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Attitude Formation and Development: An Investigation of the Interrelationships Among Attitudinal Constructs and Their Resistance to Counterpersuasion.

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Attitude formation and development: An investigation of the interrelationships among attitudinal constructs and their resistance to counterpersuasion

Phillips, Melodie Ree, Ph.D.

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Attitude Formation and Development:
An Investigation of the Interrelationships
Among Attitudinal Constructs
and Their Resistance to Counterpersuasion

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
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in partial fulfillment of the
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Doctor of Philosophy

in

the Interdepartmental Program in Business Administration

by
Melodie R. Phillips
B.A., The University of South Florida, 1984
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I can say without any doubt in my mind that completion of this degree was the most difficult task I have ever undertaken. I can also say without reservation that it has been the most challenging and rewarding experience of my life. Completion of this degree challenged me to push myself to the limits of my abilities and as a result I have grown tremendously.

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Lastly and most importantly I would like to thank my parents whose love and support has been unfailing throughout my life. I had the tremendous luck of being born to parents who love and support me without question and believe in me beyond limit. I am indeed fortunate. They are the reason I have grown to be the person I am today.

In particular, I would like to say "thank you" to my father. Throughout my life he has offered me a role model that I have always strived to emulate. There has never been a greater teacher, inspiration or father than he. This one's for you!

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the resistance of attitudes to counterpersuasion using the Elaboration Likelihood Model as a framework for analysis. The ELM postulated the centrally formed attitudes are more resistant to counterpersuasion than peripherally formed attitudes. A negative publicity setting was used to introduce respondents to a longitudinal study of attitude formation and change.

A model was developed hypothesizing the role of company and brand cognitions would be significant in the formation of attitudes and intentions in central processors. It was hypothesized that A_{Ad} would be the primary influence on company and brand attitudes for peripheral processors.

A sample of college students participated in a study examining attitudinal responses to counterpersuasive material. The study required a two-stage operationalization in initial involvement levels were manipulated, followed by presentation of a negative publicity message aimed at encouraging attributions about the target company vs. external factors. The two-stage study yielded four processing group sequences (central-central; central-peripheral; peripheral-central and peripheral-peripheral). The resulting processing groups were compared to see if attitudinal components of A_{Co}, A_B, and BI changed with the counterpersuasive information.

Results indicate that in the negative publicity setting, centrally formed attitudes exhibited the greatest change in the attitudinal components. The

internal attribution resulted in an emotional reaction for central processing subjects. Additional analysis suggested that although central processors developed the most cognitions about the stimuli, these cognitions were not used in attitude formation.

Findings suggest the ELM may not be an effective framework for explaining consumer reactions in a negative publicity setting. Findings suggest that in a negative publicity setting, company attitudes play an important role in brand attitude and behavioral intentions formation. Strategic implications suggest that company image plays an important role in response to negative publicity incidences.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Research into the areas of persuasion and attitude formation has been of interest to marketers for many years (e.g., Fishbein and Azjen 1972, 1975; Petty and Cacioppo 1981; Zajonc 1980). Of primary concern is how information is attended to by the consumer and how this influences attitude formation. This study seeks to investigate two complementary areas: 1) the resistance and persistence of attitudes formed via a cognitive or affective approach and 2) the relationship that exists between various types of cognitions and attitudes in determining behavioral intentions. Both of these areas of interest will be studied through the longitudinal investigation of attitude formation in which consumers will be introduced to information contradictory to currently held attitudes.

This study develops a conceptual framework based on the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) and focuses on the accuracy of the ELM's predictions in situations where consumers are confronted with credible information which contradicts prior beliefs and/or attitudes. The ELM posits two routes to persuasion and attitude formation, a central (primarily cognitive) route and a peripheral (primarily affective) route. This dissertation argues that in settings where consumers are confronted with contradictory information, they may switch (or crossover) routes to persuasion depending upon their involvement

1

levels. This crossover provides the consumer with four possible processing sequences (central - central, central - peripheral, peripheral - peripheral, and peripheral - central). The dissertation argues that the resistance of attitudes to counterpersuasion will vary depending upon the particular processing sequence employed by the consumer.

To date, "no research has explicitly tested the ELM prediction that the manner in which an attitude is formed or changed has important implications for the resistance of the attitude," (Petty and Cacioppo 1986, p. 181). This dissertation enables the investigation of attitude resistance to counter persuasion as consumers utilize a particular processing sequence to cope with the introduction of contradictory information. The study will enable the determination of which processing sequence yields attitudes which are more resistant to counterpersuasion.

The second focus of the dissertation is on the relationships that exist between the various types of attitudes formed via the central/peripheral processing routes. For example, attitude toward the advertisement (A_{Ad}) has been suggested to influence the attitude toward the brand (A_B) under both the peripheral and central routes to persuasion (Gardner 1985). The role of attitude toward the company (A_{Co}) has been suggested as being of potential importance (Wilkie, McNeill and Mazis 1984) in the formation of A_B but has not been investigated empirically. A_{Co} becomes a potentially influential construct in particular settings, such as the instance of negative publicity.

Use of the ELM framework in attitude research has encouraged the development of several different attitudinal constructs (e.g., A_{Ad}, A_{Co}, A_B, etc.). As suggested above, there is a lack of consensus about the definitive roles for each of these attitudinal constructs in predicting intentions or behavior under various situations faced by the consumer. The first issue addressed by the dissertation focuses on the basic question of attitude resistance to counterpersuasion. The second dissertation issue deals with the changes in the relationships among the various attitudinal constructs and their ability to predict intentions when those attitudes are formed via the central or peripheral routes posited by the ELM. A model will be developed and tested in this dissertation to help better illuminate the relationship that exists between various attitudes and cognitions in the determination of A_B and behavioral intentions (BI).

The negative publicity setting performs an important role in this dissertation not only for its stimulus role in introducing a contradiction to the consumer, but also for its ability to reveal the potential managerial implications that can result from studying publicity situations. Negative publicity has become fairly common place in the market, and management needs to better understand its implications in consumer information processing and attitude formation. This dissertation provides a forum for investigating these potential impacts.

The negative publicity setting also enables an investigation into the explanatory role of attribution theory in predicting the type of information processing that occurs. Attribution theory will help better explain the processes that the individual consumer undertakes in attempting to resolve the incoming contradictory information.

This chapter will be developed through several primary sections. First, a discussion of the negative publicity setting will be included, followed by a brief review of the ELM. Second, discussion of the outcome variables to be included in the model will be included prior to the development of the conceptual framework and the theoretical model. A brief discussion of contributions of the study will conclude the chapter.

Negative Publicity

Negative publicity provides the setting for testing the conceptual framework to be developed in this dissertation. For the purposes of this study, negative publicity will be defined as:

> Noncompensated dissemination of potentially damaging information by providing disparaging news about a product, service, business unit, or person via print, broadcast media, or word of mouth (Sherrell, Reidenbach, Moore, Wagle, and Spratlin 1983, p. 14).

The impact of negative publicity on attitude formation has traditionally been ignored by consumer researchers (Sherrell et al. 1983). However, negative publicity is of significance to consumer behaviorists not only from a managerial and public policy point of view but also from an information processing perspective. Negative publicity introduces consumers to contradictory information much like a corrective or comparative advertisement.

It is interesting to note that although negative publicity introduces the consumer to contradictory information much like a corrective or comparative advertisement, this form of information transferral is conducted via a nonpaid source. Due to this "third person" sponsorship, this type of information dissemination is subject to little control by the firm, yet is often attributed a higher level of credibility by the receiver. This form of publicity may consist of direct accusations or merely vague innuendos by either a known or unknown source. The claims purported may or may not be verifiable by the press or the firm.

It is this increased credibility potential that often proves most damaging to the firm. Exposure to negative publicity can result in the formation of more strongly held attributions (Mizerski 1982) and the potential impact of negative information is believed to be more enduring than positive information (Cusumano and Richey 1970). It has also been shown that the impact of negative information is considerably greater on attitudes and intentions than

is a similar amount of positive information (Weinberger and Dillon 1980). Therefore, the need to investigate the phenomena of negative publicity is multifold due to its many practical implications and its increasing occurrence in the marketplace (Griffin, Babin and Attaway 1991).

The potential outcomes exhibited from exposure to negative publicity include the obvious decline in sales levels as well as the more subtle and long-term psychological changes that may occur within the consumer. These outcomes may include a lowered opinion of the quality level of other brands in the product line, increased uncertainty regarding the value or safety of the product class, questions regarding management competency, and increased susceptibility to competitors claims (Sherrell et al. 1983).

From a managerial perspective, due to the uncontrollable nature of the dissemination of publicity and its impact on the firm's reputation, it would be helpful to increase our understanding of the potential effects resulting from publicity exposure and be prepared to meet these occurrences in a more proactive manner. This dissertation will provide a forum to investigate the impact of negative publicity and the possible strength of reactions exhibited by the consumer. This will enable the development of a framework to encourage more thoughtful strategic reactions to occurrences of negative publicity in the marketplace.

It is the objective of this dissertation to utilize the negative publicity scenario as an operational tool to enable consumers to generate causal

attributions about the target of the publicity. This approach should enable investigation into the relationships between the outcome variables of A_{Ad}, A_{Co}, brand cognitions, A_B and BI, as well as clarify the many practical implications that may result from an incidence of negative publicity. As a result of this setting, the study should not only highlight the effects of contradictory information on firm and product attitudes, but also provide a better understanding of the ELM and its functioning in scenarios in which contradictory information is introduced to the consumer. The conceptual approach to the study is included as Figure 1.1.

The conceptual framework highlights the proposed implications of each of the explanatory constructs to be investigated in the dissertation. As noted above, a negative publicity scenario provides the setting for the investigation into the consumers information processing approaches, attitude formation and change, and determination of the interrelationships that exist between the attitudinal constructs. The conceptual framework highlights the role of attributions and involvement levels in determining routes to persuasion. These chosen routes then highlight the importance of the traditional attitudinal constructs utilized to predict A_B and BI, as well as the addition of A_{Co} to increase predictive capabilities.

PERSUASIVE ATTEMPT
(Negative Publicity)

RESULTING ATTITUDES

PRIOR ATTITUDE STRUCTURE

ELM

Central

Peripheral

ATTITUDE TOWARDS COMPANY

ATTITUDE TOWARDS BRAND

B_i

ATTRIBUTIONS OF CAUSALITY

INVOLVEMENT LEVELS
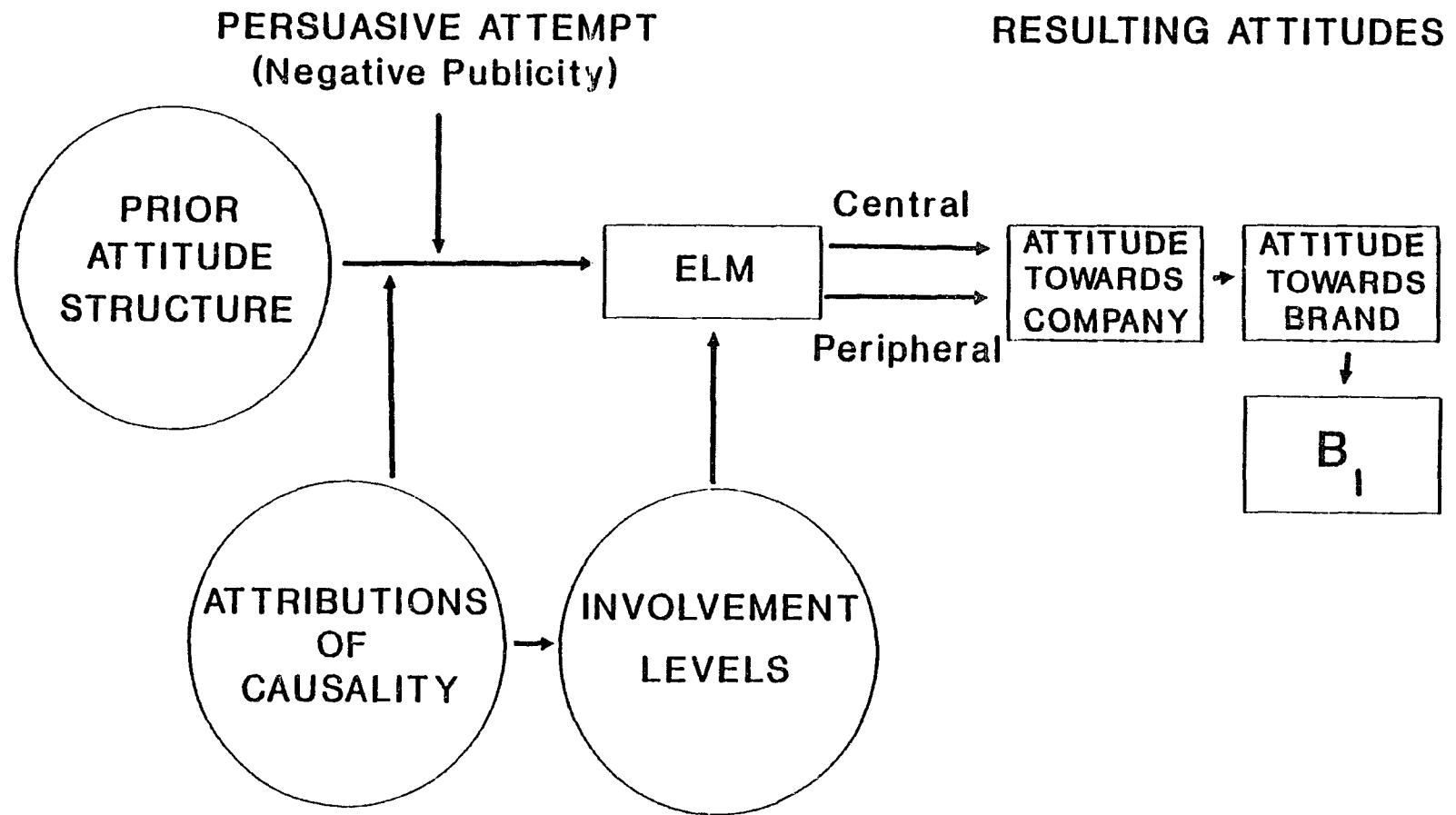
Figure 1.1
Conceptual Approach

Attitudes and Persuasion

In this study, the Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty and Cacioppo 1981) will be used to study attitude change and persuasive communication effectiveness. Unlike previous, and sometimes contradictory research, the ELM attempts to integrate seemingly disparate approaches to attitude formation. The ELM integrates two major schools of thought on attitude change and persuasion: a cognitive processing approach and an affective reaction. Both of these foci will be included in the design of the study.

