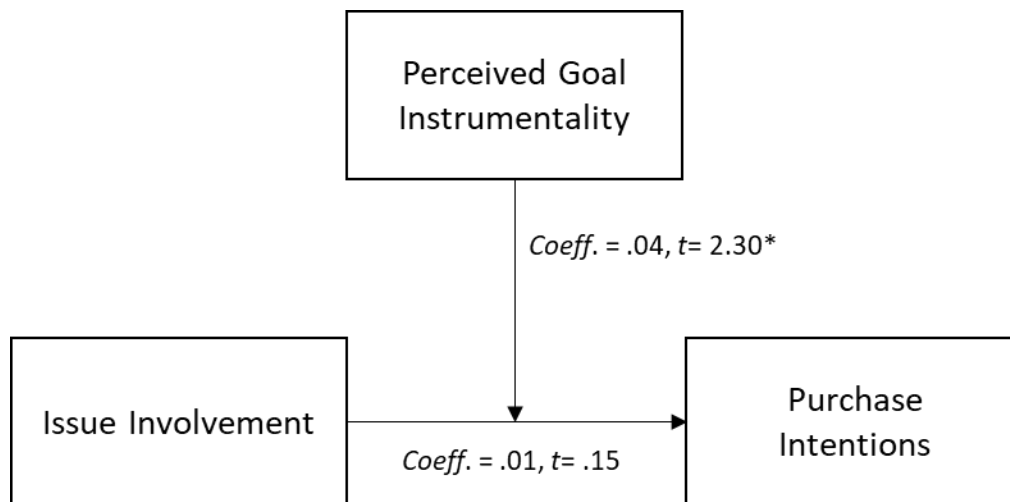
($LLCI = .006$ $ULCI = .07$) ($R^2 = .60$, $F(3, 550) = 272.10$, $p < .001$). In other words, perceived goal instrumentality moderated the relationship between issue involvement and purchase intentions. See Table 5.5 and Figure 5.5.1. Therefore, H12 was supported.

Table 5.5 H12 Simple Moderation Results

	(Y)			
	Purchase Intentions			
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>
(X) Issue Involvement	.01	.15	-.04	1.29
(W) perceived goal instrumentality	.52	6.03***	.35	.69
(X) Issue Involvement × (W) perceived goal instrumentality	.04	2.30*	.006	.07
	$R^2 = .60$, $F(3, 550) = 272.10$ ***			

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Figure 5.5.1 H12 Simple Moderation Model



Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

The proposed moderated mediation model in H13 was tested with PROCESS model 7.

Issue involvement was entered as the independent variable, purchase intentions and positive WOM intentions were entered into the model as the dependent variables respectively, perceived quality of the organization public relationship was entered as the mediator, and perceived goal instrumentality was entered as the moderator.

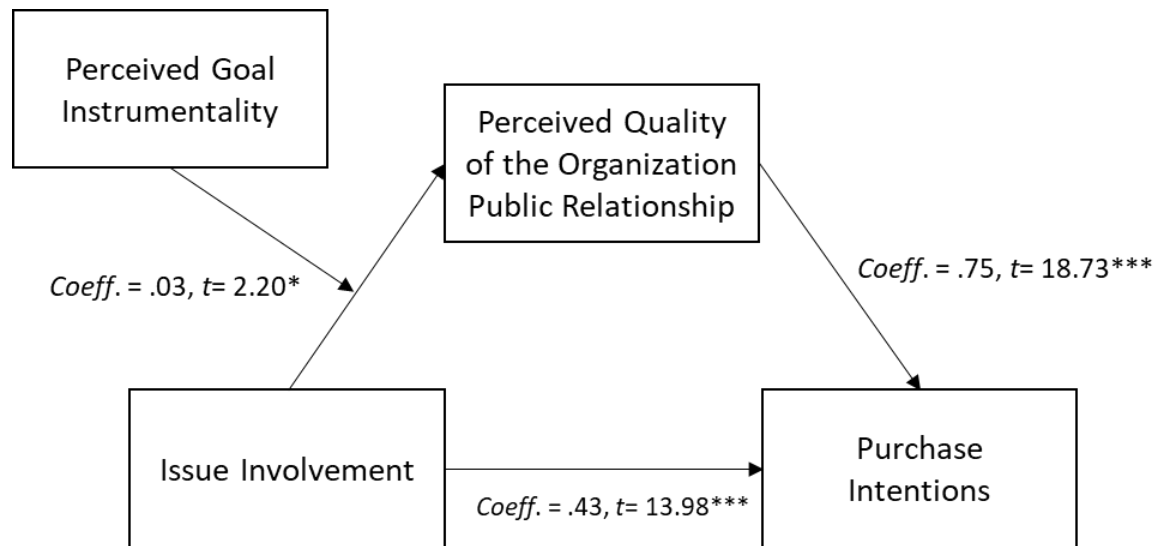
For H13(a), the model with purchase intentions as dependent variable was significant. As predicted, the interaction effect between issue involvement and perceived goal instrumentality on perceived quality of the organization public relationship was significant (*Coeff.* = .03, *t* = 2.20, *p* < .05) (*LLCI* = .003, *ULCI* = .06) ($R^2 = .40$, $F(3, 550) = 120.04$, $p < .001$). Perceived quality of the organization public relationship successfully mediated issue involvement and perceived goal instrumentality's effects on purchase intentions (*Coeff.* = .75, $t = 18.73$, $p < .001$) (*LLCI* = .67, *ULCI* = .82) ($R^2 = .56$, $F(2, 551) = 345.64$, $p < .001$). See Table 5.6 and Figure 5.6.1. Therefore, H13(a) was supported.

Table 5.6 H13 (a) Moderated Mediation Results

	(M)				(Y)			
	OPR				Purchase Intentions			
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>
(X) Issue Involvement	-.26	-3.75***	-.40	-.12	.43	13.98***	.37	.49
(W) perceived goal instrumentality	.38	4.87***	.22	.53	-	-	-	-
(X) Issue Involvement × (W) perceived goal instrumentality	.03	2.20*	.003	.06	-	-	-	-
(M) OPR	-	-	-	-	.75	18.73***	.67	.82
	$R^2 = .40$, $F(3, 550) = 120.04$ ***				$R^2 = .56$, $F(2, 551) = 345.64$ ***			

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Figure 5.6.1 H13(a) Moderated Mediation Model



Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

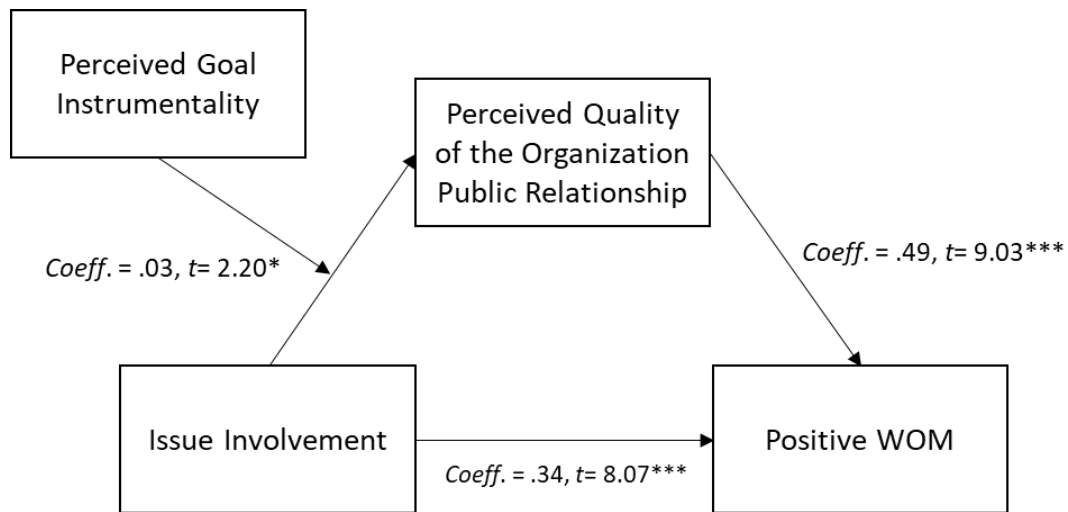
For H13(b), the model with positive WOM intentions as dependent variable was significant. As predicted, the interaction effect between issue involvement and perceived goal instrumentality on perceived quality of the organization public relationship was significant (Coeff. = .03, $t = 2.20$, $p < .05$) (LLCI = .003, ULCI = .06) ($R^2 = .40$, $F(3, 550) = 120.04$, $p < .001$). Perceived quality of the organization public relationship successfully mediated issue involvement and perceived goal instrumentality's effects on positive WOM intentions (Coeff. = .49, $t = 9.03$, $p < .001$) (LLCI = .39, ULCI = .60) ($R^2 = .25$, $F(2, 551) = 93.41$, $p < .001$). See Table 5.7 and Figure 5.7.1. Therefore, H13(b) was supported.

Table 5.7 H13 (b) Moderated Mediation Results

	(M)				(Y)			
	OPR				Positive WOM Intentions			
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>
(X) Issue Involvement	-.26	-3.75***	-.40	-.12	.34	8.07***	.26	.43
(W) perceived goal instrumentality	.38	4.87***	.22	.53	-	-	-	-
(X) Issue Involvement × (W) perceived goal instrumentality	.03	2.20*	.003	.06	-	-	-	-
(M) OPR	-	-	-	-	.49	9.03***	.39	.60
	$R^2 = .40, F(3, 550) = 120.04***$				$R^2 = .25, F(2, 551) = 93.41***$			

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Figure 5.7.1 H13(b) Moderated Mediation Model



Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

CHAPTER 6. DISCUSSION

While anecdotal evidence abounds that organizations are increasingly taking a stand on controversial or contentious political debates, little empirical research currently explores the effects of these practices on public perceptions of the organization or behavioral intentions. This research aims to add to the existing literature.

Utilizing a survey methodology, this study sought to investigate this area and to develop a deeper understanding of just how corporate social advocacy interacts with better developed PR literature such as CSR, the organization-public relationship, and stakeholder behavioral intentions.

Findings were mixed, however collectively they do establish evidence that corporate social advocacy, under certain conditions, can fulfill a significant role in communicating the organization's values to the public, strengthening organization-public relationships, and inspiring stakeholder behaviors.