The ELM approach was chosen as the framework of interest for a number of reasons. First, the model integrates prior works of interest with regards to both the cognitive, multiattribute (Fishbein et al. 1972; 1975) and the affective (Zajonc 1980) approaches to attitude formation. Second, the ELM provides an empirically testable and useful framework for analyzing attitude formation. Finally, unlike previous conceptual frameworks, the model incorporates many personal and individual difference characteristics, such as the need for cognition, involvement, and ability to process. It is proposed that such richness of detail facilitates better understanding of empirical results and helps to minimize confounding (Petty and Cacioppo 1986).

The Elaboration Likelihood Model is based on the premise that when faced with a persuasive communication, individuals will engage in issue relevant thinking (i.e., elaboration) along a continuum ranging from the

absence of issue-relevant processing to elaboration of every argument and complete integration into the person's attitude schema (Petty and Cacioppo 1989). Hence, the ELM shows two relatively distinct routes exist to persuasion: the central route and the peripheral route.

The central route is one in which the true merits and arguments of the information presented are considered by the receiver. As Brock (1981) remarks, "attitude change can be best explained by taking into account the mental processes that ensue once a persuasive stimulus has been impinged upon a thinking recipient" (p. 2). Chaiken (1980) states that "when recipients employ a systematic processing strategy, message characteristics (e.g. amount, comprehensibility, validity of persuasive argumentation) may exert a stronger impact on persuasion than source characteristics (e.g., credibility, likability, etc.)" (p.753). It is postulated by Petty and Cacioppo (1986) that attitude change resulting from cognitive or central processing is more enduring than attitude change resulting from the use of peripheral cues.

The attitudes resulting from use of the central route are also postulated to be more indicative of future behavior (Petty, Cacioppo and Schumann 1983), though empirical support for this position has yet to be established. Dröge (1989) argues that it is the strength of the relationship between the A_B and BI that is the key consequence of central versus peripheral route processing. It is important to understand the underlying reasons for the attitude change and formation, for although the results of an attitude scale

might be identical, the thoughts behind the ratings may be quite different (Petty, Ostrum and Brock 1981), leading to poor predictability of future behaviors. This dissertation should enlighten the processes by which resulting attitudes are formed, thus enabling enhanced predictability.

The other route, the peripheral, holds that persuasion will occur as the result of simple positive or negative cues such as an attractive message source, or as a result of an inference made about the merits of an advocated position based on the context in which the persuasive argument is presented. For example, a client may leave a pleasant business lunch with a favorable impression of the advocated position as a result of the overall encounter experience. Furthermore, an advocated position may be rejected simply because the position is viewed as too extreme. At any rate, attitude change will result without the individual scrutinizing the relevant message arguments. The resulting attitudes from the peripheral route are proposed to be relatively unpredictive of behavior and transitory (Petty and Cacioppo 1986).

The ELM is presented in Figure 1.2. The benefit of the ELM approach is that it may be utilized to understand attitude change in a variety situations (Petty and Cacioppo 1989), which are beyond the typical marketing and advertising issues of concern here. The ELM also allows the measurement of outcome attitudes that are formed by the consumer via a central or peripheral processing route.

PERSUASIVE COMMUNICATION

PERIPHERAL ATTITUDE SHIFT

Attitude is relatively temporary, susceptible, and unpredictive of behavior

MOTIVATED TO PROCESS?

personal relevance: need for cognition: personal responsibility: etc.

Yes

ABILITY TO PROCESS?

distraction: repetition: prior knowledge: message comprehensibility: etc.

Yes

No

No

PERIPHERAL CUE PRESENT?

positive negative affect: attractive expert sources: number of arguments: etc.

Yes

No

NATURE OF COGNITIVE PROCESSING.

(initial attitude, argument quality, etc.)

FAVORABLE THOUGHTS PREDOMINATE	UNFAVORABLE THOUGHTS PREDOMINATE	NEITHER OR NEUTRAL PREDOMINATE

COGNITIVE STRUCTURE CHANGE:

Are new cognitions adopted and stored in memory?: are different responses made salient than previously?

No

RETAIN OR REGAIN INITIAL ATTITUDE

Yes (Favorable) *Yes (Unfavorable)*

CENTRAL POSITIVE ATTITUDE CHANGE	CENTRAL NEGATIVE ATTITUDE CHANGE

Attitude is relatively enduring, resistant, and predictive of behavior.

Source: Petty and Cacioppo (1986)

Figure 1.2
Elaboration Likelihood Model

The outcome variables (attitudes) resulting from ELM's processing routes to be investigated in this study are A_{Ad}, A_{Co}, and A_B. These variables will be utilized to develop the proposed theoretical model to enable accurate prediction of A_B and BI under situations in which peripheral and/or central route processing was undertaken by the consumer. A brief review of these constructs will be presented prior to the introduction of the proposed model.

Attitude Toward the Advertisement

In investigating the phenomena of how causal attributions impact the functioning of the ELM and the resulting attitudes toward the company and the brand, development of the theoretical model would not be complete without the inclusion of the construct of A_{Ad}. A_{Ad} has been defined as:

> A predisposition to respond in a favorable or unfavorable manner to a particular advertising stimulus during a particular exposure occasion (Lutz 1985, p. 46).

It is hypothesized that A_{Ad} mediates the formation of A_B (Mitchell and Olson 1981; Shimp 1981; Mackenzie and Lutz 1989; Miniard, Bhatla and Rose 1990; and Mackenzie and Spreng 1992). Furthermore, a robust relationship between A_{Ad} and A_B has been documented (Gardner 1985; Gresham and Shimp 1985; Lutz, Mackenzie and Belch 1983; Mackenzie, Lutz

and Belch 1986). Debate currently exists in the literature, however, as to whether the construct of A_{Ad} has any impact when central processing is at work in the functioning of the ELM. Dröge (1989) remarks, "A_{Ad} appears to be a peripheral cue that has little or no impact when central processing predominates" (p. 202). This belief is supported by the work of Mackenzie and Lutz (1989) in which they show A_{Ad} to be related to A_B and behavioral intentions (BI) under all conditions except ones corresponding to the central route to persuasion.

Gardner (1985), however, proposed that A_{Ad} should influence A_B under both brand and nonbrand processing sets, where peripheral processing is said to occur under a nonbrand processing set and central processing to occur during a brand processing set. Extending this line of reasoning, Miniard et al. (1990) found support for the argument that A_{Ad} can exhibit a significant causal role regardless of which route to persuasion is operative. Both of these studies support the earlier work of Mitchell and Olson (1981) and Shimp (1981) in which A_{Ad} was shown to be a mediator of advertising's effects on both A_B and BI.

It is the intention of this dissertation to show support for a mediational role of A_{Ad}, regardless of processing route, and extend the knowledge base on attitude formation by discussing the role of A_{Ad} development under conditions of contradictory information sources. It is also of interest to determine if the traditional role of A_{Ad} will remain the same under conditions of a negative

publicity setting. In other words, could source effects, type of media, etc. result in the role of A_{Ad} being minimized or enhanced?

Attitude Toward the Company

Consumers' reaction to the company and its role in the persuasive context are of particular interest to this study due to the role of causal attribution processes at work during the introduction of contradictory information. Mackenzie and Lutz (1989) discuss the role of attitude toward the advertiser (company) in helping predict A_{Ad}. Attitude toward the company is defined as:

> A learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner toward the sponsoring organization (Mackenzie and Lutz 1989, p. 53).

A_{Co} can be viewed as an accumulation of both information and experience acquired overtime and may therefore be less transitory in nature than A_{Ad}. The longitudinal nature of this construct is of particular interest when attempting to ascertain the impact of attribution processes on the model. Operationalization of the attribution processes will include the manipulation of the stability dimension of causal attribution analysis. Under the condition that the consumer has been introduced to repeated instances of dissatisfaction, contradictory information claims, or negative publicity, the

resulting A_{Co} would be hypothesized to exhibit a stronger impact on A_B than in less stable situations. As a result, the relationship between A_{Co} and A_B would be expected to be stronger.

The inclusion of A_{Co} in the proposed model of attitude formation represents an extension of current models such as those proposed by Dröge (1989) and Mackenzie and Lutz (1989) in which the relationship between A_{Ad} and A_B does not encompass a direct role for A_{Co} in the formation of A_B. The proposed model seeks to provide a better understanding of how contradictory information and the resulting attitude formation will include generation of an A_{Co} which will ultimately influence the A_B.

Attitude Toward the Brand

Lutz (1975) remarks that "an individual's attitude toward the brand is some function of his perceptions of the brand's need-satisfying qualities (attributes), together with his assessment of the value or importance of each attribute," (p.49). This is one common formulation of the elements of A_B. While the above approach is well supported in the marketing and psychology literature (Fishbein 1967; Fishbein and Azjen 1972, 1975; Lutz 1975, 1977; Sheppard, Hartwick and Warshaw 1988) as a theoretical and predictive model, this model represents a purely cognitive approach to the formation of

attitudes. In contrast to this, an affective approach to attitude formation has been proposed (i.e., Zajonc 1980). Affect has been defined as:

> A system with motivational, perceptual, cognitive, physiological, motor expression and subjective manifestations (Cacioppo, Losch, Tassinary, and Petty 1984).

Thus, by focusing only on the cognitive consumer, it is possible that researchers may overlook other predominant occurrences in consumer behavior. Zajonc and Markus (1982) remark that the role of affective factors in generation and maintenance of preferences is quite relevant to consumer behavior research.

Fortunately, the utilization of the ELM allows the researcher to investigate both the affective and cognitive responses exhibited by consumers when forming an attitude towards the brand, company or advertisement. Through the use of this framework, the interaction of these processes (affective and cognitive) may be examined. For example, as a result of negative publicity, the consumer may develop a negative affective feeling for a given firm. This negative affect may lead the consumer to transfer these negative feelings directly to the A_B or indirectly by motivating further cognitive processing of brand related information.

The proposed relationships between A_{Co}, A_{Ad} and A_B are included in Figures 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5. These figures diagram the proposed relationships between the attitudinal constructs and their antecedents in the formation of
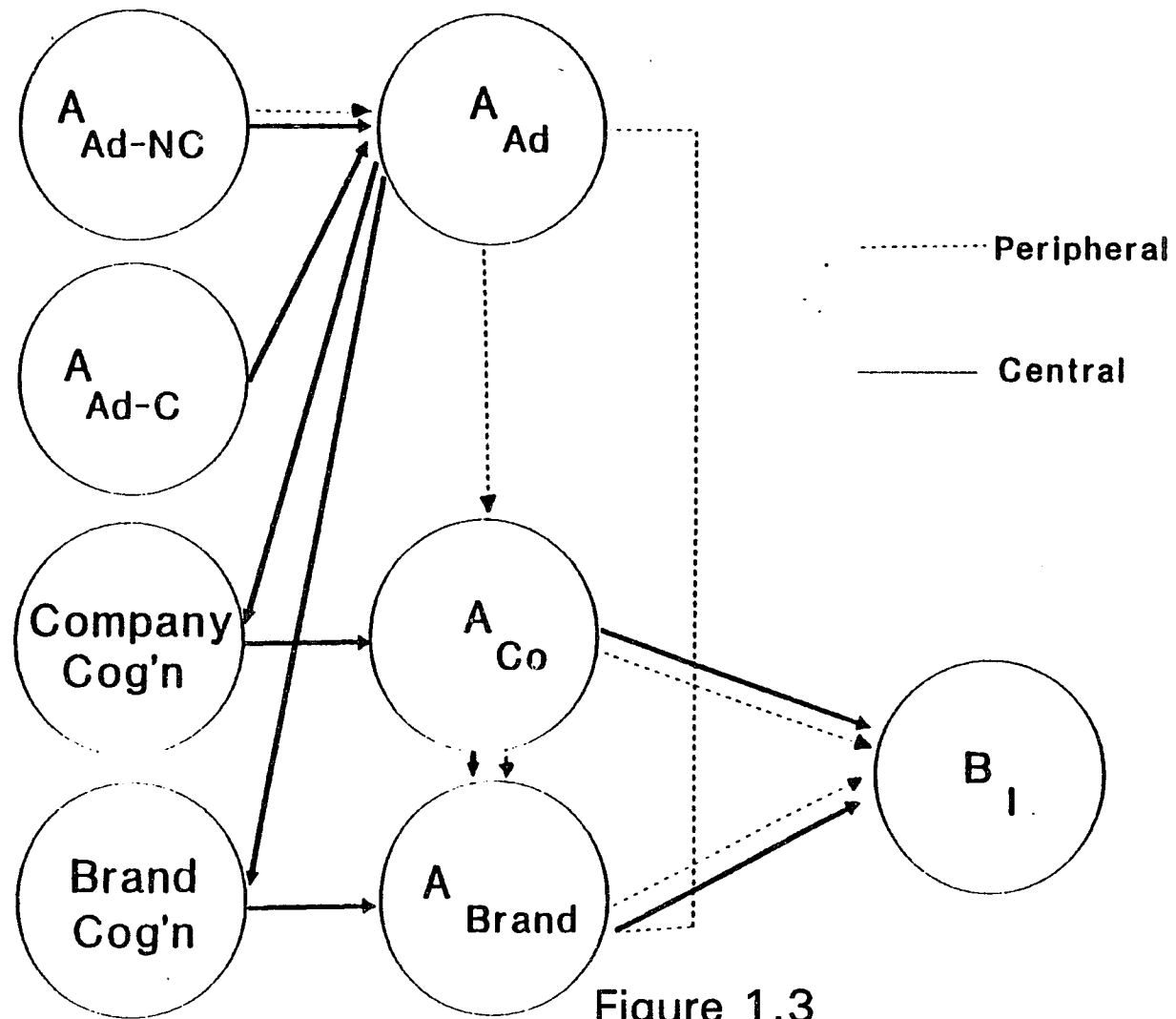
Figure 1.3
Theoretical Model
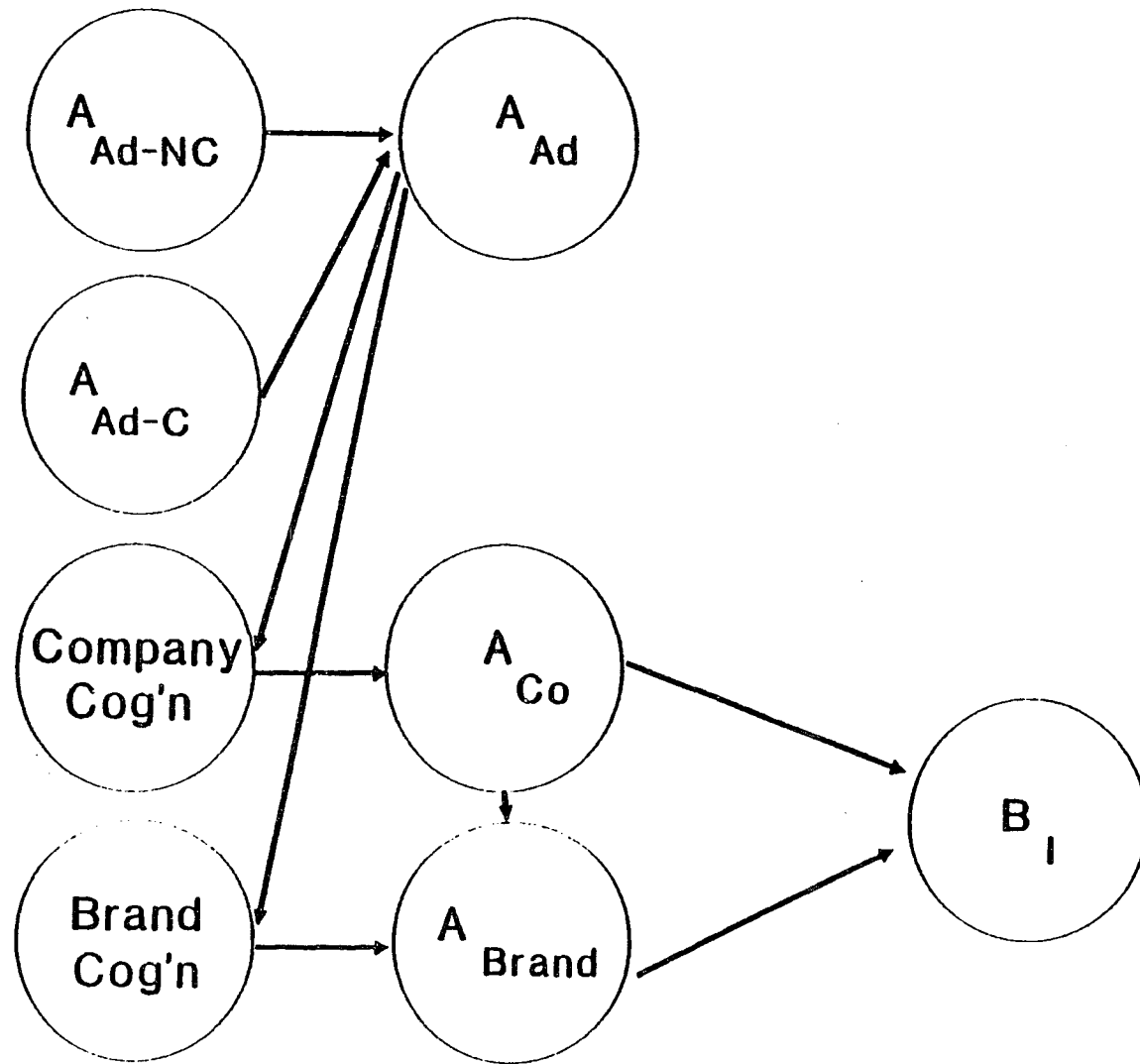
Figure 1.4
Theoretical Model
Central Processing
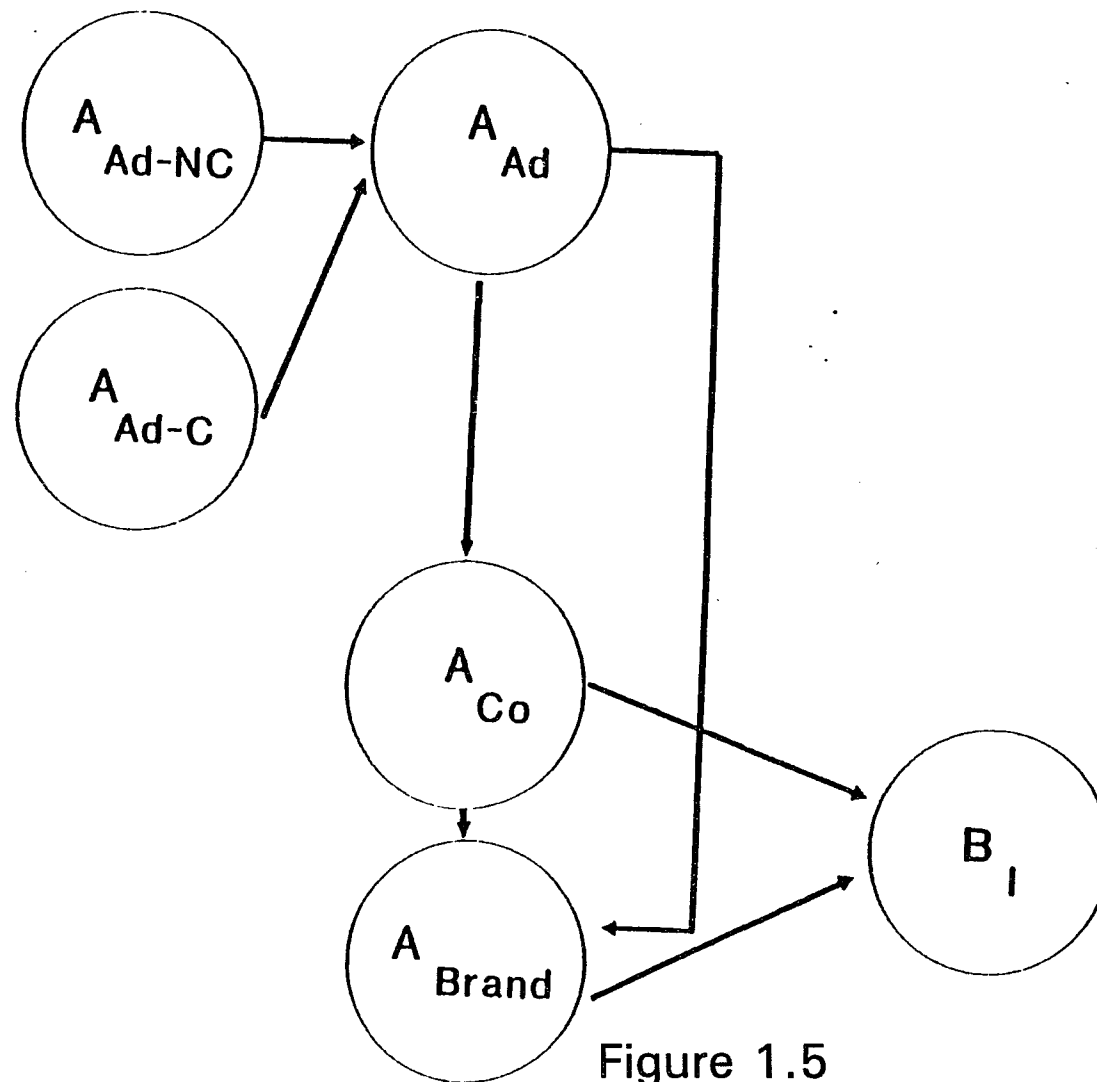
Figure 1.5
Theoretical Model
Peripheral Processing

BI. Note that as opposed to earlier work by Mackenzie and Lutz (1989), A_{Co} is hypothesized to be influenced by A_{Ad} and both are proposed to jointly influence A_B. This relationship is proposed to reflect the integration of attribution theory and its contribution to understanding the impact of contradictory information on the consumer evaluation process. As a result of the attribution process and the impact of the negative publicity item on consumer information processing, A_{Co} is proposed to moderate the relationship between A_{Ad} and A_B.

Methods

As discussed briefly in the introduction, the longitudinal nature of this investigation into resistance and persistence of attitudes formed via the central and peripheral routes will require a two stage experimental design. Stage I will introduce the respondent to a print advertisement for a product in which issue involvement will be utilized to manipulate central vs. peripheral processing routes.

Measurement of resulting attitudes (A_{Ad}, A_{Co}, and A_B), beliefs and intentions will follow Stage I. Respondents will be classified as processing centrally or peripherally based on protocol analysis and recall questions. Two groups will result reflecting those individuals that utilized the peripheral route to processing the advertisement and those who utilized the central route.

Stage II will introduce the consumer to the negative publicity piece. This publicity piece will be designed to encourage the respondent to process information either peripherally or centrally regardless of the prior processing approach. Hence the inclusion of cues that should apriori be either central or peripheral cues should aid in completion of the experimental manipulation. For this study, the use of attribution manipulations and source effects will be utilized as the central and peripheral cues.

The inclusion of the attribution cue should enable the encouragement of central route processing. In the negative publicity setting, the development of an internal/external attribution should facilitate additional information processing. Of particular interest to this study's operationalization is the work of Kelley (1973) in developing his covariation analysis approach to empirically test the workings of attribution theory. In developing the covariation analysis approach, Kelley specified three criteria of validity: consensus, consistency and distinctiveness.

For the purposes of this study, we will seek to operationalize the constructs in a more simplified approach. The consumer will be presented with information designed to encourage the determination of either an external or internal cause for the observed event. Internal causality would reflect the consumer determining that the company was primarily responsible for the resulting negative consequences, whereas external attributions would reflect

a determination by the consumer that the company was a victim of an uncontrollable event or excessive governmental intervention.

The negative publicity setting will enable the formation of causal attributions by the consumer. It is this format that is particularly helpful in developing this study. Prior research has shown that depending on the strength of the publicity message, consumers' attitudes, beliefs and/or purchase intentions may be impacted (Mizerski 1982). One of the objectives of this dissertation is to clarify the relationship between A_{Ad}, A_{Co}, brand cognitions, A_B and BI.

The result of the attribution process and its impact on involvement levels may lead to central processing of peripheral cues relating to the source. This may then be followed by further processing of the message arguments and revised attitude formation to the brand or a transfer of affect from the revised corporate attitude to the brand.

The utilization of the source cue as the peripheral stimulus will be operationalized by using a constant level of expertise to minimize confounding and aid in the simplification of the experimental design. Source expertise will be utilized in this study due to the nature of the attribution processes and the resulting persuasive impacts that will occur with the introduction of the negative publicity piece. Expertise will be operationalized with items such factors as knowledgeability, intelligence, and competency.

Rationale for the Processing Strategies

Although Festinger (1954) notes that it is impossible to determine if attitudes or evaluations are necessarily correct in an absolute sense, the drive towards holding correct attitudes reflects a desire to avoid deleterious behavioral, cognitive and affective consequences. In other words, there is a motivation to avoid poor purchase choices and minimize cognitive dissonance. In attempting to self-validate these attitudes, Holtz and Miller (1985) found that when the individual perceives others to hold similar attitudes, it serves to increase the validity that one can attribute to his own viewpoint.

As a result of the consumer choosing to maintain cognitive consistency, the framework proposed for the study will enable the determination of which types of attitudes (formed via the central or peripheral route) are most resistant to counter-persuasion. With the introduction of the experimental manipulations, the consumer will be faced with one of four possible processing sequences to integrate the incoming information. Each of these processing strategies allows for the development of hypotheses reflecting varying levels of attitude resistance reflecting prior processing route. It is this longitudinal nature of the experiment that enables the investigation of the resistance phenomena.

With the use of a negative publicity stimulus in this study, cognitive consistency implies that consumers' behavior will be influenced on one of

several possible levels. Contradictory information will mean that the consumer should attempt to either refute the message, derogate its source, or alter existing attitudes to maintain cognitive consistency.

As a result, this study will investigate the four possible processing strategies that could be employed by the consumer. These strategies reflect varying levels of involvement, source contributions, and attribution that occur in various situations. The four possible processing sequences are:

(1) Central Route ----- Central Route

(2) Central Route ----- Peripheral Route

(3) Peripheral Route ----- Central Route

(4) Peripheral Route ----- Peripheral Route

In situation one, it is hypothesized that the consumer will discount or discredit the source of the contradiction and maintain existing attitudes. This scenario could be envisioned under conditions in which the consumer was previously highly involved with the issue and formed initial attitudes based on the central route to persuasion. If a negative publicity message argues strongly for company blame, the contradiction would be resolved in the consumer's mind by developing strong counter arguments about the negative publicity message or its execution (Petty and Cacioppo 1989). Previously elaborated brand cognitions should be sufficient to refute the claims of the

contradictory information. Therefore, A_{Co} and A_B should be expected to remain relatively unaffected and the source cues and attribution cues would be processed in a central manner.