The initial set of hypotheses (H1-H2) sought to examine how corporate social advocacy intersects with better established (i.e. "legitimate") organizational behaviors such as the literature around corporate social responsibility. The strong correlation between CSR legitimacy and CSA legitimacy ($\beta = .72, t = 24.02, p < .001$) suggest that the normalization of CSR as an integral part of organizational outreach is increasingly setting the stage for CSA legitimacy, as well. Despite this correlation, analysis reveals that stakeholders still perceive corporate social responsibility ($M = 5.23, sd = 1.18$) as significantly more legitimate than its conceptual descendent, corporate social advocacy ($M = 4.293, sd = 1.21$). In tandem, this suggests that,

while corporate social responsibility is opening up opportunities for organizations to engage politically, stakeholders may still be somewhat ambivalent about corporate political behaviors.

It should be considered, however, that much of this ambivalence may be a byproduct of the relatively partisan political environment within which the study was conducted. Attitudes regarding the legitimacy of corporate social advocacy, varied markedly, for example, across the political spectrum, with respondents identifying with more liberal political parties (Green and Democratic) perceiving CSA as distinctly more legitimate than more conservative respondents (Republican/Libertarian).

At a minimum, this suggests that any organization considering corporate social advocacy take into account the political leanings of their primary or target consumers, consistent with past research on social identity salience and optimal distinctiveness (Brewer, 1993). Future research could examine this more fully to assess whether or not attitudes about CSA reorient themselves depending on which party is perceived as dominant within the US domestic political cycle. Preliminary analysis of the data here, however, did reveal significant gaps in perceptions of both CSR and CSA legitimacy across the political spectrum, with more liberal leaning respondents (Democrat and Green Party) more likely to perceive CSA and CSR as legitimate versus their more conservative counterparts (Republican, Libertarian). Whether or not this is a byproduct of current political power structures or emblematic of deeper, ideological schisms between liberal and conservative consumers requires further research.

Given legitimacy's centrality, it is perhaps natural that this partisan divide replicated itself throughout the findings, with conservative leaning-consumers generally taking a dim view

of the post-CSA OPR, the authenticity of CSA, and expecting high-penalties (costs) for corporate political activity. The limitations of this study's design make it difficult to discern whether this divide is phenomenological or ideological. Future research could incorporate organizations more closely linked with conservative-linked causes such as Chick-Fil-A or the Black Rifle Coffee company to discern boundary conditions of conservative opposition to corporate social advocacy.

These evolving norms about corporate social advocacy may also be changing stakeholder reactions to corporate political behavior, as well. The close relationship of corporate social advocacy with perceptions of the organization-public relationship suggest that CSA activities may have a very ancillary role to play via bolstering public perceptions of relationship quality with the organization.

The second cluster of hypotheses (H3-H7) investigated the relationship of CSA activity, authenticity, perceptions of the OPR and perceived social cost. The majority of the model was supported with the distinct exception of a precisely inverted relationship of perceived cost with nearly every other variable within the models.

Consistent with the literature of CSR, authenticity was again demonstrated to be a significant factor in CSA's impact on perceptions of the organization-public relationship. Corporate social advocacy must be perceived as an authentic expression of the organization's fundamental nature or its effects on the organization-public relationship drop precipitously. For some organizations such as Starbucks and Patagonia, CSA is perceived as a highly authentic expression of corporate character. While not measured here, it is plausible that attitudes

towards specific Starbucks' engagement is/are shaped by the organization's lengthy track record of corporate social responsibility. (Indeed, when opting for the open-ended "other CSA campaign" option, a number of respondents identified Starbucks' ongoing CSR efforts on ethically-sourced coffee beans or water conservation.) Relatively robust efforts on CSR bolster perceived authenticity of CSA. Intriguingly, even Starbucks' decision to shut down all locations for a session of "racial bias training" in the wake of a highly publicized scandal last year was actually perceived by many respondents as a pro-active CSA effort, rather than re-active crisis management.

Conversely, Patagonia has deliberately cultivated close linkages between the organization and environmental protection, scoring highest among all organizations on perceived authenticity for their ongoing efforts to sue the federal government regarding federal parkland. The way Patagonia has deliberately woven ecological friendliness and sustainability throughout their ancillary activities seems to strengthen perceptions of CSA authenticity, even among consumers who aren't particularly issue-involved.

Organizations with weaker (or even negative) CSR performance histories are seen as less authentic in their CSA. This authenticity (or rather the lack thereof) significantly undermines the impact of CSA efforts on satisfaction with the OPR. This was particularly observable in the tepid response to Nike's decision to feature in their "Dream Crazy" campaign. While the campaign certainly drove conversations, the results here suggest that the efforts haven't really moved the needle in terms of public perceptions of Nike, nor beliefs that Nike is an authentically responsible company.

The biggest loser vis-à-vis authenticity, however, is unquestionably Gillette. Respondents were extremely skeptical of Gillette's campaign, viewing it as the most inauthentic of all CSA efforts under examination. One possible explanation for the negative response could be that, of all issues surveyed, "#MeToo/Gender Equality" scored lowest in-terms of involvement, regardless of respondent gender. As hypothesized, the lack of involvement could be the key factor undercutting public response to Gillette's ad.

Conversely, an alternative explanation may be that, unlike many of the other campaigns, Gillette's ad may have been poorly framed. Nike's Kaepernick campaign is clear in its intentions to elevate African-American rights in the context of the #BLM movement. Levi's efforts emphasize the desire to affirm the right of students to be kept safe from gun-violence. Patagonia's lawsuits have been framed as positive efforts to protect federal lands from changing federal policies. Gillette's advertising, however, seemed to take a more negative slant, emphasizing the worst of "boys will be boys" behaviors while positioning positive male-behavior only in the wake of negative actions. It is plausible that, unlike other campaigns that were perceived as "punching up" against the powerful on behalf of the powerless; Gillette's ad was perceived as "punching down." Further research is required, however it is plausible that gain/positive framing of CSA efforts may be crucial to gaining public approbation.

Yet another explanation may be that Gillette is perceived as a "male" brand. From this perspective, an advertisement highlighting the worst behaviors in a brand's ostensible primary consumer base is simply doomed to failure. While all other campaigns seemed to present the opportunity to align with consumers to push for social change; Gillette's campaign was pushing their consumers to change themselves. Congruent with the literature of attachment theory,

Gillette's shift from "Best a Man Can Get" to "The Best Men Can Be" may have been experienced as negative feedback from the consumer perspective. From this lens, the ad may have been interpreted as the organization rejecting or levelling negative feedback at their primary consumers, introducing tension to the organization-public relationship, effectively "breaking up" with their consumers. Again, future research is necessary.

The key takeaway here is that, while CSA *can* strengthen the organization-public relationship, it is most effective when judged as authentic based on a backdrop/track-record of corporate social responsibility and perceived as collaborative with the consumer to push for positive social change. Without positive performance history, positive framing, and a perception as bolstering of the relationship between the organization and the public, CSA struggles to effect OPR meaningfully.

On the other hand, proposed effects of social cost (either public sanction or economic) on perceived authenticity and OPR were uniformly rejected. The relationship it seems, is actually quite the opposite of the one hypothesized. Rather than costly commitments to social justice in the face of hostile public response, respondents generally perceived authentic CSA as a boon for the organizational bottom line. While further research is certainly required to unpack this relationship, several potential explanations are proffered here.

The simplest interpretation of the inverted relationship is the possibility that activists see themselves (and others like themselves) as a social or cultural majority. Despite threats of boycotts or protests by a vocal minority of opponents to the policy espoused by the CSA,

individuals see themselves (and other members of their ideological group) as capable of fending off social cost via strategic, targeted purchase decisions (boycott behaviors).

A second, more esoteric, explanation may be found in the just-world hypothesis (Lerner & Miller, 1978). The just-world hypothesis is a cognitive bias that actions are inclined to bring about a fair outcome. Similar to the concept of karma, just-world believers believe that doing the right thing, even at a short-term cost will ultimately lead to long-term individual benefits. For example, if an organization is engaged in the “right” behavior via CSA, then just-world would contend that, eventually, that rectitude will be justified via increased profit.

Future research could seek to better unpack this relationship and establish whether perceived social cost differs in the short-term and long-term outcomes and the precise mechanisms of perceived cost and its relationship with perceived authenticity.

Intriguingly, although perceived social cost had a negative relationship with CSA authenticity, two considerations must be entertained. First, the moderating effect of CSA legitimacy (H5) on the relationship of social cost and authenticity suggests significantly different perceptions of cost based on CSA legitimacy. For respondents who saw CSA activities as inherently legitimate, engagement in corporate social advocacy should not necessarily incorporate any social costs, thus negating the relationship between cost and authenticity. Conversely, for respondents who saw CSA as illegitimate, costs should apply regardless of the relative “authenticity” of the action. The illegitimacy of CSA as a whole superseded authenticity perceptions, motivating a desire to see the organization punished for the activity, regardless of how genuine a reflection of the corporate conscience it was. For consumers who saw CSA as

illegitimate, social cost was seen as legitimate punishment for breaking the rules of organizational behavior. Indeed, Republicans ($M = 3.70$, $sd = 1.73$) saw CSA as significantly more “expensive” than did Democrats ($M = 2.84$, $sd = 1.26$).⁴

This dynamic could be amplified with the “filter bubble” effect of the social media era (Bozdag & van den Hoven, 2015). Simply put, conservatives are more likely to follow and interact with fellow conservatives online; liberals are more likely to follow and interact with fellow liberals (Messing & Westwood, 2012). Subsequently, perceptions of public response to corporate social advocacy are largely dictated by the *a priori* beliefs and ideologies of the observer. Those opposed to the advocacy largely see the reactions of fellow opposers and overestimate public backlash. Conversely, those supportive of the advocacy see the reactions of fellow supporters and presume supportive responses to dominate in the public sphere. The end result is that stakeholders of both political persuasions end up with evidence that supports what they already hoped to be true. Conservatives see a vocal public rejection; liberals vocal public support. The perceived costs incurred as a result of the advocacy are largely just those that the stakeholder wished to perceive in the first place.

It could further be considered that the linkage of authenticity and perceived social cost may not occur in the direction tested. If stakeholders perceive authenticity *before* social cost (rather than cost before authenticity), then the desire to support the organization for engaging in authentic CSA activity may occur *before* considerations of the social cost. Social cost becomes retroactive, with stakeholders seeking to psychologically insulate organizations with whom they

⁴ This trajectory continued with Libertarian identifiers ($M = 3.83$, $sd = 1.95$), but was statistically insignificant due to the limited sample size ($n = 16$).

share an ideological perspective from harm. Future research could seek to better unpack the direction of this relationship.