In situation two, the consumer would exhibit low motivation to process on a cognitive level. In this situation the consumer was highly involved with the issue and the introduction of a contradictory message may not stimulate further cognitive analysis of the arguments if the source of the publicity piece was not viewed as credible and the attribution was external. No change in involvement levels would be expected and previous cognitions regarding the brand, company and ad would hold attitudes constant across exposures. In situation three, the consumer initially utilized a peripheral route to persuasion. A highly involving negative publicity piece (internal attribution) would result in a path switch between peripheral and central processing reflecting increased advertising message involvement. However, given the initial peripheral route use, it is possible that the appropriate brand cognitions do not exist to counter publicity claims. Therefore, in the case of a negative publicity piece with an expert source, attempts to refute the message will be difficult and A_{Co}, A_{Ad}, and A_B will exhibit the highest level of change from a previously favorable position.

In situation four, the consumer would have previously formed attitudes via the peripheral route and is introduced to a relatively uninvolving publicity piece (external attribution). Persuasion resulting from the negative publicity

should result in attitude changes for A_{Ad}, A_{Co}, and A_B. Although the necessary motivation to cognitively process the contradictory, incoming information would not be present, peripheral cues in the incoming information should play predominant roles. Hence, A_{Ad} will be influenced by the relative recency and strength of the peripheral cues of the publicity piece.

Model Development

The second objective of this dissertation is to focus upon the relationship of the outcome variables A_{Ad}, A_{Co}, and cognitions to A_B and BI. It is proposed in the complete model that the roles of these various components will change when the consumer engages in central versus peripheral processing. These relationships will be investigated through the development of the four processing strategies that will be developed through the experimental manipulations.

To investigate the impact of processing sequence on attitude relationships, the two pure (central - central, peripheral - peripheral) processing groups will be subjected to a path analysis to determine the significance of the resulting attitudes on A_B and BI. It is hoped that investigation of these pure groups should minimize confounding effects associated with the cognitive and affective elements (i.e., confounds arising from the use of central - peripheral or peripheral - central processing sequences).

Involvement has been shown to reflect the type and amount of information that consumers attend to. As noted in Figures 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5 as involvement levels increase (due to the internal attribution formation) the role of A_{Ad} will generally decline. The claim elements of the ad will prove significant in the cognitive development of A_{Ad}, which then will impact the A_{Co} and A_B through the brand and company cognitions. The direct influence of A_{Ad} on A_{Co} and A_B drops out as a result of the moderating influence of involvement cognitions. Conversely, as involvement levels decline, the role of A_{Ad} is direct in its impact on A_{Co} and A_B. Note that the development of A_{Ad} is related primarily to non-claim elements of the ad.

Miniard et al. (1990) found support for decomposing the construct of A_{Ad} into two primary components A_{Ad-c} and A_{Ad-nc}. These two components reflect the consumer distinguishing between the ad's claims and executional (non-claim) elements. This breakdown is beneficial from an executional point of view for the practitioner must be sensitive to the consumer's reactions to both aspects of the advertisement reflecting the amount and nature of the elaboration required during information processing.

Research Issues

This dissertation argues that in the face of inconsistent or contradictory information, the ELM may not adequately predict the level and type of

consumer information processing. In fact, the ELM fails to incorporate the impact of contradictory information and path switching into its predictive format. In order to fully understand the impact of this contradictory information and the resistance of attitudes to counter persuasion, it will be necessary to incorporate attribution theory into a conceptual framework with the ELM to encourage the central processing manipulation and to study the relationship between the outcome variables of A_{Ad}, A_{Co}, A_B and BI. The use of the attribution and source manipulation combination, resulting in central or peripheral processing, should enable the prediction of involvement levels and provide a setting for investigating the role of A_{Co} in predicting modifications in A_B.

The influence of A_{Ad} will also be further illuminated through the expected empirical support for its mediating role in both brand cognition development and A_B. With this information, it will be possible to expand our understanding of the ELM to better predict persuasion outcomes.

Research Questions

Specifically, we seek to answer the following questions:

1.   Are central route attitudes more resistant to change than peripheral route attitudes?

2.   What is the relative influence of A_{Ad}, A_{Co}, and brand cognitions on predicting changes in A_B and BI in a negative publicity setting?

3.   Can attribution-based predictions of audience involvement lead to better predictions of attitude resistance in a negative publicity setting?

Contributions of the Study

The objective of the dissertation is to investigate the resistance to counter persuasion of attitudes formed via the central and peripheral routes and to investigate the relationships that exist among the resulting attitudes. Attributional effects and source characteristics will be used in concert to develop the four processing sequence groups in the negative publicity setting. Theoretical and managerial and public policy contributions are possible as a result of this work.

Theoretical Contributions

As discussed earlier, research support for the Elaboration Likelihood Model is quite extensive (e.g., Petty and Cacioppo 1986; Petty and Cacioppo 1982; Petty and Cacioppo 1979; Petty, Cacioppo and Schumann 1983; Dröge 1989). Although Petty and Cacioppo (1986) have hypothesized about the stability of attitudes, no empirical support has been generated regarding the resistance to counterpersuasion of centrally and peripherally formed attitudes.

The proposed study will allow marketers to expand the knowledge base surrounding the ELM approach and enhance its applicability to expanding areas of interest. Additionally, inclusion of the effects of causal attributions and its impact on the functioning and outcomes of the ELM will be addressed through its use as an experimental manipulation.

Additionally, a lack of inclusion of the construct of A_{Co} exists in models developed to predict A_B and BI. Although its role has been alluded to (Wilkie et al. 1984) there has been no empirical support for its role in the development of A_B and BI. The contributions of attribution theory should help illuminate this constructs usefulness. The strength of the relationships between this construct and A_{Ad}, brand cognitions, A_B and BI will be empirically tested and should lend support to prior studies (Miniard et al. 1990).

Managerial Contributions

The study not only provides an arena for the theoretical extension of the ELM framework, but the model will facilitate practical applications which result in more proactive approaches to negative publicity situations. Increased understanding of the attitude formation process and the strength of the relationship between A_{Co} and A_B will enable management to appreciate the role of subjects' motivation to process information in situations where contradictory information is presented. As a result, advertising campaigns following a negative publicity situation may be developed around strong

messages designed for more cognitive processing reflecting increased involvement levels. Additionally, an appreciation of the role of credible and attractive sources for these arguments may help enable the minimization of the undesirable impacts of negative publicity.

Attribution theory may help illuminate the overall consumer reaction to a negative publicity incident. For example, previous management activity, viewed negatively by the public, may in isolation not prove sufficient for a consumer to generate an internal (corporate blame) explanation for the negative publicity piece. However, over time, this **stable** history of misconduct may lead to these internal attributions of misconduct (Folkes 1988) and result in strongly negative A_{Co} which may ultimately reduce A_B.

The investigation of resistance to change in previously held attitudes is of particular interest from a policy point of view. Individuals forming centrally processed attitudes may be quite resistant to counter persuasion, and regulatory agencies seeking to modify incorrect attitudes may need to develop unique approaches to bringing about the desired changes in attitude structure. Practical guidelines may be established in the general approach to publicity design to enable the maximum effectiveness for governmental agencies or special interest groups to encourage attitude changes. Currently, little guidance is available in helping to determine the most appropriate approach to attitude change.

For example, in the event that the determination is made that certain types of publicity have little impact on A_{Co} and A_B, little strategic reaction is necessitated by the firm. However, those types of negative publicity that require increased attention to the message and evaluation of the source should show significant levels of counter persuasion. From a managerial point of view, development of a practical set of guidelines to handle the various types of publicity situations would prove beneficial.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

As highlighted in Chapter One, the purpose of this dissertation is twofold. First, it examines the resistance of attitudes resulting from both the peripheral and central routes to persuasion (ELM) in the context of contradictory information. Second, the relationship that exists between the various attitudinal structures (across the longitudinal study) will be investigated through the development of a theoretical model. The specific questions to be investigated are:

1. Are central route attitudes more resistant to change than peripheral route attitudes?

2. What is the relative influence of brand cognitions A_{Ad}, and A_{Co} in predicting A_B and BI in a negative publicity setting?

3. Can attribution-based predictions of audience involvement lead to better predictions of attitude resistance in a negative publicity setting?

The general research design requires the development of a two stage longitudinal study. The experimental design will result in the formation of four ELM processing sequence groups (Central - Central, Central - Peripheral, Peripheral - Central, and Peripheral - Peripheral). In Stage I the respondents

will be introduced to an advertisement and resulting beliefs, attitudes and behavioral intentions will be measured. Processing route will also be assessed through a series of recall measures. Stage II will introduce the respondent to a negative publicity piece. The four resulting processing sequence groups will enable the comparison of attitude resistance levels across the various processing route alternatives.

The second focus of the study, the development and testing of a model of attitude change, will help illuminate the relationship among important outcome variables from the ELM processing approach. Specifically, the relationships between brand cognitions, A_{Co} and A_{Ad} to A_B and BI will be investigated. The negative publicity scenario provides a useful setting for the investigation of the explanatory role of attribution theory in attitude development and the inclusion of A_{Co} in the formation of A_B.

Chapter Two will provide a review of the relevant literature, tracing the role of attitudes in persuasion research within the fields of psychology and marketing. This discussion will include a discussion of the debate regarding the role of cognitive and affective factors in attitude formation. Next, a brief review of persuasion and attitude resistance research will be presented, followed by a discussion of the Elaboration Likelihood Model framework for predicting the factors underlying attitude change. Then, a description of the outcomes of persuasion effects (A_B, A_{Co}, and A_{Ad}) will be provided. Outcome

variables of interest include modified beliefs, attitudes and behavioral intentions.

The context of the study, negative publicity will be briefly discussed regarding its benefits as an experimental setting and the growing importance of this phenomena due to its increasingly common occurrence in the marketplace. Episodes of negative publicity introduce the consumer to information that is generally contradictory to previously formed attitudes. Furthermore, through the use of this experimental setting, the model of attitude formation and resistance will be empirically tested.

Negative publicity provides a setting in which the impact of attributional processes on information processing and attitude formation is visible. Attribution theory is concerned with the investigation of blame and responsibility by the individual (Shaver 1985). This reflects the general orientation of negative publicity in which often an accusation of misconduct, product failure or misleading advertising is made and the consumer feels compelled to evaluate the information and draw a causal inference.

Relevant to both of these discussions is the role of source factors in credibility, publicity and persuasive impact. This discussion will conclude the literature review and lead to the development of the hypotheses and the conceptual model. This model is composed in light of the negative publicity setting and the contributions of attribution theory. Based on the review of the literature, research hypotheses will be developed.

The Evolution of Attitude Research

Attitudes have been an area of interest to social psychologists since the early 1920's. Today, the term typically refers to a general orientation toward something (an idea, issue, or individual).

Spencer (1862) first used the term to refer to an individual possessing the "right" attitude. The first influential use of the term, however, was by Darwin (1872), who used attitude to describe a motor concept - a physical expression of an emotion. Although this initial approach to attitude formation by Darwin reflected a motor state, it was the cognitive approach to attitude formation that was destined to take a prominent role in the research literature.

The key transition occurred when Thomas and Znaniecki (1918) defined attitude as "a process of individual consciousness which determines real or possible activity of the individual in the social world" (p.22). This definition represented the first stripping of the concept of its physiological component and introduced the idea of conscious processing.

Allport (1935) remarks that "attitude is probably the most distinctive and indispensable concept in contemporary American Social Psychology," (Allport 1935, p. 2). Attitudes were highlighted in the social psychology literature due primarily to their perceived directing role in determining social behaviors (Brock 1981).

Despite the vast amount of research, publication, books and articles on attitudes, there was little agreement as to what an attitude was, how it was formed or how it might undergo a change (Fishbein and Azjen 1975). Petty and Cacioppo (1986) remark that two factors primarily contributed to this phenomena. First, the very utility of the construct was called into question, for conflicting and troubling results followed attempts to predict behavior from attitudes (Fishbein and Azjen 1972). Second, no clear and simple generalizations could be made from the literature concerning the modification of attitude structures.

During the 1970's significant progress occurred in addressing the empirical relationship between attitudes, behavioral intentions and behaviors (Fishbein and Azjen 1977) and the conditions under which attitudes were predictive of behavior. However, investigations into attitude change continued to be problematic for researchers, however, prompting Sherif (1977, p. 368) to remark that there was a "reigning confusion in the area," despite "a tremendously thriving output" in the area. Furthermore, despite the accumulation of perhaps more data and theory than any other topic in the social sciences, there was very little agreement regarding "if, when, and how the traditional source, message, recipient, and channel variables affected attitude change" (Petty and Cacioppo 1986, p. 125).

Attitudes have remained of concern, however, due to their proposed guiding role as "efficient psychological mechanisms that strongly influence

social behavior," (Kerlinger 1984, p.1). This interest was soon generalized to the fields of business, particularly marketing. Attitudes and their influence on behavior peaked the interest of marketers due to their relevance in predicting and understanding phenomena such as advertising effectiveness and consumer behavior (Bettman 1986; Kassarjian 1982; Strong 1925).

Much of the focus regarding persuasion and attitudes followed divergent paths within the field of marketing research and consumer behavior reflecting the ongoing disagreements brooding within the psychology literature. Different approaches to attitude change and persuasion, as well as definitional issues, have been proposed by many authors. However, the single most prevalent argument stems from a debate about the cognitive versus affective approach to attitude formation and change (e.g., Petty and Cacioppo 1989, 1986, 1981, 1979; Zajonc 1980; Fishbein and Azjen 1972, 1967).

Popular Competing Attitudinal Models

Reflecting the current debate regarding the formation of attitudes by the individual, this section will provide a brief review of the two dominant paradigms in the attitude literature: affective vs. cognitive attitude formation. Following this discussion, a brief introduction to the ELM will be provided to demonstrate its usefulness in overcoming this debate within persuasion research.

<u>The Theory of Reasoned Action</u>

Fishbein and Azjen (1972, 1975 and 1981) pioneered the "Theory of Reasoned Action" (TORA) which develops a cognitive approach to the formation of attitudes. It is considered perhaps to be the most clearly developed exposition of the causal basis of attitude formation (Mitchell and Olson 1981). According to Fishbein and Azjen (1975) attitude is defined as a "person's favorable or unfavorable evaluation of an object" (p. 2). This definition has been extended to include other people, themselves, and issues (Petty and Cacioppo 1986).

The TORA posits that attitudes result from the summed product of a person's evaluation of each belief and the strength with which those beliefs are held (Fishbein and Azjen 1980, 1975). Fishbein's initial conceptualization of the individual's attitude toward the act (A_{act}) is:

$$A_{Act} = \Sigma B_i a_i \tag{1}$$

where "A_{Act} represents an individual's attitude toward (i.e., affect for or against) using a particular brand; B_i is the individual's perceived likelihood (or belief) that using the brand will lead to some consequence i; a_i is the individual's evaluation of the occurrence of that consequence i on a good-bad dimension; and n is the number of salient consequences" (Lutz 1975, p. 49). Equation 1 represents the theoretical relationship between the attitude and its cognitive antecedents. B_i and a_i are cognitions associated with the attitude in question.

Support for the multiattribute, cognitive approach to attitude formation has been empirically documented within the marketing literature. Lutz (1975; 1977) found that attitudes may be influenced by changing an existing B_i element, an existing a_i element or adding a new B_ia_i combination. Mitchell and Olson (1981) found that product attribute beliefs are in fact the major mediator of A_B. Olson, Toy, and Dover (1982) found support for the mediational role of cognitions on advertising content comprehension. Support for the relationship (between b_ie_i and A_B) has been demonstrated in many studies in which correlations greater than .65 were found (Sheppard, Hartwick and Warshaw 1988; Bagozzi 1982; Fishbein, Azjen and Hinkle 1980; Jaccard and Davidson 1972; King 1975; McCarty, Morrison and Mills 1983 and Riddle 1980).

As discussed earlier, primary interest in the construct of attitude results from its believed value in predicting behavior. The extended Fishbein model was introduced to provide a model of behavioral intentions and behavior. Lutz (1977) found the initial support for the extended Fishbein model (1977) in a consumer behavior application in which behavioral intentions were predicted from the weighted summation of A_{Act} and subjective norms (shown as Equation 2 below).

$$B \sim BI = W_1(A_{Act}) + W_2(NB_jMC_j) \quad (2)$$

Equation 2 shows B as a specific behavior; BI as the individual's intention to perform that action (behavioral intention); A_{Act} is the individual's attitude toward performing the behavior; NB_j is the individual's perceptions of the expectations of referent j with respect to the behavior (normative belief); MC_j is the individual's motivation to comply with referent j's expectations; m is the total number of salient referents; and W_1, W_2 are empirically derived weights.

Many other studies have been developed to investigate this extended model with interesting results. These studies range from investigating the relationship between intentions and behavior (Warshaw and Davis 1985, 1984; Bagozzi 1981; to those supporting the relationship between attitudes and subjective norms and intentions (Ryan 1982; Ryan and Bonfield 1980; Warshaw 1980; Bearden and Woodside 1978; Weddle and Bettman 1973). Ryan (1982) posits that the SN component may not be formed independently of A_{Act}.

In general, the opinion of marketing scholars is that the Fishbein model put a coherent structure on a disparate grouping of literature and has provided a starting ground for additional research. In particular, it has been remarked that future work should investigate its predictive abilities in dealing with goal intentions and choice situations (Sheppard et al. 1988).

Affect

As support for the cognitive approach to attitude formation and the development of behavioral intentions continued throughout the psychology and marketing literature, a resurgence of interest in the physiological approach to attitude formation began to resurface. Zajonc (1980) reintroduced the affective approach attitude formation in the psychology literature, and it has generally been recognized that these affective components do in fact play a critical role in the consumption experience (Burke and Edell 1989). Zajonc (1980) hypothesized that cognitive processes may operate either in conjoint or completely independently to affective attitude formation. This is counter to traditional thinking with regards to affect and its sequential role in preference formation.

Historically, it was assumed that affect occurred as a result of cognition or awareness (Pluzinski and Qualls 1986). Wundt (1907) notes that to arouse affect, objects need only to be cognized, if only minimally. This view is supported by Tsal (1985). However, Zajonc (1980) allows for the possibility of affective reactions occurring independently of cognitive processes. Zajonc (1980) allows for a separate systems view to account for the role of affect in attitude formation. This reflects the full circle evolution to earlier approaches to physiological attitude formation such as those posited by Darwin (1872).

Although no universal agreement exists for the definition of affect, it is defined for the purposes of this dissertation as:

> An individualistic, physiological based predisposition to behave either positively or negatively towards an objective or idea (Muncy 1986, p. 227).

It is interesting to note that this definition does not differ greatly from the definition of attitude frequently cited from Fishbein and Azjen (1975). The primary differences reflect: 1) that this definition of affect does not require affect to be learned (though it does not exclude that possibility), and 2) it reflects the physiological basis of affect (Muncy 1986).

Zajonc (1980) describes affective responses as being: 1) basic; 2) inescapable; 3) irrevocable; 4) difficult to verbalize; 5) implicating the self; 6) need not depend on cognition; and 7) may become separated from content. Affect is considered basic for it reflects the "first link in the evolution of complex adaptive functions that eventually differentiated plants from animals," (Zajonc 1980, p.156).

The irrevocability of affective responses is of particular interest to this study as the dissertation hopes to provide empirical support for the resistance of attitudes to persuasion. Zajonc (1980) argues that the attitudes resulting from an affective reaction are quite impervious to persuasion, concluding that counterpersuasive messages would be virtually ineffective. This directly contradicts the philosophy of Petty and Cacioppo (1986; 1989) who argue that attitudes formed via the central route to persuasion should be more

persistent and resistant to counterpersuasion. The peripherally formed, affectively-based attitudes should be more temporal and malleable. This study enables the investigation of the possibility that exposure to a negative publicity message will elicit an affective reaction that may in fact permanently taint company, brand and ad attitudes.

Zajonc (1980) supports the proposition that affective responses occur fairly independently of cognition by reporting the exhibited failures of persuasive communications to achieve substantial attitude change in individuals. Additionally, although the individual may be able to readily access his general impression of a book, advertisement, movie, etc., he may not be able to recall any substantial part of the content of the object. Hence, it may become questionable as to the overall ability of cognitive persuasive appeals to influence attitude structure without the presence of some motivating force such as product or issue involvement or an attempt to develop some causal explanation for a given phenomena.

Tsal (1985) challenged this approach which encompasses the independence of cognitions and affect. This challenge centers around two primary arguments. First, while it is possible that the mere mention of a past event might generate a powerful affective response, this does not necessarily mean that associated cognitions were never present. It is possible that the remaining affect may have simply proven more persistent than the associated cognitions reflecting a separation of the affective response and the supporting

cognitions. Second, the possibility exists that unconscious cognitive processes can mediate the formation of likings. Gordon and Holyoak (1983) suggest that affect resulting from mere exposure does in fact result from unconscious cognitive processes.

In sum, traditionally affective processes have been relegated to a secondary role (Holbrook and Hirschman 1982; Peterson, Hyer and Wilson 1986) in the literature. Recent work, however, has shown that affective processes may in fact be a powerful source of human motivation, information processing and choice (Westbrook 1987; Hoffman 1986; Isen 1984; Zajonc 1980).

In summary, while much of the focus regarding persuasion and attitudes has followed divergent paths within the field of marketing research and consumer behavior, two primary approaches to attitude change and persuasion have been championed by various authors. The most prevalent disagreement stems from the cognitive versus affective approach to attitude formation and change. As discussed above, Fishbein and Azjen (1972, 1975 and 1981) pioneered and championed the "Theory of Reasoned Action" which supports a very cognitive approach to the formation of attitudes.

Alternatively, Zajonc (1980) suggests the more affect-driven approach which has recently been introduced into the marketing literature. This approach hypothesizes that cognitive processes may operate in conjunction or completely independently of affective attitude formation. He describes

attitudes resulting from the affective processes as being physiological responses that are enduring and quite resistant to change.

This dissertation embraces the explanatory capabilities of both of these choices. This will primarily be possible through the selection of the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) as the theoretical foundation of investigation. A discussion of the field of persuasion research and a description of the ELM will highlight the applicability of this approach to the dissertation.

The Persuasion Process and Its Outcomes

The study of persuasion and its effects on individual thinking has long been of interest to psychologists, communication scholars, marketers and advertisers. The goals of persuasive efforts may be to generate favorable feelings toward a political candidate, stimulate the purchase of a particular product or influence an individual's value system. As a result, persuasion efforts may range from subtle peer influences to overt social or religious conversion efforts (Smith 1982). This section will provide a brief overview of persuasion research and the framework used in the dissertation, the ELM. Discussion of the components of the attitudinal model (A_{Ad}, A_{Co}, A_B, cognitions and BI) will follow the discussion of supporting literature on the ELM.

Persuasion

The study of attitude change and persuasion can be traced to the studies of Hovland, Lumsdaine and Sheffield (1949) relating to the impact of U. S. Army training and morale films. Persuasion and attitude change evolved into four general approaches: the learning approach (i.e, classical conditioning, Doob 1947; Zanna, Kiesler and Pilkonis 1970; Gorn 1982); the perceptual approach (Sherif and Cantril 1945, 1946; Asch 1948); the functional approach (Sarnoff 1960; Kelman 1961); and the consistency approach (Heider 1946; Festinger 1957; Osgood and Tannebaum 1955).

As late as the 1950's the average American viewed persuasion as a tool capable of controlling anyone who happened to encounter its efforts. It was during this period that the "hypodermic" needle theory of persuasion was developed. This approach states that as receivers of persuasive communications, we are relatively defenseless against persuasion and that the sender may "inject" a persuasive communication into our system of thinking. Fortunately, as Schramm (1971) notes:

> "The most dramatic change in general communication theory during the last forty years has been the gradual abandonment of the idea of a passive audience, and its replacement by the concept of a highly active, selective audience, manipulating rather than being manipulated by a message," (p. 8).

Since the early 1970's, it has become the predominant view in persuasion research that the recipient of a message is in fact a very active

participant in the persuasive process. This view is quite consistent with the works of attitude formation developed by both Fishbein and Ajzen (1967; 1972) and Zajonc (1980). As stated earlier, Fishbein and Azjen (1972) state that the individual arrives at an attitude toward a particular act after the conscious analysis of the consequences of performing that behavior. Additionally, although Zajonc (1980) does not generally support the cognitive processing of all incoming information, he does not imply that the receiver is at the whim of the sender with regards to the amount and type of information used to arrive at the A_{Act}.

Attitude Resistance Research

This dissertation utilizes one of the prevalent views of persuasion currently accepted within the field of psychology, the ELM. This model enables the integration of cognitive and affective and provides for two distinct routes to persuasion: the central (cognitive) and peripheral (affective). Through the integration of these two approaches, it is possible to investigate a number of potential outcome variables and their impact on one another in a negative publicity scenario.

Under the ELM, the central route provides for the resulting attitudinal structure to develop as a result of brand and company related cognitions, A_{Ad}, and A_{Co}. The peripheral route enables the investigation of attitude formation without the development of many brand-related cognitions. The model

developed in the dissertation will include all of these attitudinal components, as well as relating these attitudinal components to BI.

Petty and Cacioppo (1986) report that the final consequences associated with choosing a particular route to persuasion are resistance to counterpersuasion and attitudinal persistence. Both of these concepts are quite distinct, persistence referring to the temporal durability of an attitude. Resistance refers to the ineffectiveness of counterpersuasive efforts. Hence, an attitude could be quite resistant to change, yet be short term in duration.

Attitudes formed via the central route are assumed to be both resistant and persistent. Conversely, peripherally formed attitudes would be assumed to be both transient and susceptible to counterpersuasion. The reasoning is that the development of counterarguments to support the initial attitudes should be more possible under conditions of central route processing.

To date, "no research has explicitly tested the ELM prediction that the manner in which an attitude is formed or changed has important implications for the resistance of the attitude," (Petty and Cacioppo 1986, p. 181). This dissertation will provide a setting for investigating this proposition.

The Elaboration Likelihood Model

The Elaboration Likelihood Model is based on the premise that when faced with a persuasive communication, individuals will engage in issue relevant thinking (elaboration), along a continuum ranging from the use of no

thought about issue relevant information presented to complete elaboration of every argument and integration of these elaborations into the person's attitude schema (Petty and Cacioppo 1989). Although it has been shown that people are motivated to hold correct attitudes (Festinger 1957), the amount and nature of issue-relevant elaboration in which they are willing or able to engage to evaluate a message varies with individual and situational factors.

It is the continuum of elaboration that most clearly illustrates the integration of the prior works in the area of attitude change and persuasion. It is this theoretical and practical flexibility that led to the selection of the ELM as the framework for research.

Relevant ELM Components

At the lower end of the processing continuum, such theories as classical conditioning (Gorn 1982) and exposure (Zajonc 1980) are relevant in which the individual exhibits virtually no ability or desire to consider issue relevant thinking. However, attitudes may still be modified or altered through the association of a strong positive or negative cue and the transferral of its associated affect to the object (Petty and Cacioppo 1989). Zajonc (1980) has even shown support for the notion that mere subliminal exposure can result in a more positive attitude towards a given object.