Based on the literature of instrumentality, the final cluster of hypotheses (H8-H13) sought to investigate how issue involvement and perceived utility of the organization affected public perceptions of CSA, attitudes towards the organization and behavioral intentions. Overall, the findings here provided relatively robust support for the contention that, for highly-involved consumers, the mechanisms of corporate social advocacy and instrumentality on relationship satisfaction closely parallel those of the interpersonal relationship literature.

The first three hypotheses (H8-H10) indicate that issue involvement is a significant factor in shaping a variety of stakeholder cognitions regarding CSA. Highly-involved consumers are more likely to see CSA as legitimate, more likely to associate CSA with the quality of organization-public relationships, and more likely to report intention to strengthen the organization-public relationship through relationship bolstering behaviors.

The relationship of issue-involvement with perceptions of legitimacy is fairly straightforward but merits discussion nonetheless. There are several possible mechanisms for this relationship of involvement with CSA legitimacy.

The first and perhaps most obvious is perhaps basic utilitarianism. For highly issue-involved consumers, corporate advocacy may stand a chance of strengthening their impact on society and signaling to political elites and the public that strong forces support the position advocated, increasing the likelihood of effective advocacy.

A second explanation connects back to the basic principles of the implemental mindset (Gollwitzer, Heckhausen, & Steller, 1990). For individuals in the implemental mindset, new information and relationships are measured largely by their perceived utility in achieving the goal. If new information or resources help achieve the primary goal, then they are considered good. This is most acutely observed in the results of Hypothesis 11. Issue involvement has a negative effect on the organization-public relationship, regardless of relative instrumentality. Simply put, when issues or extra-relational goals are salient for stakeholders, the organization-public relationship constitutes something of a distraction from the primary goal. This is consistent with the implemental/instrumentality literature of interpersonal relationships.

In implemental conditions, information and resources (and relationships) seen as irrelevant to goal pursuit are perceived negatively. Consistent with this, highly involved stakeholders tend to have a dimmer view of the OPR than their low-involvement counterparts.

Rather than earning stakeholder trust or faith or satisfaction with the relationship, instrumentality in this context serves to preserve whatever relationship exists, almost immunizing the OPR against the negative effects of high-involvement/issue-focus. Congruent CSA may not necessarily earn *new* consumers/stakeholders, it can, however, help retain those that already exist. If the CSA is perceived as non-instrumental, then it doesn't have practical value for pushing for social change. It is only if the CSA is perceived as instrumental that it has any value for high-involvement consumers.

A third option, as previously mentioned, is the potential role of ideology/partisan identity as a key-factor in this process. With a few notable exceptions (such as Chick-Fil-A's

contentious history with anti-LGBT/conservative groups), most CSA efforts tend to lean towards more liberal ideals (environmental protection; LGBT rights; #blacklivesmatter). It could be that, given a conservative dominated government, liberal activists are a) activated to lens new information through the perceived threat of conservative governance or b) hungrier for alternative authority figures (in this place corporations) to challenge the dominance of a mistrusted or disliked federal government. Future research is necessary to examine the boundary conditions of this particular finding, however, in the current study, the data clearly supports a clear and fairly strong linkage between issue-involvement and CSA legitimacy.

The association of issue-involvement and CSA 's effects on satisfaction with the OPR is consistent with Feeney's extension of attachment theory to explain the interactions of extra-relational exploration, perceptions of supportiveness, and satisfaction with the relationship. For stakeholders whom are highly issue-involved, CSA seems to trigger similar psychological mechanisms to the "secure base" proposed by attachment theory. By engaging in CSA activity, the organization can signal its supportive intentions for issue-involved stakeholders, promising a supportive-base from which they can continue their own activism and strengthening the relationship between the organization and its publics.

However, CSA's relationship bolstering effects are not one-directional. While CSA seems to strengthen perceptions of connection of the public towards the organization, it further seems to motivate similar behaviors from the public back towards the organization. If we consider purchase intentions and positive WOM intentions as variations of relationship approach behavior, the findings suggest that, similar to interpersonal relationship contexts (Feeney, 2004), individuals respond to perceptions of the secure base by seeking to strengthen

the connection through approach behaviors. The findings here suggest that this process is bolstered by relative issue-involvement. The more issue-involved consumers are, the more positively they perceive CSA, the more positively they perceive of the organization-public relationship, and the more relationship supportive behaviors (such as positive word of mouth and future purchase intentions) they report.

Hypotheses 11-13 sought to pull this dynamic further out by investigating the role of instrumentality in this process. Instrumentality is the perceived utility of a relational partner in pursuing an individual's goals. Past research has shown that perceived instrumentality has positive effects on individuals who are very highly involved in the pursuit of an individual-level objective. When relational partners are shown to be beneficial or supportive (i.e. "instrumental) in these pursuits, individuals report greater fondness towards the relational partner and positivity regarding the relationship itself (Fitzsimons & Shah, 2008).

Hypotheses 11-13 found that instrumentality has similar effects on the organization-public relationship as it does on interpersonal ones. Hypothesis 11 found that perceived instrumentality moderates the relationship of issue involvement with relationship quality. For individuals who are highly issue-involved, it's not enough to make gestures towards corporate social advocacy, but those advocacies must be perceived as genuinely beneficial. Examination revealed, for example, that Nike's campaigns in connection with Black Lives Matter were perceived as only moderately instrumental in addressing the issue of racism in the United States ($M = 4.24, sd = 1.66$) compared to perceptions of groups like Patagonia's work on environmental protection ($M = 5.74, sd = 0.91$).

Of particular note, for high-involvement consumers, the moderation effect means that instrumentality is make-or-break in terms of the relationship of CSA with OPR. Indeed, high-involvement, but low-instrumentality consumers scored the lowest on satisfaction with the OPR ($M = 4.28, sd = 1.19$) whereas high-involvement, high-instrumentality consumers scored the highest ($M = 5.46, sd = 0.87$). Low-involvement consumers fell within this range in assessments of the OPR, however high instrumentality ($M = 5.42, sd = 0.82$) was still significantly preferred to low instrumentality ($M = 4.34, sd = 1.24$) for low-involvement consumers, as well. This finding closely aligns with Fitzimons and Shah's assessment of the impact of instrumentality on relationship "closeness" among goal-primed (versus unprimed) respondents in interpersonal contexts (2008). While the effects of instrumentality are more pronounced among goal-active respondents, individuals universally prefer instrumental partners to those perceived as non-instrumental.

Instrumentality's potent role in the relationship of involvement and satisfaction with the OPR (with issue-active organizations) has several implications for both theory and practice. One possibility is the question of appropriate fit of the CSA scope. Most extant CSA research (including the current study) focuses on large, national or international organizations and large, national or international issues.

At that level, issue and organization are an appropriate fit for potential instrumentality. Does this hold true for small-or-medium enterprises (SMEs)?

While it makes sense for Starbucks to weigh in on nationally debated topics, would it make sense for a local, independent coffee house to do the same? How would stakeholders

perceive the relative instrumentality of an SME taking on CSA with little hope of enacting meaningful change on public policy or opinion? Future research needs to examine the perceptions of CSA wherein the organization punches above its weight class, with naturally low instrumentality and little hope of applying meaningful pressure at the relevant level of governance or society. Does the misfit undercut instrumentality and subsequent effects of the CSA on the OPR?

This process is continued in instrumentality's role in moderating the relationship of issue involvement with future purchase intentions in hypothesis 12. Similar to instrumentality's critical function in bolstering the perception of the OPR among highly involved publics, instrumentality is required for issue-involvement to convert into purchase intentions as a result of CSA. No significant relationship emerges between issue-involvement and purchase intention *until* moderated by instrumentality.

Instrumentality's moderating effect on the relationship of issue involvement and future purchase intention suggests that motivating consumer behavior changes isn't merely a function of *acting good* (social responsibility/social advocacy), but those actions must be seen as impactful on the problems or issues our consumers are passionate about. No significant relationship emerges between issue-involvement and purchase intentions *until* moderated by instrumentality.

It should be considered, however, that there is a potentially direct link between instrumentality and one of the core components of OPR measurement: trust. Several items of the trust construct measure perceived competence, or the ability of the organization to deliver

on its promises to consumers. Instrumentality assesses how effective an outsider's assistance or help can be. The "trust" construct partially measures how capable an organization is perceived at doing or accomplishing goals it sets for itself. If an organization is trustworthy, it will accomplish what it sets out to do. If that goal is social advocacy, then the organization will be effective and thus, instrumental in the push.

H13 sought to more fully articulate the linkage of issue-involvement, instrumentality and behavioral intention by introducing the organization-public relationship as a mediating variable. The findings suggest that the OPR is a critical component in linking issue-involvement with behavioral intentions, but that this component is again reliant on the moderating effect of instrumentality.

Intriguingly, in this case, an alternative perspective on the significance of instrumentality and CSA emerges. Within the model, the basic relationship between issue-involvement and the OPR is negative. Highly involved consumers are disinterested in the OPR until they recognize the organization as a potentially instrumental partner in the CSA. Once highly involved consumers perceive the organization/organizational CSA as instrumental, perceptions of the relationship become positive.

This finding is congruent with the "implemental mindset" (Gollwitzer & Kinney, 1989) concept, wherein individuals who are currently engaged in a specific goal-pursuit measure both relationships and new information based on their relative utility for the achievement of the goal. If the organization is instrumental, implemental individuals will perceive it favorably. If the organization is not instrumental, implemental individuals will ignore it.

The moderated-mediation model also significantly strengthens the relationship of both the OPR and issue-involvement with relationship-bolstering intentions (positive WOM and purchase intentions) among high-involvement publics. Individuals are much more motivated to purchase products or to speak favorably of an organization with whom they share an ideological framework, most pronouncedly when that framework is perceived as genuinely instrumental in pursuing social change.

Taken collectively, the findings presented here suggest a need to rethink several elements of the organization public relationship: the role of the organization within the OPR, and the nature/implications of extrinsic goal pursuits on the OPR itself. While marketing and advertising theory and literature often discuss the significance of need-fulfillment in product promotion and messaging, it is less common to see the same construct applied to the organization (and organization-public relationship) itself.