At the upper end of the processing continuum is the inclusion and integration of all issue relevant information. This occurs when both the ability and motivation for elaboration are present in the individual. As above, there are other competing theories that may be considered as part of this alternative such as the TORA (Fishbein and Azjen 1975, 1980) and cognitive response theory (Greenwald 1968; Petty, Ostrum and Brock 1981).

Hence, the ELM postulates that two relatively distinct routes exist to persuasion: the central route and the peripheral route. These routes reflect the influence of several possible situational and individual difference variables. The individual difference variables of concern include the need for cognition and the ability to process information. Situational factors of interest to this dissertation include distraction and involvement.

Also, given the negative publicity setting of the study, one peripheral cue of relevance to the dissertation is that of source credibility. For example, if the consumer chooses to develop a positive attitude toward the advocated position solely due to the expertise of the source, the peripheral route has been utilized and no conscious consideration of the issues has occurred. This dissertation will enable the assessment of peripheral cues such as source factors on the formation of attitudes. Furthermore, the resistance of peripherally formed attitudes may be investigated.

Cognitive Consistency

Maintaining cognitive consistency is necessary for the individual to minimize deleterious cognitive, affective and behavioral consequences (Petty et al. 1986). In marketers' terms, these consequences can include cognitive dissonance, poor product performance after selection, and social pressures to conform. If the consumer believes that the product to be purchased is a "good" choice when in actuality it is a "poor choice," the consequences for the consumer may not only be increased dissonance, but also financial and personal consequences.

This dissertation proposes to introduce the respondent to information that is contradictory to previously held beliefs and attitudes. Through the introduction of this negative publicity piece, the respondent is then faced with the situation in which the contradiction must somehow be resolved and integrated into the existing belief structure. This process of integration or refutation will enable the determination of attitude resistance levels across processing groups. Therefore, the importance to consumers of maintaining cognitive consistency is a primary assumption underlying the operation of the model.

Festinger (1954) first investigated the phenomena of individuals striving to maintain correct attitudes and noted that part of the process includes gathering similar opinions from peers to strengthen the resolve the individual has in the attitude. The dissertation's approach of presenting a contradiction

in incoming information will force individuals to examine the type of information, its credibility and may modify their motivation to seek additional information to integrate the incoming data. Not only will this integration and examination of the information enable the determination of resistance levels across processing groups, but it will also enable the determination of the relevant influence of each of the attitudinal components such as A_{Ad} and A_{Co} on the overall resulting A_B and BI.

The next section will develop support for the various aspects of the ELM that are subject to investigation in this dissertation or are necessary for inclusion to support the development of the research questions and hypotheses. It will be presented sequentially covering the major theoretical areas covered under the basic propositions of the ELM. These propositions are included as Table 2.1.

Relevant Individual Difference Constructs

The need for cognition as a relevant dispositional trait has been supported in psychology as early as Maslow (1943). Initial empirical support, however, was formulated by Cohen, Stotland and Wolfe (1955), who described the need for cognition as "a need to structure relevant situations into meaningful, integrated ways. It is a need to understand and make reasonable the experiential world" (p. 291). In other words, individuals that score highly on a need for cognition scale "find it fun to think".

Early research on the topic often provided disappointing results attributed to weak experimental procedures. Cacioppo and Petty (1982) studied the need for cognition and developed a useful scale for distinguishing those individuals who dispositionally tend to engage in and enjoy more effortful analytic activity. The need for cognition has been found to be a contributory as opposed to a necessary or sufficient cause for high elaboration in the ELM framework (Cacioppo, Petty and Morris 1983).

Table 2.1
Elaboration Likelihood Model - Postulates

Postulate One:	People are motivated to hold correct attitudes.
Postulate Two:	Although people want to hold correct attitudes, the amount and nature of issue-relevant elaboration in which they are willing or able to engage to evaluate a message vary with individual and situational factors.
Postulate Three:	Variables can affect the amount and direction of attitude change by: a) serving as persuasive arguments; b) serving as peripheral cues, and/or; c) affecting the extent or direction of issue and argument elaboration.
Postulate Four:	Affecting motivation and/or ability to process a message in a relatively objective manner can do so by either enhancing or reducing argument scrutiny.
Postulate Five:	As motivation and/or ability to process arguments is decreased, peripheral cues become relatively more important determinants of persuasion. Conversely, as argument scrutiny is increased, peripheral cues become relatively less important determinants of persuasion.
Postulate Six:	Attitude changes that result mostly from processing issue relevant arguments (central route) will show greater temporal persistence, greater prediction of behavior, and greater resistance to counterpersuasion than attitude changes that result from mostly peripheral cues.
Postulate Seven:	Variables affecting message processing in a relatively biased manner can produce either positive (favorable) or negative (unfavorable) motivational and/or ability bias to the issue-relevant thoughts attempted.

Adapted from: Petty, Richard E. and John T. Cacioppo (1986) "The Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion," in Advances in Experimental Psychology.

Cacioppo, Petty and Morris (1983) found in a persuasion context that argument quality had a greater impact on message evaluations and source impressions for those individuals measuring high on the need for cognition measure scales, compared to those subjects with lower Ncog scores. Furthermore, individuals determined to have higher need for cognition exhibited greater cognitive effort and recalled more message arguments irrespective of the argument quality. The need for cognition will be measured in the dissertation study to control for individual differences in this construct.

Relevant Situational Variables

Many potential effects can impact the route to persuasion utilized by the individual. Situational variables that can impact the route to persuasion can include levels of distraction, repetition and involvement (under certain conditions).

Distraction has been associated with a decreased ability to attend to the message at hand. Keating and Brock (1974) found that the number of counterarguments the respondent was capable of recalling decreased as the level of distraction increased. Petty et al. (1976) report that distraction is associated with increased agreement when weak arguments are present and decreased levels of agreement with increased message strength. The general consensus in the literature is that distraction interrupts the thoughts that would normally be elicited by the message (Petty et al. 1986). However,

under conditions of low motivation and/or low ability to process the message, distraction generally has little impact.

Involvement is the primary individual difference construct that will be used in this study to initially encourage central or peripheral processing. Involvement is of primary interest to this study due to the impact of causal attributions on involvement, resulting in a crossover effect (for example, processing paths of peripheral changing to central paths over time).

Involvement has been found to both facilitate and inhibit persuasiveness, depending on the quality of the message at hand (Chaiken 1980). Hence, involvement is important in this study to understand how the consumer, when faced with contradictory information, may modify his originally chosen path to persuasion.

For the purposes of this dissertation involvement will be defined as referring to the personal relevance of a persuasive message to the receiver (Zaichowsky 1985). Petty and Cacioppo (1979) cited two important dimensions to involvement that were of specific interest in a persuasive context: issue and response involvement.

Issue involvement is referred to as the situation in which the "recipient is compelled to see the importance of the message issue's resolution to valued and current goals," (p. 270). Cacioppo and Petty (1982) found that an important determinant of whether the central route or the peripheral route is

utilized reflects how extensively the recipient is involved with the issue under consideration.

Response involvement is of concern when recipient's attitudinal response will in some way be presented for public or peer scrutiny. In other words, when the respondent may be expected to publicly discuss or defend their opinions, response involvement is high. Response involvement, therefore, may be instrumental in obtaining a valued outcome such as social approval (Leippe and Elkin 1987).

Both issue and response involvement have been associated with a predisposition to select the central route to processing (Chaiken 1980), and significant differences do exist in the persuasion effects. Previous research, however, highlights several effect differences that exist between response and issue involved individuals. For example, high response involved individuals appear to be relatively less sensitive to message quality than highly issue involved individuals (Leippe and Elkin 1987). Response involved individuals also tend to be relatively insensitive to peripheral cues such as source expertise (Johnson and Scileppi 1969) and source attractiveness (Chaiken 1980). However, when both types of involvement are at work the private and public motives of consumers must reach a compromise. Hence, under these conditions, some sensitivity to the message quality is present (Petty and Cacioppo 1986). It is possible that the response involved individual does not actually engage central route elaborate processing. Instead this individual

engages in a maintenance-type processing, picking up only those pieces of information consistent with the mainstream viewpoint and consistent with the private self (Leippe and Elkin 1987).

Response involvement will not be manipulated in this study. Response involvement reflects a situation in which the issue is not particularly important to the individual, but adopting a position that will maximize the immediate situational rewards is of primary importance (Petty and Cacioppo 1979). Hence, the reasons for focusing on the influence of issue involvement as opposed to response involvement in this study are threefold: 1) the scenario utilized for this study does not require the public defense of consumer based attitudes; 2) the relatively greater significance of issue involvement in many attitude formation and change situations justifi᷄ its inclusion in the study as opposed to response involvement and; 3) the study setting of the impact of negative publicity does not require the respondent to adopt the situationally correct response, but rather weigh the long term impact of holding the correct attitude to the individual.

Issue involvement reflects whether or not the issue has significant consequences on the individual respondent's life (Apsler and Sears 1968). Early research found that with increasing levels of involvement, the individual may in fact have increased resistance to the persuasive communication (Sherif and Hovland 1961). This dissertation will be consistent with the arguments that higher proposed resistance levels are present for centrally formed

attitudes. Centrally formed attitudes should be reflective of higher involved individuals.

The ELM approach suggests that due to an individual's desire to hold correct attitudes, introduction to contradictory information may lead to increased elaboration by the individua!. However, Petty and Cacioppo (1986) note that in the real world individuals may have become more practiced at defending their beliefs and be less susceptible to counterpersuasive appeals or there may simply be a problem motivating consumers to address a thoroughly evaluated situation (in their minds) through this counterattitudinal process. Issue involved individuals have also been found to express more extreme attitudes that are highly correlated with the quality of the message (Leippe and Elkin 1987).

Since the study setting concerns the use of advertising messages as the experimental stimuli, there are some additional involvement dimensions that should be considered in the context of consumers' attitudinal reaction to advertising. Baker and Lutz (1987) have distinguished two dimensions of involvement with regards to an advertising stimulus: advertising message involvement (AMI) and advertising execution involvement (AEI). While the former is quite similar to the context of issue involvement as discussed by Petty and Cacioppo (1986), the latter reflects the recipient's cognitive effort devoted to the noncontent aspects of the advertisement. These noncontent issues include source and executional characteristics. Source issues are of

primary interest in the investigation of a negative publicity scenario, since the credibility of the message source is enhanced due to the message's nonpaid nature.

Summary

As discussed through this review of the ELM, there are many areas available to the researcher for investigation. This study specifically investigates differences in resistance to counterpersuasion of individuals that process information either primarily cognitively or peripherally. The ELM provides a useful framework for this investigation by enabling the construction of four processing sequences that define the available elaboration alternatives when the individual is confronted with contradictory information. These four processing routes (Central-Central; Central-Peripheral; Peripheral-Central; and Peripheral-Peripheral) provide the framework for the study's focus on resistance to counter persuasion.

In investigating this resistance to counterpersuasion, the study will focus on the impact of: 1) the negative publicity setting and the resulting subject attributions, 2) the level of message processing involvement engendered in the subjects, and 3) the influence of the perceived expertise of the source of the negative publicity message. These various influences will be examined for their role in changing the attitudinal outcome variables.

Hence, the study design will result in four processing groups and should highlight the impact of initially cognitive versus affective processing of information in the formation of attitudes and the resulting resistance of these attitudes to counterpersuasive material. The outcomes of the ELM include several attitudinal and behavioral components of interest. The attitudinal components are cognitions relating to the company and brand, A_{Co}, A_{Ad}, and A_B (refer to Figures 1.3-1.5). Each of these components will be succinctly reviewed through the relevant literature in the sections that follow.

Relevant Attitudinal Outcomes

<u>Attitude Toward the Company (A_{Co})</u>

As discussed in Chapter 1, the concept of A_{Co} has been often overlooked in the development of attitudinal models. Although the construct seems logical for inclusion in brand attitude models, it is often assumed to be of minimal importance (Wilkie et al. 1983).

The importance of the A_{Co} in this study reflects the causal attributions that may occur during exposure to a negative publicity message. A negative publicity message involves unsponsored dissemination of potentially damaging information about a firm. For the purposes of the dissertation, A_{Co} will be defined as:

A learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner toward the sponsoring organization (Mackenzie and Lutz 1989, p. 50).

Much of the literature investigating the construct of A_{Co} lies in the areas of corrective and comparative advertising. These areas closely parallel the focus of this study, the effects of negative publicity on the consumers' attitude structure.

In fact, the potential ramifications of negative publicity on A_{Co} may be more severe due to the unsponsored and **credible** nature of the message. In addition, negative publicity messages are not subject to the same governmental guidelines that influence corrective and comparative advertisements. Such guidelines limit the strength and scope of corrective and comparative advertising messages (Wilkie et al. 1983).

Corrective advertising seeks to correct misimpressions result from a misleading or deceptive advertisement (Wilkie et al. 1984). The goal is not to assess punitive damages on the firm. It is logical in such settings to consider the role of A_{Co} in these corrective attempts.

Early studies in corrective advertising generally reviewed consumers' reactions to corrective ads using experimental designs. The impact of message strength, increased frequency, and message source (FTC vs. company) were all found to produce reduced consumer brand perceptions (Dyer and Kuehl 1974; Hunt 1973). Kassarjian, Carlson and Rosin (1975) found that exposures to corrections lead to lowered brand perceptions from

the original opinions held. Dyer et al. (1974) also noted lower intentions to purchase the brand as a result of the corrective exposure.