Yet the findings here suggest that organizations also fulfill needs among their stakeholders through far more than simply creating a reliable product or experience. While traditional PR emphases such as cultivation of the OPR may fulfill needs for relationship and acceptance among stakeholders, corporate social advocacy also has a roll to play in aiding stakeholders in the pursuit of extra-relational goals of positively affecting the world they inhabit.

In an odd way, and although poorly received, the findings here suggest an underlying, metaphorical truth in the tagline associated with Gillette's #MeToo inspired campaign. While historical public relations efforts and corporate behaviors have emphasized positioning the

organization as the “best a [stakeholder] can get,” emergent modes of corporate behavior such as corporate social advocacy emphasize bolstering efforts to become the “best a [stakeholder] can be.”

From this perspective, non-ancillary activities such as corporate social advocacy become extremely ancillary in the sense that they position the brand or organization as a trusted partner or friend, ready and willing to support the stakeholder in efforts to improve themselves outside of the relationship. In an environment where nearly all organizations are engaged in the same, traditional public relations/OPR-bolstering efforts, advocacy efforts that push beyond the OPR to the effect of the partnership on social good may be critical to differentiating the organization from a host of other potential suitors.

These findings further illustrate a potential limitation in much of the extant literature of the OPR. The negative effects of issue involvement on the OPR suggest that, rather than an island unto itself, stakeholders consider the OPR just part of a rich tapestry of interests, pursuits, and life-goals. Much of the extant literature approaches the organization-public relationship as isolated and unique, a distinct psychological entity in the mind of the consumer. Yet these findings here illustrate that the OPR is merely a small part of a psychological constellation of issues, topics, aspirations, and interests in the mind of the consumer. Activation in the form of issue-involvement, for example, reduces interest in the OPR, regardless of whether the organization is directly or indirectly involved in the issue at-hand. Whether or not organizations wish to be political, in an amplified political climate, stakeholders certainly seem to expect them to be.

From this perspective, it is perhaps a misapprehension to see CSA as corporations leaning into the political sphere. In the mind of the stakeholder, the political sphere is absorbing the corporation, whether they wish to participate or not.

When the OPR and those externalities are congruent, the relationship is fine, when they undermine each other, though, something has to give. The findings here suggest that, for highly issue-involved stakeholders, the OPR takes a back seat as attention and effort shifts to focus on social advocacy or political change. With fewer resources left for the OPR, the relationship between the stakeholder and the organization understandably takes a back seat.

Congruent CSA, however, constitutes something of a salve for this hit to the relationship, repositioning the organization as a partner *in* (and not obstacle to) the pursuit of extra-relational goals. While CSA doesn't provide complete immunization against the negative effects of issue-involvement on the OPR, it nevertheless bolsters the relational immune system, mitigating these negative effects.

Further research is of course required. However the findings, particularly vis-à-vis emergent legitimacy of CSA, may suggest that we are in a moment of transition, wherein traditional public relations modalities may be losing their effectiveness as stakeholders increasingly prioritize social and political issues as part of their own motivations.

CHAPTER 7. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

As with all research, the findings presented here come with a number of limitations but also possibilities for future research. Broadly speaking, the limitations of this research can largely be broken into two areas: methodological and contextual.

Methodologically, survey research has several broad limitations that must be considered when weighing the validity of the findings presented. Survey research has strengths in depicting phenomena in practice, however survey's reliance on respondent engagement, rather than manipulation, weakens them when it comes to making causal arguments. In this context, while correlations have been observed between the OPR, CSA, instrumentality, authenticity and stakeholder behavioral intentions, it is beyond the purview of this methodology to make explicit, causal arguments. Logically, this leaves some ambiguity as to how the OPR and variables such as authenticity interact.

Does strong OPR encourage perceptions of authenticity, or do perceptions of authentic advocacy inspire positive attitudes towards the OPR? Unfortunately, it is beyond the current research to argue directionality here other than to proffer that attachment theory argues that relationships are constructed through a longitudinal series of experiences, good or bad (Feeney, 2008). From this perspective, corporate social advocacy, much like many other experiences within organization-public interactions, ought to reflect on an overall attitude towards the OPR. Relationship quality is perhaps best understood as the sum total of a series of such moments. Social advocacy efforts may constitute just such a vignette, a singular moment in time wherein

the organization either affirms (or alienates) its relationship with stakeholders. From this logic, stakeholder perceptions of the organization-public relationship

Conversely, relational attitudes often inform reactions to partner behaviors. Trusted partners receive the benefit of the doubt (Coombs & Holladay, 2006). Actions from a trusted other are perceived more favorably, seen as more authentic, and received less critically. So which is it? Does the organization-public relationship inform perceptions of authenticity and legitimacy in CSA, or do perceived authenticity and legitimacy strengthen the OPR?

The present research is methodologically unable to discern causality, yet it nevertheless proffers several, tantalizing clues. The negative relationship of issue-involvement with the OPR, for instance, suggests that for highly involved stakeholders, the OPR is perceived as something of a distraction from primary goals of social advocacy. This is consistent with the literature of the implemental mindset. Conversely, although the OPR suffers due to issue-involvement, perceived instrumentality nevertheless fosters purchase intentions, historically a behavioral bellwether of stakeholder satisfaction with the organization-public relationship. These findings, in tandem, suggest that social advocacy is operating distinctly from the OPR, subsequently informing it, rather than vice-versa. In all likelihood, the relationship is bi-directional, with positive OPR cultivating receptiveness to social advocacy among the public, and instrumental social advocacy informing the OPR.

Yet survey methodologies cannot argue causality conclusively, and thus exploration the precise mechanisms and directions of social advocacy's relationship with the OPR may best be left to future research.

While surveys strive to accurately assess the population under consideration, it should be considered that the sampling method (Amazon's mTurk) may not necessarily be representative of consumers as a whole. While some past research has argued that mTurk samples are acceptably representative of the population, and that mTurk data is as reliable as any panel company (Hauser & Schwarz, 2016; Smith, Roster, Golden, & Albaum, 2016), others argue that mTurk may have limitations in terms of representation (Harms & DeSimone, 2015). Any number of demographic factors resultant from sampling method could skew the data, and thus any conclusions should be considered in light of this possibility.

It should further be considered that, as a survey method, the data collected here is vulnerable to a host of external or contextual factors which could have affected responses and the subsequent findings. Data was collected in late-Spring of 2019, a moment with a number of unique characteristics. It would be impossible to summarize the entirety of cultural factors which may have shaped the findings here, however, a highly-charged partisan environment, highly-motivated political advocacy (particularly from the left) in the wake of Fall 2018's "Blue Wave" election certainly seem to have mobilized left-leaning voters, an effect which may have further held true in attitudes regarding CSA. It should further be considered that several of the CSA campaigns (as well as the cultural contexts which inspired them) were unfolding during and even after data collection, at a minimum priming issue salience among respondents and potentially even shaping responses.

Realistically, though, these limitations are intrinsic to the nature of survey methods. To control for these external factors, future research could return to alternative methodologies, such as experimentation.

CHAPTER 8. CONCLUSION

Corporate social advocacy is a significant and growing component of the organizational communications strategy. While potential case studies on corporate social advocacy abound, there is currently a theoretical dearth in the area. This research aimed to address this gap.

The findings suggest that social advocacy can be a potent means of bolstering connections between organizations and their consumers, however its efficacy comes with several, highly significant boundary conditions. Social advocacy works best when perceived as organically linked with the organization's day-to-day behaviors, such as consistent corporate social responsibility. Without this framework, social advocacy efforts are perceived as inauthentic and ineffective. Social advocacy works best when it's perceived as effective and instrumental, not merely lip-service to the issues or topics of the day. Social advocacy works best when it's progressive, with most conservative-minded consumers less open to corporate involvement in politics. Finally, social advocacy should be considered a component of a relatively complex web of involvement, relationship, and behavioral intentions, with each deeply affecting the others. CSA does not occur in a political or behavioral vacuum, and the interactions and moderations of a complex set of variables should be considered before pumping organizational resources into advocacy efforts.

Regardless of the findings here, though, corporate social advocacy is becoming an increasingly significant part of organizational outreach efforts. Hopefully, the findings the current research can illuminate the hows, whens, and whys corporate social advocacy can be most successful, both in enacting social change and in bolstering relationships with the public.

APPENDICES

Appendix A- Tables & Figures

Table 4.1. Respondent Organization Selection

Organization	Count	%	Cumulative %
Starbucks	172	31.0	31.0
Nike	102	18.4	49.4
Levi's	37	6.7	56.1
Gillette	50	9.0	65.1
Patagonia	22	4.0	69.1
Apple	126	22.7	91.8
Other	45	8.1	99.9

Table 4.2. Respondent Issue Selection

Issue	Count	Percent	Cumulative %
Bigotry against LGBTQ Rights	91	16.4	16.4
Police violence against men of color	86	15.5	31.9
Gun Violence	33	6.0	37.9
Toxic Masculinity/Sexism	66	11.9	49.8
Environmental Protection/Climate Change	209	37.7	87.5
Other	69	12.5	100

Table 4.3. Respondent Organization X Issue Selection Crosstab

Company	Police violence						Other	Total
	LGBTQ Rights	against people of color	Gun Control	Toxic Masculinity	Environmental Conservation			
Starbucks	42	17	12	9	78	14	172	
Nike	5	64	1	9	14	9	102	
Levi's	3	1	11	1	18	3	37	
Gillette	4	0	0	38	6	2	50	
Patagonia	0	1	0	1	20	0	22	
Apple	31	2	7	6	57	23	126	
Other	6	1	2	2	16	18	45	
Total	91	86	33	66	209	69	554	

Table 5.1. Construct Correlation Table

		CSR	CSA	OPR	AUTH	INSTRU	INVOLV	COST	P INTENT	WOM I
CSR	Pearson	1	.715**	.210**	.378**	.409**	.447**	-	.340**	.210**
	Correlation							.282**		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
CSA	Pearson	.715**	1	.250**	.421**	.498**	.501**	-	.432**	.357**
	Correlation							.250**		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
OPR	Pearson	.210**	.250**	1	.718**	.610**	.216**	-	.632**	.406**
	Correlation							.410**		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
AUTH	Pearson	.378**	.421**	.718**	1	.813**	.470**	-	.775**	.542**
	Correlation							.424**		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
INSTR	Pearson	.409**	.498**	.610**	.813**	1	.539**	-	.758**	.574**
	Correlation							.472**		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
INVOLV	Pearson	.447**	.501**	.216**	.470**	.539**	1	-	.524**	.378**
	Correlation							.256**		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
COST	Pearson	-	-	-	-	-.472**	-.256**	1	-.289**	-.112**
	Correlation	.282**	.250**	.410**	.424**					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.008
P INTENT	Pearson	.340**	.432**	.632**	.775**	.758**	.524**	-	1	.779**
	Correlation							.289**		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
WOM INTENT	Pearson	.210**	.357**	.406**	.542**	.574**	.378**	-	.779**	1
	Correlation							.112**		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.008	.000	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5.2. H5 Simple Moderation Model