Hence, the necessity to investigate the phenomena of corporate attitudes and their impact on A_B is obvious with regards to corrective advertisements alone. However, in light of the unregulated and potentially damaging effects of negative publicity scenarios, the need for determining the causal role of A_{Co} in forming brand attitudes is even more apparent.

In summary, the early research surrounding the impact of corrective advertising research determined two major points. First, the corrective ad may have the potential to shift consumers' brand perceptions, and these changes could impact the firm's overall company image, injuring market share and sales. Second, the existence of the correction itself produced more change in consumer attitudes and perceptions than changes in message characteristics.

There has been some disagreement among researchers concerning the role of A_{Co} in bringing about changes in the relevant brand or product attitudes. Wilkie et al. (1984) suggest that the impact of the contradictory information (in the form of the corrective advertisement) appears to have little if any impact on the company image or on the image of the general product category. However, Mackenzie and Lutz (1989) found support for A_{Co} in predicting A_{Ad}. This dissertation provides an opportunity to provide evidence that will help resolve this issue.

Wilkie et al. (1984) highlight the importance publicity plays in the outcome of the many cases that come under FTC scrutiny. In fact Bernhardt, Kinnear, Mazis and Reece (1981) remark in their analysis of the STP Order that publicity - through television and newspaper accounts of the settlement - likely produced greater effects than any of the corrective ads. This highlights the importance of examining this phenomena in detail and determining in this unregulated format the impact contradictory information does have on the consumers' company attitudes.

In the area of comparative advertising, research has examined the impact of the format on information processing and the relationship between A_{Ad} and A_B. Dröge (1989) remarks that the comparative ad format encourages a more careful and thoughtful consideration of the true merits of the information presented (i.e. central route persuasion), possibly reflecting higher levels of consumer involvement due to the contradictory format. This enhanced elaboration, however, often takes the form of negative elaboration involving source derogation and counterarguments reflecting a general distaste for the format itself (Wilson and Muderrisoglu 1980). However, no discussion of the impact of this negative elaboration on the exhibited A_{Co} has been discussed in the literature to date.

In other words, the consumer is faced with a contradictory piece of information and levels of involvement then become elevated (Chaiken and

Stangor 1987), encouraging learning with regards to the information presented, but not necessarily resulting in better exhibited A_{Ad}.

In addition, attitudinal models incorporating advertising stimuli have been proposed by Dröge (1989) and Mackenzie and Lutz (1989). These models reflect the influence of A_{Ad} on A_B. However, the role that A_{Co} may play in the formation of A_B has not been fully discussed. Just as Mitchell and Olson (1981) found support for the mediational role of A_{Ad} in the formation of A_B, this dissertation hopes to extend the knowledge base by providing support for the mediational role of A_{Co} in the formation of A_B.

Limited investigation into the role of attitude toward the advertiser has been suggested by Mackenzie and Lutz (1989). This view of attitude toward the advertiser proposes the construct as an antecedent condition to the formation of A_{Ad} only during 'central' type processing. This dissertation hopes to extend this logic and show a role for A_{Co} as a direct antecedent to the formation of A_B in both central and peripheral processing. Furthermore, the dissertation hopes to show that changes in A_{Co} that result from the negative publicity scenario may not result in similar changes in magnitude for A_{Ad}.

Summary

Prior attitudinal models proposed by Dröge (1989) and Mackenzie and Lutz (1989) do not fully encompass the role of A_{Co} in the determination of A_B. The importance of construct should be enlightened through the selection of

a negative publicity setting. The experiment should highlight the role of on the consumers' attitude toward the firm and it's proposed influence on the resulting A_B. This dissertation proposes to test this proposition and provide support for its explanatory role in overall attitude formation.

Attitude Toward the Advertisement

A_{Ad} has been defined as:

A predisposition to respond in a favorable or unfavorable manner to a particular advertising stimulus during a particular exposure occasion (Lutz 1985, p.46).

The importance of this construct in the formation of the consumers' A_B has been well documented in the marketing literature. It has been hypothesized that A_{Ad} mediates the influence of brand cognitions in the formation of A_B (Mitchell and Olson 1981; Shimp 1981; Mackenzie and Lutz 1989; Miniard et al. 1990; and Mackenzie and Spreng 1992). There has been significant support shown for the robustness of the relationship between the two constructs A_{Ad} and A_B (Shimp and Yokum 1982; Gardner 1985; Gresham and Shimp 1985; Lutz et al. 1983; Mackenzie et al. 1986).

Initially, it was postulated that the A_B was affected by A_{Ad} through its impact on brand-related beliefs (Mitchell and Olson 1981). Gardner (1985) argued that not only may this relationship exist in certain situations, but that A_B may in fact be directly impacted by the consumers' A_{Ad}. The importance

of this relationship reflects the role that A_{Ad} may have in representing the affective component of A_B (Gardner 1985).

Interest in the role of emotions evoked by an advertisement is fairly new (Chapman and Edell 1989), yet its roots go back to the late 1970's in the work of Holbrook (1978). Holbrook (1978) investigated the role of A_{Ad} on the belief structure of the individual. Gardner (1985) investigated the role of A_{Ad} under varying levels of brand set conditions. Support was generated for the greater role of A_{Ad} under conditions of brand set conditions as opposed to nonbrand set conditions. Conversely, Phelps and Thorson (1991) have reported that A_{Ad} significantly influences A_B regardless of level of prior familiarity with the brand.

Although the explanatory value of A_{Ad} has been well documented (Batra and Ray 1986; Cacioppo and Petty 1985; Mitchell and Olson 1981), there exists some debate within the literature as to the true dimensionality of this construct. The conceptual definition shown above is consistent with Fishbein and Azjen's (1975) definition of attitude and views A_{Ad} as being comprised solely of an affective response. However, additional work in the area has extended the operationalization and definition of A_{Ad} to include a cognitive component (Shimp 1981; Gresham and Shimp 1985; Miniard et al. 1990).

Work by Mackenzie and Lutz (1989) utilizes cognitive, evaluative, and affective responses as antecedents to the general attitudinal response A_{Ad}. It has been shown that ad- related cognitive and affective components are

important supplements to the more commonly used brand related cognitive and attitudinal measures (Mackenzie et al. 1986). Hence, a dual mediational approach has been suggested in which the role of A_{Ad} includes a direct impact upon A_B and an indirect effect on A_B through cognitions (Mackenzie et al. 1986). This work is consistent with the types of processing that occur in the alternative processing strategies in the ELM. The model is included as Figure 2.1.

CENTRAL PROCESSING | PERIPHERAL PROCESSING
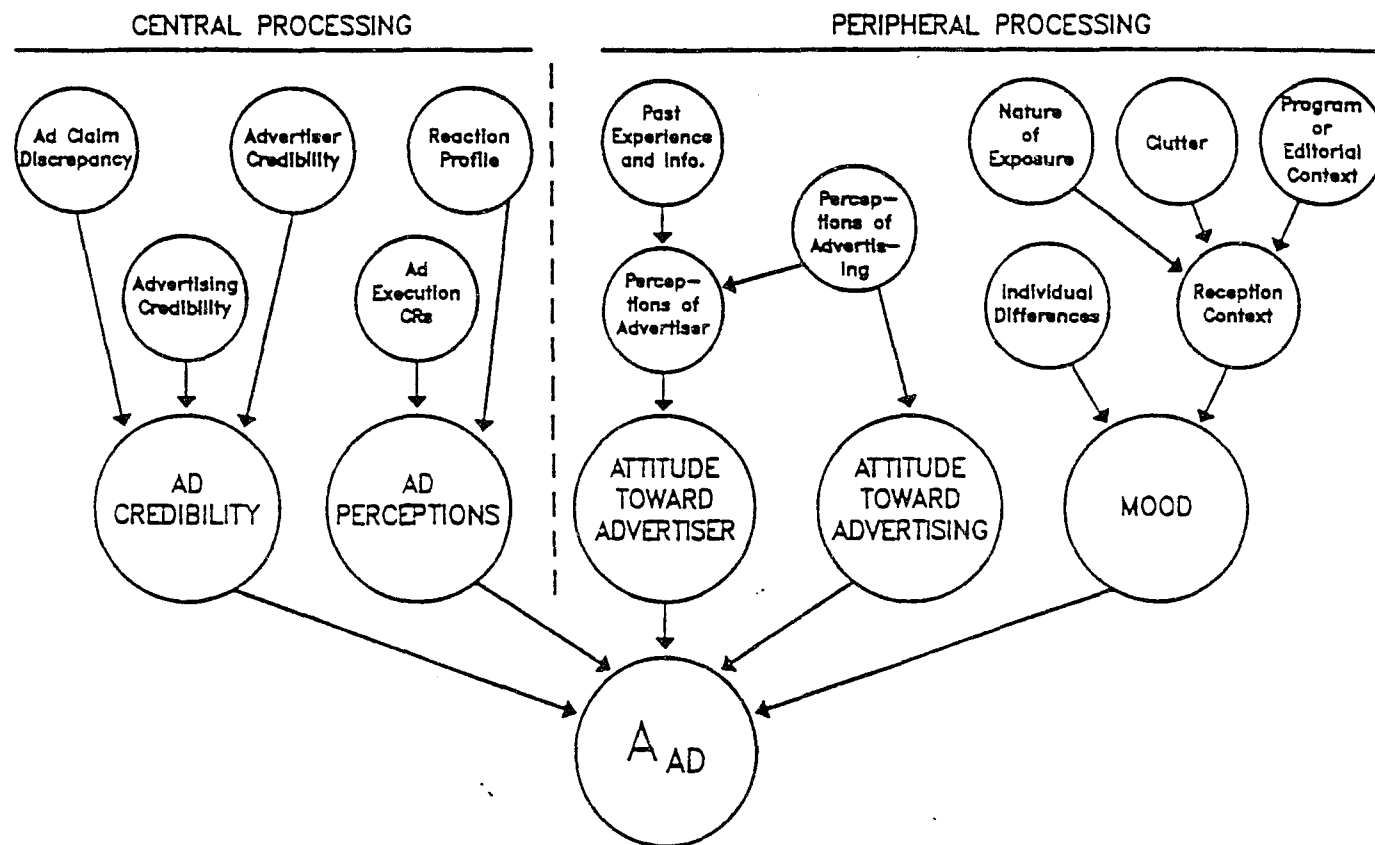
*From Lutz, MacKenzie, and Belch (1983). Used by permission.

Figure 2.1
Proposed Antecedents of A_{Ad}

Some disagreement exists as to whether the construct of A_{Ad} has any impact on the functioning of central route processing in the ELM. Dröge (1989) remarks, "A_{Ad} appears to be a peripheral cue that has little impact when central processing predominates" (p. 202). This approach is perpetuated in the work of Mackenzie and Lutz (1989) in which they show A_{Ad} to be related to A_B and behavioral intentions under all conditions except those corresponding to the central route to persuasion.

However, Park and Young (1986) found that A_{Ad} operates as a mediator of persuasion cues in advertisements under conditions of high cognitive involvement. Miniard et al. (1990) found support for decomposing the construct of A_{Ad} into two primary components A_{Ad-c} and A_{Ad-nc}. These two components reflect a distinction between the ad's claims and executional (non-claim) elements. This breakdown is beneficial from a practical point of view for the manager must be sensitive to the consumer's reactions to both aspects of the advertisement.

Of interest to this study is whether peripheral cues such as source credibility (which are A_{Ad-nc} elements), will become subject to more elaborative processing under the central route to persuasion in a negative publicity setting. Petty, Kasmer, Haugtvedt and Cacioppo (1987) remark that a source factor may perform one of several roles in the functioning of the ELM: 1) peripheral cue, 2) persuasive argument, or 3) a determinant of the extent or direction of processing. These roles may vary as a result of situational

factors. The dissertation will provide a setting in which source effects may function as a persuasive argument and impact the extent of central route processing.

Summary

The role of A_{Ad} has been supported in the marketing literature for its impact on A_B. However, clarification is needed with regards to the claim versus non-claim elements of advertisements that help to generate A_{Ad}. Furthermore, the impact of A_{Co} on A_B and A_{Ad} has not been clarified. This dissertation will provide a means through the use of the negative publicity scenario and the attribution manipulation to clarify this relationship.

Attitude Toward the Brand

According to most multiattribute models of attitude formation, A_B is the primary predictor of BI. The individual's A_B is proposed to be a function of the "brand's need satisfying qualities (attributes) together with his assessment of the importance of each attribute" (Lutz 1975, p.49). This dissertation will study the primary antecedents to the formation of A_B and the resulting BI in a negative publicity setting.

A_B has been a construct of interest to researchers for many years due to its believed predictive ability regarding purchase intentions. The primary research regarding the determinants of A_B and BI trace back to the work of

Fishbein and Azjen (1967; 1972) and Lutz (1975; 1977). As discussed earlier, the TORA posits that the A_B is a function of the consumers' perceptions of the brands need satisfying attributes together with the assessment of the importance of each attribute (Lutz 1975). Therefore, the consumers' overall brand attitude reflects a summary score of the belief components and their importance.

The determinants of A_B have been studied in some detail by many authors (Burke and Edell 1989; Park and Young 1985; Gardner 1985; Lutz, Mackenzie and Belch 1983; Mackenzie and Lutz 1983; Monroe and Hutchinson 1983; Shimp and Yokum 1982; Mitchell and Olson 1981; Holbrook 1978; Lutz 1975; Fishbein and Azjen 1972, 1967). Early research into the cognitive determination of A_B reflected the importance of beliefs and evaluative criteria (Fishbein 1967, 1972; Lutz 1975, 1978). Later work focused on developing an enhanced view of the determinants of A_B, specifically the role of A_{Ad}.

A_{Ad} has been shown to significantly improve the explained variance in A_B Mitchell and Olson 1981). This has been demonstrated under a number of experimental conditions. Lutz et al. 1983 found that A_{Ad} was a significant indicator of purchase attitudes for both a low knowledge/low importance subsample and a high knowledge/high importance subsample. Cognitive responses were found to be a significant mediator only in the latter group which is consistent with the findings of the ELM and Zajonc's (1980) work.