	(Y)			
	Perceived Authenticity			
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>
(X) Social Cost	-.61	-5.83***	-.82	-.41
(W) Legitimacy of CSA	.17	1.95*	-.002	.34
(X) Social Cost × (W) Legitimacy of CSA	.07	2.93**	.02	.12
$R^2 = .30, F(3, 550) = 77.46***$				

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 5.3. H7 Moderated Mediation Model

	(M)				(Y)			
	Perceived Authenticity				OPR			
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>
(X) Social Cost	-.61	-5.83***	-.82	-.41	-.10	-4.00***	-.16	-.05
(W) Legitimacy of CSA	.17	1.95	-.002	.34				
(X) Social Cost × (W) Legitimacy of CSA	.07	2.93*	.02	.12	-	-	-	-
(M) Authenticity	-	-	-	-	.57	20.52***	.51	.62
$R^2 = .30, F(3, 550) = 77.46***$					$R^2 = .53, F(2, 551) = 308.90***$			

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 5.4 H11 Simple Moderation Model

	(Y)			
	OPR			
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>
(X) Issue Involvement	-.26	-3.75***	-.40	-.12
(W) perceived goal instrumentality	.38	4.87***	.22	.53
(X) Issue Involvement × (W) perceived goal instrumentality	.03	2.20*	.003	.06
$R^2 = .40, F(3, 550) = 120.04***$				

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 5.5. H12 Simple Moderation Model

	(Y)			
	Purchase Intentions			
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>
(X) Issue Involvement	.01	.15	-.04	1.29
(W) perceived goal instrumentality	.52	6.03***	.35	.69
(X) Issue Involvement × (W) perceived goal instrumentality	.04	2.30*	.006	.07
	$R^2 = .60, F(3, 550) = 272.10^{***}$			

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 5.6. H13 (a) Moderated Mediation Model

	(M)				(Y)			
	OPR				Purchase Intentions			
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>
(X) Issue Involvement	-.26	-3.75***	-.40	-.12	.43	13.98***	.37	.49
(W) perceived goal instrumentality	.38	4.87***	.22	.53	-	-	-	-
(X) Issue Involvement × (W) perceived goal instrumentality	.03	2.20*	.003	.06	-	-	-	-
(M) OPR	-	-	-	-	.75	18.73***	.67	.82
	$R^2 = .40, F(3, 550) = 120.04^{***}$				$R^2 = .56, F(2, 551) = 345.64^{***}$			

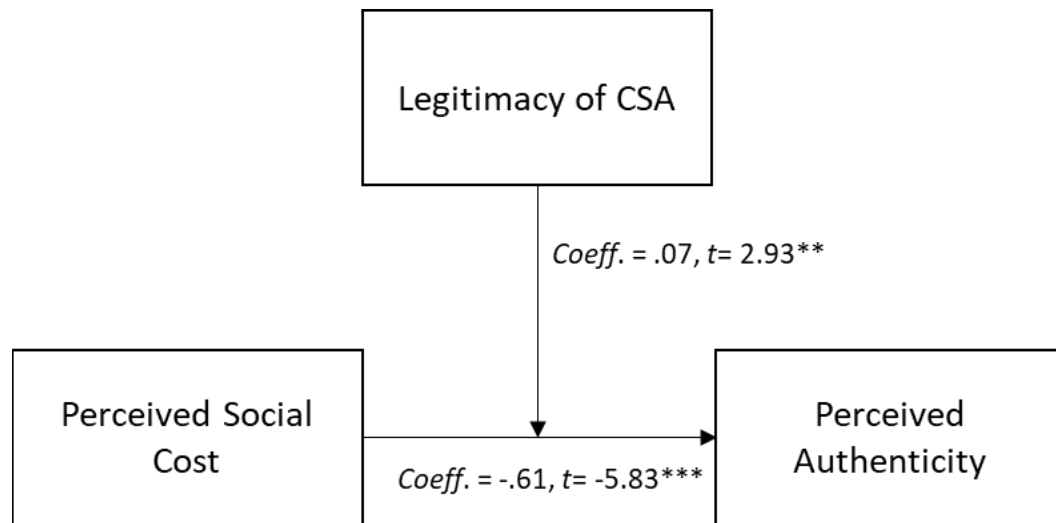
Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 5.7 H13 (b) Moderated Mediation Model

	(M)				(Y)			
	OPR				Positive WOM Intentions			
	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>	<i>Coeff.</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>LLCI</i>	<i>ULCI</i>
(X) Issue Involvement	-.26	-3.75***	-.40	-.12	.34	8.07***	.26	.43
(W) perceived goal instrumentality	.38	4.87***	.22	.53	-	-	-	-
(X) Issue Involvement × (W) perceived goal instrumentality	.03	2.20*	.003	.06	-	-	-	-
(M) OPR	-	-	-	-	.49	9.03***	.39	.60
	$R^2 = .40, F(3, 550) = 120.04^{***}$				$R^2 = .25, F(2, 551) = 93.41^{***}$			

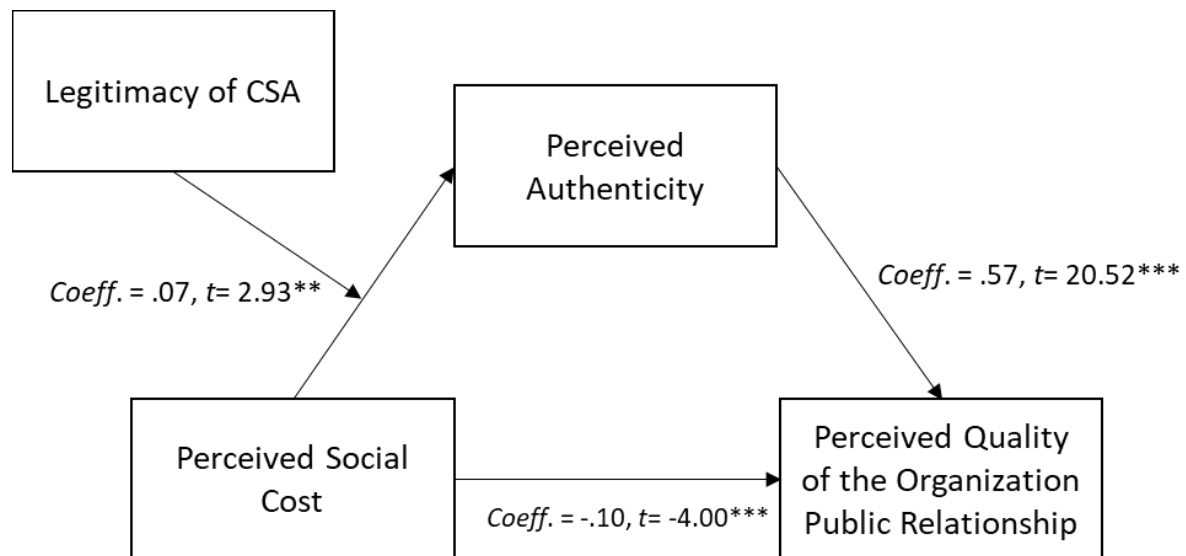
Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Figure 5.2.1. H5 Simple Moderation Model



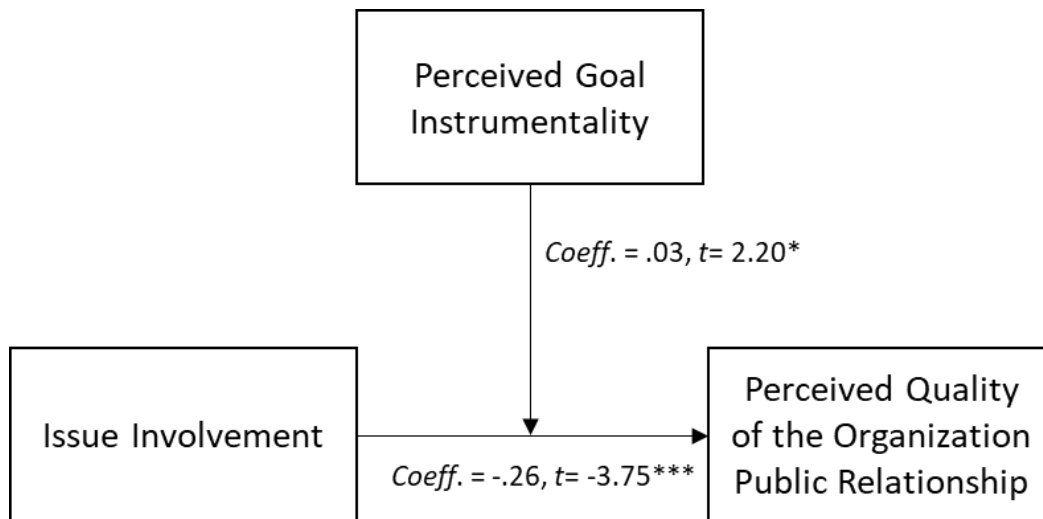
Note. $*p < .05$, $**p < .01$, $***p < .001$

Figure 5.3.1. Moderated Mediation Model



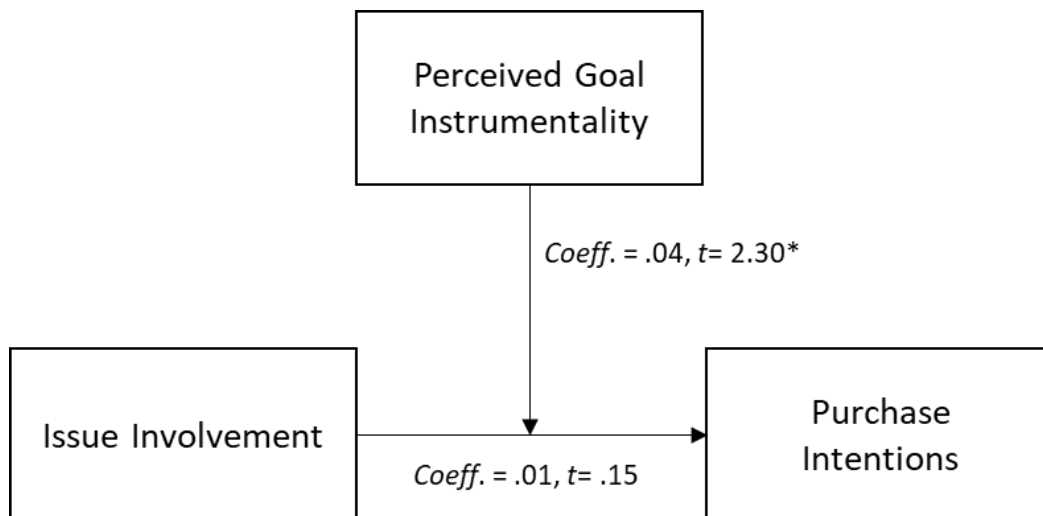
Note. $*p < .05$, $**p < .01$, $***p < .001$

Figure 5.4.1. H11 Simple Moderation Model



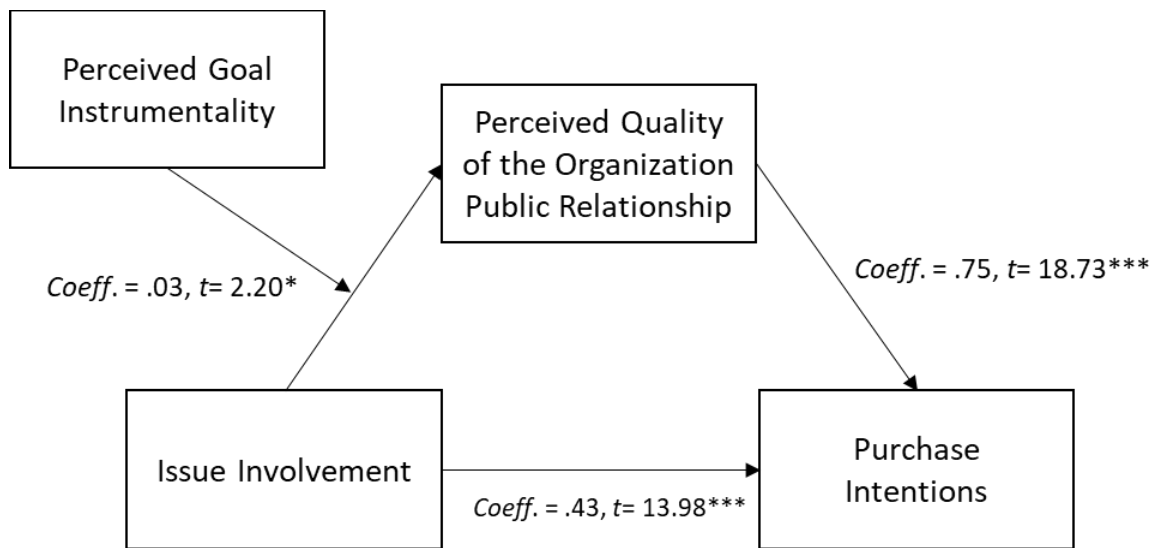
Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Figure 5.5.1. H12 Simple Moderation Model



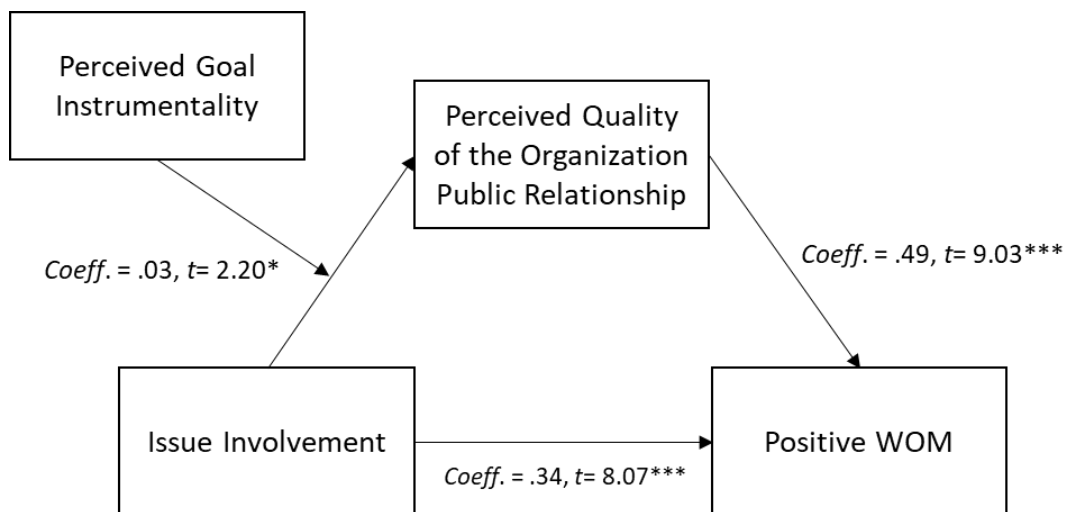
Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Figure 5.6.1 H13(a) Moderated Mediation Model



Note. $*p < .05$, $**p < .01$, $***p < .001$

Figure 5.7.1. H13(b) Moderated Mediation Model



Note. $*p < .05$, $**p < .01$, $***p < .001$

Appendix B- Instrument

INFORMED CONSENT

My name is Jonathan Borden, and I am a graduate student at the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University.

I am interested in learning more about how people perceive corporate participation in social issues or debates. This study is a part of this research. If you choose to participate, you will be asked to answer a few questions about your attitudes regarding social issues and regarding certain corporations. There are no right or wrong answers, we just ask that you answer as honestly as you can.

Following these questions, I have a few questions about you, and then you'll be all done! This will take approximately 10-15 minutes of your time. I am inviting you to participate in this research study in exchange for compensation via Amazon's Mechanical Turk. Involvement with the study is purely voluntary, which means you can choose whether or not to participate, and you may withdraw at any time with no penalty, although withdrawal would disqualify you from compensation on mTurk.

Whenever one works with an online survey; there is always the risk of compromising privacy, confidentiality, and/or anonymity. Your confidentiality will be maintained to the degree permitted by the technology being used. It is important to explain that no guarantees can be made regarding the interception of data sent via the internet to third parties.

However, this research will not intentionally collect any personally identifiable information and will keep your responses confidential to the best of our ability. Our only requirement is that you are at least 18 years of age and a citizen/resident of the United States.

None of these questions are intended or expected to be upsetting or offensive, however if you have any questions, concerns or complaints about the research please contact me at jborden@syr.edu or Dr. Dennis Kinsey of the S.I. Newhouse School at dfkinsey@syr.edu.

Thank you very much for your interest in participating!

By clicking "I agree" below, I hereby acknowledge that I have read the above. I am 18 years of age or older, and I knowingly agree to participate in this research.

I agree. (1)

I disagree. (2)

ACTIONAL LEGITIMACY

Corporate Social Responsibility (9 items; $M = 5.23$, $SD = 1.18$, $\alpha = .927$)

How strongly do you Agree or Disagree with the following statements?

- 1) Companies should do more to make the world a better place.
- 2) It's not enough for a company to make good products. They should do good in the community, as well.
- 3) Companies owe their customers more than just a reliable product. They should make the world better, too.
- 4) Companies should put people over profits.
- 5) Companies should try to make the world a better place.
- 6) Companies should make money first and consider social issues second or not at all. (R)
- 7) Companies should just focus on making money. (R)
- 8) Companies should always try to do the right thing, even if it hurts their profits.
- 9) Companies should always prioritize doing good for the community or the world.

Corporate Social Advocacy (12 items; $M = 4.293$, $SD = 1.21$, $\alpha = .918$)

How strongly do you Agree or Disagree with the following statements?

- 1) Companies have an ethical obligation to push for social change.
- 2) Companies should wait for the government to take the lead on social change.
- 3) Companies should stay out of politics. (R)
- 4) When the government doesn't or won't try to fix a problem, companies should fix it themselves.
- 5) When the government tries to pass a bad law or unethical regulation, companies should try to stop them, even if it has nothing to do with the business.
- 6) From time to time, companies should take action against bad government or politicians.
- 7) Companies should make money first and consider social issues second or not at all. (R)
- 8) Corporations should "stay in their lane" and avoid political issues. (R)
- 9) CEOs have an obligation to express their political viewpoints in public.
- 10) Corporate leaders should push for social change when the government doesn't.
- 11) When government leaders fail to act on social problems, corporations should act first.

12) Companies should take a stand when the government won't.

ORGANIZATION CHOICE

For the remainder of this study, we would like for you to think about one particular company that you have strong thoughts or attitudes about. From the following list, please select one corporation that you buy from frequently, particularly care about, or would be willing to answer a few questions about.

As you go through the remainder of the study, you will be asked a few questions about one of these corporations, so keep it in mind as you continue forward!

Starbucks (1)

Nike (2)

Levi's (3)

Gillette (4)

Patagonia (5)

Apple (6)

Other (7) _____

PURCHASE FREQUENCY/CONSUMPTION

Q35 How frequently do you purchase products from [COMPANY]?

Never (1)

Less than half the time (2)

About half the time (3)

Most of the time (4)

Always (5)

Q36 Overall, how do products from [COMPANY] compare to their competitors in terms of quality?

Much worse (1)

Moderately worse (2)

Slightly worse (3)

About the same (4)

Slightly better (5)

Moderately better (6)

Much better (7)

Q37 Overall, how do products from [COMPANY] compare to their competitors in terms of price?

Much more expensive (1)

Moderately more expensive (2)

Slightly more expensive (3)

About the same (4)

Slightly cheaper (5)

Moderately cheaper (6)

Much cheaper (7)

ORGANIZATION-PUBLIC RELATIONSHIP

PROMPT: Thinking about [COMPANY], please select how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements...

Satisfaction (8 items; $M= 5.22$, $SD= 1.27$, $\alpha=.926$)

- 1) I am happy with [COMPANY].
- 2) Both [COMPANY] and people like me benefit from our relationship.
- 3) Most people like me are happy in their interactions with [COMPANY].
- 4) Generally speaking, I am pleased with the relationship that [COMPANY] has established with customers like me.
- 5) Most people enjoy dealing with [COMPANY].
- 6) [COMPANY] fails to satisfy the needs or expectations of people like me. (R)
- 7) I feel that people like me are important to [COMPANY].
- 8) In general, I believe that nothing of value has been accomplished between [COMPANY] and people like me. (R)

Trust (11 items; $M= 4.94$, $SD= 1.18$, $\alpha=.934$),

- 1) [COMPANY] treats people fairly and justly.
- 2) Whenever [COMPANY] makes an important decision, I know it will consider people like me.
- 3) [COMPANY] can be relied on to keep its promises.
- 4) I believe that [COMPANY] takes the opinions of people like me into account when making decisions.
- 5) I feel very confident about [COMPANY]'s quality.
- 6) [COMPANY] has the ability to do what it says it will do.
- 7) Sound ethical principles seem to guide [COMPANY]'s behavior.
- 8) [COMPANY] does not mislead people.
- 9) I am very willing to let [COMPANY] make decisions for people like me.
- 10) It is important to watch [COMPANY] closely so that it doesn't take advantage of people. (R)
- 11) [COMPANY] is known to be successful at things it tries to do.

Commitment (8 items; $M= 4.41$, $SD= 1.28$, $\alpha=.946$)

- 1) I can feel that [COMPANY] is trying to maintain a long-term commitment to people like me.
- 2) I can see that [COMPANY] wants to maintain a relationship with people like me.
- 3) There is a long-lasting bond between [COMPANY] and people like me.
- 4) Compared with other companies, I value my relationship with [COMPANY] more.
- 5) I would rather work together with [COMPANY] than not.
- 6) I have no desire for a relationship with [COMPANY]. (R)
- 7) I feel a sense of loyalty to [COMPANY].
- 8) I could not care less about [COMPANY]. (R)

Control Mutuality (8 items; $M= 4.66$, $SD= 1.38$, $\alpha=.939$)

- 1) [COMPANY] is attentive to what people like me have to say.
- 2) [COMPANY] believe the opinions of people like me are legitimate.
- 3) In dealing with people like me, [COMPANY] tends to push us around. (R)
- 4) [COMPANY] really listens to what people have to say.
- 5) [COMPANY] gives people like me enough say in the decision-making process.
- 6) When I have an opportunity to interact with [COMPANY], I have some sense of control.
- 7) [COMPANY] doesn't cooperate with people like me. (R)
- 8) I believe I can influence the decision-makers at [COMPANY].

Communalism (7 items; $M= 4.77$, $SD= 1.4$, $\alpha=.918$).

- 1) [COMPANY] does not especially enjoy giving others help.
- 2) [COMPANY] seems genuinely concerned with the welfare of people like me.
- 3) [COMPANY] takes advantage of people who are vulnerable.
- 4) [COMPANY] succeeds by stepping on other people. (R)
- 5) [COMPANY] helps people without expecting anything in return.
- 6) I don't consider [COMPANY] to be particularly helpful. (R)
- 7) In general, [COMPANY] is always trying to get the upper hand with people like me.(R)

ISSUE SELECTION

Q10 Increasingly today, companies are taking positions on social or political issues. For example, while [COMPANY] has taken a stand on many issues, which issue do you see [COMPANY] as being most outspoken about?

Bigotry against LGBTQ Rights (1)

Police violence against people of color (2)

Gun violence (3)

Toxic Masculinity/Sexism (4)

Environmental Protection/Climate Change (5)

Other (6) _____

CONGRUITY – (4 items; $M= 4.98$, $SD= 1.75$, $\alpha=.971$).

Q41 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

- 1) On the issue of [ISSUE], [COMPANY] and I agree with each other.
- 2) [COMPANY] is working in the right direction on the issue of [ISSUE].
- 3) The world would be better if more companies were like [COMPANY] on the issue of [ISSUE].

CSA AUTHENTICITY (8 items; $M= 4.9$, $SD= 1.42$, $\alpha=.953$).

Q12 Thinking about [COMPANY]'s efforts about [ISSUE], please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements.

- 1) [COMPANY]'s actions on [ISSUE]are genuine.
- 2) [COMPANY]'s actions on [ISSUE]are an important part of what [COMPANY] means to me.
- 3) The action on [ISSUE]captures what makes [COMPANY] unique to me.
- 4) [COMPANY]'s action on [ISSUE]is in accordance with [COMPANY]'s values and beliefs.
- 5) [COMPANY] is standing up for what it believes in.
- 6) [COMPANY] is a socially responsible company.
- 7) [COMPANY] is being true to itself with its actions on [ISSUE].
- 8) [COMPANY] is concerned about improving the well-being of society.

INSTRUMENTALITY (5 items; $M= 4.56$, $SD= 1.59$, $\alpha=.952$).

Q14 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

- 1) With [COMPANY]'s support, I think we can help the issues with [ISSUE].
- 2) [COMPANY] and I could work together to help solve [ISSUE].
- 3) [COMPANY] is being helpful on the issues of [ISSUE].
- 4) I genuinely think [COMPANY] can push the government on [ISSUE].
- 5) Together, [COMPANY] and I can make a difference on [ISSUE].

ISSUE INVOLVEMENT

Outcome Relevant (4 items, $M= 4.04$, $SD= 1.95$, $\alpha=.968$),

Q15 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

- 1) [ISSUE]affects my ability to live my life as I want to.
- 2) [ISSUE]directly affects my life.
- 3) It is easy to think of ways that [ISSUE]affects me.
- 4) [ISSUE]is directly relevant to my life.

Value Relevant (4 items; $M= 5.27$, $SD= 1.5$, $\alpha=.931$),

Q16 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

- 1) [ISSUE]has an impact on values that I care about.
- 2) My opinion on [ISSUE]relates to values that I care about.
- 3) My attitudes [ISSUE]are based on my personal values.
- 4) I tend to base my attitudes on [ISSUE]on my general principles of how life should be lived.

Impression Relevant (4 items; $M= 4.67$, $SD= 1.81$, $\alpha=.949$)

Q17 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

- 1) [ISSUE]affects people close to me.
- 2) [ISSUE]is important to people I care about.
- 3) [ISSUE]affects social groups that I identify with.
- 4) [ISSUE]is important to the social groups I identify with.

PERCEIVED COST

Q20 How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

- 1) Overall, I think most consumers were angry at [COMPANY] because of their position on [ISSUE].
- 2) I suspect that [COMPANY]'s position on [ISSUE]cost them sales.
- 3) Consumer reactions to [COMPANY] were very positive.
- 4) Some consumers will probably never buy [COMPANY]'s products again as a result of their activism on [ISSUE].
- 5) Overall, [COMPANY]'s reputation was damaged as a result of this position.
- 6) Overall, click strongly disagree (10) (attention check)
- 7) Some consumers likely boycotted [COMPANY] in retaliation for their stand.
- 8) [COMPANY] lost some public favor because of their actions on [ISSUE].
- 9) This decision probably cost [COMPANY] a lot of money.
- 10) Some people complained at first, but I bet they'll buy [COMPANY]'s products again in the future. (R)

Q21 What percentage of [COMPANY]'s annual revenue do you think they lost due to their stand on [ISSUE]? (There's no right or wrong answer, just what is your best guess?)

Annual Revenue (%) (1)	
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Q22 Overall, was the public response to [COMPANY]'s stance on [ISSUE] overall positive or negative? (No right or wrong answer, just go with your gut/memory!)

- 1) Very Negative
- 2) Negative
- 3) Slightly Negative
- 4) Neither Negative nor Positive
- 5) Slightly Positive
- 6) Positive
- 7) Very Positive

BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS

Supportive BI (11 items; $M= 4.32$, $SD= 1.73$, $\alpha=.932$).

Q24 Overall, how strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

- 1) I am more inclined to buy [COMPANY]'s products to show my support for them.
- 2) Buying from [COMPANY] is a way to show I agree with their position on [ISSUE].
- 3) As a result of their position on [ISSUE] I am more likely to purchase products from [COMPANY] than their competitors.
- 4) Buying from [COMPANY] could be a way for me to express my support for their decision.
- 5) I told my friends to buy from [COMPANY] to show our agreement with them.
- 6) I would tell my neighbors to buy from [COMPANY] to show our support.
- 7) After [COMPANY] did this, I started trying to buy from them more often.
- 8) I seek out and purchase [COMPANY]'s products to express my own views.
- 9) I seek out [COMPANY]'s products to protect them from negative reactions (boycotts).
- 10) I buy from [COMPANY], even if their products are a little more expensive than their competitors.
- 11) I went on social media and complimented [COMPANY] to support their position on [ISSUE].

OPTIONAL

**Q50 Do you have anything you'd like to add regarding [COMPANY]'s position on [ISSUE]?
(Purely optional, but we'd love to hear your thoughts!)**

DEMOGRAPHICS

Q18 You're nearly done! Now we just have a few questions about you, and you'll be on your way!

Q19 What is your marital status?

Single, never married (1)

Married or domestic partnership (2)

Widowed (3)

Divorced (4)

Separated (5)

Q25 Currently, what is your occupational status?

Employed full time (1)

Employed part time (2)

Unemployed looking for work (3)

Unemployed not looking for work (4)

Retired (5)

Student (6)

Disabled (7)

Q26 What is your educational background (highest level completed).

Some high school (1)

High school diploma or equivalent (2)

Some college (3)

College graduate (B.A./B.S.) (4)

Some graduate work (5)

Master's degree (M.A./M.S. et cetera) (6)

Doctorate (either of philosophy or professional) (7)

Other (8) _____

Q27 Which political party do you most strongly affiliate with?

Democratic Party (1)

Republican Party (2)

Libertarian Party (3)

Green Party (4)

No particular preference (5)

Other (6) _____

Q28 What, if any, is your religious affiliation?

Protestant (Evangelical, Mainline, et cetera) (1)

Orthodox (2)

Latter-day Saints (Mormon) (3)

Jehovah's Witness (4)

Catholic (5)

Jewish (6)

Muslim (7)

Buddhist (8)

Hindu (9)

Atheist (10)

Agnostic (11)

Other (12) _____

Q29 Which of the following best describes your annual household income?

Less than \$20,000 per year (1)

\$20,000-\$39,999 (2)

\$40,000-\$59,999 (3)

\$60,000-\$79,999 (4)

\$80,000-\$99,999 (5)

\$100,000-\$149,999 (6)

\$150,000 or more (7)

Q30 Do you consider yourself to be Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Transgender (LGBT)?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Prefer not to respond (3)

Q31 Which gender is closest to how you would describe yourself?

Male (1)

Female (2)

Nonbinary/Third Gender (3)

Prefer to self-describe (4) _____

Prefer not to respond (5)

Q32 Are you Hispanic/Latinx?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Prefer not to respond (3)

Q33 Which ethnicity do you most closely identify with? (Select all that apply)

Asian (1)

Black/African-American (2)

Hispanic/Latinx (3)

Middle Eastern, Arabic or North African (4)

Native American (5)

Pacific Islander (6)

White/Caucasian (7)

Prefer not to respond (8)

Other (9) _____

Q38 Do you now, or have you ever, worked for [COMPANY]?

Yes, I work for them now. (1)

Yes, I have worked for them before, but I don't now. (2)

No (3)

Display This Question:

If Do you now, or have you ever, worked for

`\${q://QID4/ChoiceGroup/SelectedChoicesTextEntry}? = Yes, I have worked for them before, but I don't now.

Q39 How would you describe your decision to stop working for [COMPANY]?

I was terminated/let go. (1)

I chose to leave for something better. (2)

I chose to leave because I hated it. (3)

Other (4) _____

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VITA

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Education

Doctor of Philosophy- Syracuse University (2014-2019)

- Focus Areas: Relationship Management, Social Media, Consumer/Stakeholder Psychology
- Dissertation: **Consumer Attachment and Corporate Social Advocacy: Leveraging Political Behaviors to Bolster Organization-Public Relationships** (Defended 10/13/19)
- Committee: Dennis Kinsey (Chair), Joon Soo Lim, Hua Jiang, Laura Macchia, Roy Gutterman and Jeff Stanton

Master of Arts in Mass Communications – University of Florida (2010-2013)

- Focus Areas: Public Relations, Crisis Communications, International/Intercultural Communications
- Thesis: **The Impact of National Identity Factors in International Crises**
- Committee: Sora Kim (Chair), Juan-Carlos Molleda and Michael Leslie

Bachelor of Arts- Florida Gulf Coast University (2008)

Research/Publications

PEER-REVIEWED PUBLICATIONS

Arceneaux, P., **Borden, J.**, & Golan, G. (2019). The news management function of political public relations. In S. Kioussis & J. Stromback (Eds). *Political Public Relations. Concepts, Principles and Applications*. Routledge, UK. (Book Chapter)

Borden, J., & Zhang, X. (2019). Linguistic crisis prediction: An integration of Linguistic Categorization Model in crisis communication. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*.

Borden, J. (2016). Effects of national identity in transnational crises: Implications of social identity theory for attribution and crisis communications. *International Journal of Communication*, 10.

- Borden, J., & Zhang, X. (2019).** "Do not Use!": Ethical implications of the 2014 Elk River chemical spill. In B. Brunner-Johnson, & C. Hickerson (Eds). *Translating Values into Conduct: Cases in Public Relations Ethics*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. (Book Chapter)
- Grzywinska, I., & **Borden, J. (2012).** The impact of social media on traditional agenda setting theory. The case study of the Occupy Wall Street Movement in the USA. In B. Dubek-Ostrowsa, & W. Wanta (Eds). *Agenda Setting: Old and New Problems in Old and New Media* (pp. 133-155). Warsaw. (Book Chapter)
- Zhang, X., & **Borden, J. (2019).** How to communicate cyber-risk? An examination of behavioral recommendations in cybersecurity crises. *Journal of Risk Research*.
- Zhang, X., **Borden, J., & Kim, S. (2018).** Understanding publics' post-crisis social media engagement behaviors: An examination of antecedents and mediators. *Telematics and Informatics, 35(8)*, 2133-2146.
- Zhang, X., & **Borden, J. (2017).** Linking issue management, corporate social responsibility and crisis communication: Applying balance theory in crisis and issue management. *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- Borden, J., & Zhang, X. (2018).** Ultimate Crisis? An examination of linguistics and ultimate attribution error in international organizational crisis. Presented at the AEJMC annual conference, Washington, DC.
- Borden, J., & Dey, S. (2016).** The effects of screen size and physical proximity on perceptions of risk and hazard. *Communication with Power: ICA 2016*. Fukuoka, Japan: International Communications Association.
- Borden, J. & Zhang, X. (2015).** Attribution error of internal stakeholders in assessments of organizational crisis responsibility. San Francisco, CA. Presented at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.
- Borden, J. (2013).** A preliminary study on the impact of social identity on crisis attribution. *AEJMC*. Washington, D.C.: Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. 2nd Place Student Paper, Public Relations Division.
- Dey, S., & **Borden, J. (2016).** Glass ceiling or glass jaw? Gender as root of biased blame attribution in contemporary politics and its implications for post-crisis image restoration. *PCA/ACA National Conference*. Seattle, WA: Pop Culture Association.

Zhang, X., & **Borden, J.** (2018). Linguistic crisis prediction: An integration of linguistic categorization model in crisis communication. Paper presented at the AEJMC annual conference, Washington, DC.

Zhang, X., **Borden, J.**, & Hwang, J. (2017). What they did or who they are? An examination of linguistic intergroup bias in media and public responses to corporate crises. *ICA National Conference*. San Diego, CA. International Communications Association.

Zhang, X. & **Borden, J.** (2016). Understanding publics' post-crisis social media engagement. Presented at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. Minneapolis, MN.

Zhang, X., & **Borden, J.** (2016). Linking issue management, corporate social responsibility, and crisis communication: Applying Balance Theory in Crisis and Issue Management. *Communicating With Power: ICA 2016*. Fukuoka, Japan: International Communications Association.

CONFERENCE PANELS

Blackstone, G., **Borden, J.**, Zhang, X., & Shay, R. (2018, April). The Credibility Crisis: Leveraging Crisis Communication Theory to Mitigate the Effects of "Fake News" Accusations on Audience Trust. Panel presented at the 2018 Annual Conference of the Broadcast Education Association. Las Vegas, NV.

Zhang, X., **Borden, J.**, Cosma, R., Muturi, N., Mwangi, S., & Shay, R. (2019, April). Rebuilding trust in an era of mass skepticism. Panel presented at the 2019 Annual Conference of the Broadcast Education Association. Las Vegas, NV.

Past Courses

PRINCIPLES OF ADVERTISING

- Large enrollment (approximately 100-150 students per semester)
- Introduction to advertising and paid organizational communication.

PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC RELATIONS (ONLINE)

- Intensive, 8-week online version of Principles of Public Relations
- Typically enrolled between 25 and 50 students.
- Driven by weekly discussion assignments to foster student creative thinking and bolster engagement and retention among non-traditional students

INTEGRATED STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS MANAGEMENT

- Medium enrollment (25-35 student) seminar-type class
- Focus: exploration of the psychological aspects of brand cultivation
- Introduces upper-level communications majors to how marketing and branding dovetail with Ad and PR

PUBLIC RELATIONS WRITING

- Introducing students to paid, earned, owned and converged content creation for strategic communication purposes, as well as AP style
- Skills course intended to improve student ability to create (and deliver) compelling content in both traditional and digital/social applications.

PUBLIC RELATIONS WRITING (ONLINE)

- An online, condensed version of the regular semester PR Writing course
- Critical to allowing transfer majors to quickly catch up with their peers and stay on track for graduation

SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY

- Intended to bridge the gap from digital native to content creator, this class develops an understanding of the science of strategic social media
- Applies campaign principles such as research, objectives, strategy, and strong tactics are necessary to make social meaningful

MASS COMMUNICATIONS AND SOCIETY

- Foundation for undergraduate enrollment and a popular elective
- Introduces students to a spectrum of communications disciplines, theories, and critical approaches to mass communication

ADVANCED PR WRITING (graduate level assistant instructor)

- Intended to transition graduate students to applied PR Writing
- Offered in an 8-week “bootcamp” format for incoming students
- Focused on helping international students develop English writing skills

ADVANCED PR WRITING FOR DIGITAL AND SOCIAL MEDIA (graduate level/assistant instructor)

- Assisted a recently hired professor-of-practice who had worked in social media management for a Fortune 500 company but had little teaching experience
- Intended to instill in the students a basic understanding of how writing styles and strategies evolve from the traditional media to social media environments
- Taught the basics of social media analytics, content creation and effective crisis recovery in the social media space

Professional Experience

DIRECTOR OF ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS, BRONSON SPEEDWAY, BRONSON, FL
(March 2012 – Aug 2014)

- Managed organizational outreach efforts at both the B2B and B2C levels at the speedway
- Managed the organization's social media presence.
- During my time here the track experienced significant growth in advertising revenue, significant increases in attendance, and major opportunities for outreach and expansion within the industry.
- Landed coverage in multiple news sources including *The New York Times*
- Worked with development company to pitch track activities for reality TV

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTITUTE, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, GAINESVILLE, FL (Jan 2014 – Aug 2014)

- Maintained constant contact with representatives from the U.S. Department of State and the Embassies/Ministries of Education of more than 6 nations
- Managed student and instructor performance evaluations and assisted in the achievement of expected performance objectives.
- Hosted initiatives by the Saudi Arabian government to allow female citizens abroad for post-secondary education.

HEAD INSTRUCTOR, CHUNGDAHM INSTITUTE AND DONGJA SCHOOL, SEOUL (Nov 2008 – Aug 2010)

- Developed ESL/TOFEL prep program curriculum
- Managed training and evaluated performance of 4 employees/teachers

COMMUNITY RELATIONS AT PLANTS, PALMS, AND MORE- PORT CHARLOTTE, FL (Jan 2005-Aug 2008)

- Managed community outreach and advertising for a small and medium sized enterprise (SME)
 - Managed community relations with suppliers, customers, and government agencies
-

Service

2017- 2019 Chair, Diversity Committee

2015 – 2016 President- Newhouse Doctoral Students Organization (NDSO), S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communication, Syracuse University

2015 – 2016 3rd Year Tenure Review Committee, S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communication, Syracuse University

2015 – present: Reviewer for *International Journal of Strategic Communication*

2016—present: Reviewer for the *International Communications Gazette*

2017—present: Reviewer for *International Migration*

Selected Awards

July 2016 – Feinberg Newhouse Dissertation Award

Aug 2014 – University Fellowship, Syracuse University

Aug 2013 - 2nd Place Student Paper, Public Relations Division, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Washington, D.C. - Borden, J. (2013). A preliminary study on the impact of social identity on crisis attribution.