Park and Young (1985) found that a brand set manipulation which drew subject's attentions to brand image was associated with enhanced impact of A_{Ad} on A_B. This work found positive, but insignificant results for the cognitive involvement set. Burke and Edell (1989) found that A_{Ad} had both direct and indirect (via attribute evaluations) effects on A_B.

Summary

The predictors of A_B have been investigated through a variety of models developed by previous researchers. The predictive value of brand cognitions has been demonstrated through the Fishbein model (Fishbein 1967; 1972) and other supporting research (Burke and Edell 1989; Gardner 1985; Lutz 1972; 1975). Additional support has been shown for the predictive value of A_{Ad} (Mackenzie and Spreng 1992; Miniard et al. 1990; Burke and Edell 1989; Dröge 1989; Mackenzie et al. 1986; Lutz et al. 1983; Mitchell and Olson 1981; and Shimp 1981). It is the goal of this dissertation to develop an improved model of attitudinal development and its relationship to BI. As a result of previous research, the inclusion of A_{Ad} and brand cognitions will be necessary as predictors of A_B.

Behavioral Intentions

Interest in modifying consumer held attitudes and beliefs stems from the relationship posited between A_B and BI. The extended Fishbein Model

(Equation 2) posits that A_B, along with subjective norms, is the primary predictors of BI. Behavioral intentions are of interest to the researcher for the BI is believed to be the "equivalent to overt behavior (Lutz 1977, p. 198). Lutz (1977) provided empirical support for the extended Fishbein Model through the determination that a change in the cognitive structure or a change in the normative components lead to a change in intentions.

Much of the previous research in marketing has limited the investigation of attitudes to predicting only A_B. It is important, however, to extend model development to include BI. BI are the closest approximation researchers have to predicting actual behavior.

Support for the relationship between A_B and BI has been shown in several studies (Lutz 1977; Ryan and Bonfield 1975; Weddle and Bettman 1974; Fishbein 1967, 1972). Research surrounding the ELM has discussed the possibility that the strength of the relationship between A_B and BI varies according to the route to persuasion utilized. It has been suggested that attitudes formed under the central (cognitive) route will be more closely tied to BI than those attitudes formed under the peripheral (affective) route (Petty and Cacioppo 1981). When investigating the cognitive approach to attitude formation, Lutz (1977) found significant support for the strength of the relationship between A_B and BI. A_B emerged as the only significant predictor of BI.

Mackenzie et al. (1986) extended the viewpoint of Petty et al. (1981) by expanding the scope of the ELM framework and allowing for the possibility that the central and peripheral routes to persuasion may be intertwined as opposed to substitutes for one another. Hence, their model encompasses the possibility that A_{Ad} (a peripheral cue) may foster message acceptance. Empirical support was generated. These results were further supported by Mackenzie and Spreng (1989).

Summary

Although the concept of BI is often overlooked in the development of attitudinal models, it is of interest to include behavioral intentions to investigate the full impact of the negative publicity scenario. It also enables the determination if A_{Co} has a direct or indirect impact on individuals' intentions to purchase a firm's brands even in light of perceived improprieties. Therefore, this study will utilize BI as the final outcome of the proposed theoretical model.

Negative Publicity

The proposed design of this investigation requires the consumer to be introduced to information contradictory to prior beliefs and attitudes. This setting will enable the study of the various message processing sequences

across time. Such information contradiction could be provided through a number of different scenarios including corrective advertising, comparative advertising or negative publicity. This study will utilize negative publicity as the stimulus to deliver the contradiction.

Negative publicity was chosen for a number of reasons relevant to the study design and the research questions of interest. Incidences of negative publicity have become increasingly frequent over the past several years (Griffin, Babin and Attaway 1991) and therefore provide an environmentally relevant area for study. Furthermore, many recent events have demonstrated the potentially damaging fallout to corporate images from negative publicity (e.g., the Exxon Valdez oil spill and the ongoing investigations into the safety of breast implants and Dow-Corning's role).

In light of the reduced authority of the current FTC and its limited role in corrective advertising orders, negative publicity has great relevance in today's environment. Furthermore, negative publicity provides the topic of message source characteristics a much greater role in attitude change than other forms of advertising. This is due to the tremendous variety in the types of sources responsible for publicity pieces. Advertising represents paid sponsorship, thus expert credibility determination may not be as obvious to the consumer.

Publicity may emerge in one of two primary forms: negative (unfavorable) and positive (favorable). Publicity, as opposed to commercial

advertising, comes across to the consumer as a highly credible and influential message due to the fact that the information transferral results from a nonpaid source. Therefore, this may become a very effective element of the promotional mix. Unfortunately, publicity's "third person" sponsorship results in a promotional element that the firm has very little control over. Negative publicity has increased potential for harm not only the damaging impact on belief provided by a credible source, but also through the negative information itself. Research has shown the disproportionate impact of negative versus positive information on consumer perceptions (Mizerski 1982; Weinberger and Dillon 1980; Lutz 1975; Reynolds and Darden 1972; Arndt 1967).

For the purposes of this study, negative publicity will be defined as:

Noncompensated dissemination of potentially damaging information by providing disparaging news about a product, service, business unit, or person via the print, broadcast media, or by word of mouth (Sherrell, Reidenbach, Moore, Wagle and Spratlin 1983).

The goal of negative publicity may be multifold, ranging from the press informing consumers of misrepresentation to rumors resulting from competition. Hence, negative publicity may emerge as direct accusations or vague innuendos (Sherrell et al. 1983). The claims may be verifiable by the press or the targeted firm or purposefully elusive. This reflects the fact that the source of the information may or may not be identified to the consumer. Sources for the unfavorable information may be a unbiased party such as the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) or a competing firm (Sherrell et al. 1983).

The specific target of the negative information may not even be the firm or the product, but members of the management team (i.e., the attacks made on John DeLorean (Delorean Motors), Michael Milken (Drexel Burnham Lambert) and Roger Smith (GM).

Prior research into the area of publicity has been primarily limited to the impact of unfavorable information. Research into the area of negative information found a significant relationship exists between the type of information presented (negative versus positive), and the product category (good versus service) (Weinberger and Dillon 1980). Specifically, Weinberger and Dillon (1980) found that unfavorable information was more influential to homemakers when evaluating unbranded goods and services as opposed to branded goods or services. This effect was, however, mediated by the source characteristics with regards to the negative information.

Negative information has been shown to have more impact on consumers' attitudes, beliefs and behavioral intentions than an equal amount of positive information (Weinberger and Dillon 1980) and generates more lasting impressions (Cusumano and Richey 1970). In fact, one item of negative information has been shown to be capable of neutralizing five pieces of positive information (Richey, Koenigs, Richey and Fortin 1975). Early research also showed that consumer's responses to negative information often generated a more significant response (Arndt 1967; Reynolds and Darden 1972), particularly within the service sector (Weinberger and Dillon

1980). In other words, the consumer followed through with strong intentions not to buy or did not follow through with the actual purchase.

Practical research by marketers has focused on strategic approaches to reacting to negative publicity situations (Reidenbach and Sherrell 1986) and some limited attempts to understand how consumers interpret unfavorable information (Richins 1983; Sherrell et al. 1983; Mizerski 1982; Richey, Koenigs, Richey and Fortin 1975). Generally however, research investigating the impact of negative publicity is scarce (Griffin et al. 1991).

Research designed to illuminate the consumers' response to negative information has centered on the type of information processed and explanations generated by the consumer with regards to assigning blame. Mizerski (1982) investigated the phenomena of negative publicity within the context of an attributional model designed to explain the disproportionate impact of negative information as opposed to positive information. The study provided empirical support for the disproportionate impact of negative information on consumers. Results indicated that in cases where the consumer had strong expectations of positive information being forthcoming, the unfavorable information may not be viewed as credible. This may indicate the existence of an attributional threshold not documented previously within the attribution research (Mizerski 1982).

As a result, from a managerial perspective, it is vital to investigate the impact of this type of information on perceptions of source credibility, attitude

formation towards both the product and company, and behavioral intentions. Investigation of these attitudinal and source factors will enable the enlightened prediction of potential sales impacts resulting from this form of communication. In order for managers' to react in a proactive and effective way to negative publicity, extensive knowledge of consumer reactions to this type of situation is required.

The presentation of a negative publicity piece will encourage the consumer to develop different types of attributions toward the target firm and the source of the information. These attributions are proposed to influence the processing of further information through their impact on involvement levels (Hirschman and Wallendorf 1982) and the perceived importance of source credibility.

The consumer's attempt to resolve the inconsistencies in incoming information is hypothesized to result in the elaboration of peripheral cues in the central route to persuasion. Led to an attribution of company blame, the individual may become more motivated to process incoming information centrally to integrate the contradictory information. The ELM in its current form is unable to address this phenomena and make accurate predictions.

As a result of this information contradiction with currently held beliefs, consumers may alter their use of persuasion routes (central versus peripheral) and the resulting strength, formation and resistance of the attitudes may also change. The conceptual approach to this study is presented as Figure 1.1.

A more thorough consideration of the influence of attribution theory is needed at this point to help explain the study design rationale. Since negative publicity message typically make or imply accusations about company actions, consumers may be motivated to determine who is to blame for the occurrence. Attribution theory provides a framework for predicting consumer reaction to a particular negative publicity message.

Attribution Theory

Attribution theory is concerned with the investigation of blame and responsibility by the individual (Shaver 1985). Attribution research is focused upon "all aspects of causal inference: how people arrive at those inferences, what sort of inferences they make, and what the consequences of these inferences are," (Folkes, 1988, p. 548). In other words, attribution theory enables the researcher to better understand "how" this assignment of blame occurs.

This section will provide a brief overview of attribution theory, how it is operationalized, its previous applications in marketing, and its contribution to this study. The application of attribution theory and its role in the functioning of the ELM has not been investigated. Many other marketing studies, however, have utilized the theory to better explain marketing phenomena such as product failure (Manrai and Gardner 1991; Folkes 1984),

source credibility (Zaltman and Wallendorf 1983), salesforce motivation (Teas and McElroy 1986) and the use of two-sided messages in persuasion (Folkes 1988).

Attribution theory is actually a compilation of several theories that share a set of core assumptions (Folkes 1988). According to Jones, Kanouse, Kelley, Nisbett, Valins and Weiner (1972, p. 7) the general assumptions or principles used by attribution theory are:

(1) Individuals are inclined to assign causes for important instances of behavior, and will seek additional information to do so if necessary.

(2) These causal explanations will be assigned in a systematic fashion.

(3) The specific attribution made will yield important consequences for the attributor's future behavior.

The contemporary seminal work in attribution research traces back to the work of Heider (1958). Heider was the first researcher to systematically examine the way the layman would interpret the actions of another. While all individuals may not have access to principles of psychology, we all actively engage in the attribution of responsibility for events. Heider investigated the individual's "naive" explanation of the world. According to Heider (1958), individuals operate as "naive" psychologists when attempting to make sense out of their environment. The individual attempts to arrive at explanations in

a fairly logical and analytical fashion. According to Heider (1958) as these explanations proceed, the individual utilizes his own set of implicit assumptions regarding causes and effects.

Although Heider (1958) provided the early theoretical development of attribution theory and is considered the "father of attribution theory," his work was not represented in a format that was applicable to empirical testing (Mizerski et al. 1979). Jones and Davis (1965) provided the first testable approach to determining how individuals determine causal attributions. Jones and Davis (1965) proposed three basic criteria for making attributions:

1) Choice and Effects - individuals are assumed to have a choice among actions (or inaction).

2) Commonality - only "noncommon effects" (those unique to specific actions) are useful for inferring personal, as opposed to environmental causality.

3) Desirability - the more undesirable the action or the effects of the action, the more readily and more confidently causality can be inferred.

Hence, high correspondence of inference occurs only with certain combinations of noncommon effects and desirability for the actor (Mizerski et al. 1979). This model suggests the person about whom attribution judgments are made must have knowledge of the effects that will be produced as well as the intention and ability to perform the action.

Kelley (1973) built upon the early work of Hume and expanded the concepts purported by Heider through the investigation of the processes by which the individual arrives at causal explanation via a covariation analysis approach. The major contribution of this work, however, is that in expansion of Hume (1748) in which it was believed that there must be the ability of the observer to gather multiple observations, Kelley allows for inferences to be made.

Kelley (1967, 1971, 1972 and 1973) moved to integrate the earlier work of Heider (1965), Jones and Davis (1965) and Bem (1972) into an analysis of variance framework. Kelley distinguishes the process of attribution based on the amount of information available to the individual.

Case 1: The individual has information based on a single observation.
Case 2: The individual has information based on multiple observations.

In Case 1, the individual must reflect upon the configuration of factors that are possible causes for the event. Case 1 requires that the individual to rely on previous experiences of similar situations and preconceived notions to supplement the information occurring from the single existing observation. In this case, prior inferences are recalled to help explain causality.

In the event of multiple observations, the individual is able to engage in a simple covariation analysis between the event and the potential causal factor. In other words, "an event is attributed to the one of its possible

causes with which it varies over time" (Kelley 1973, p. 108). Implicit in understanding the covariation approach is the concept of temporal sequentiality, in which the presumed cause occurs prior to the effect.

Kelley (1967) delineates three primary types of information that are pertinent to his covariation principle. This forms the basis for the validity associated with the associated attributions.

1) <u>Consistency-</u>   the degree to which an event is consistently associated with the attributor across time and situation.

2) <u>Consensus-</u>   the frequency with which other individuals are associated with the event.

3) <u>Distinctiveness-</u>   the extent to which an event is associated with an individual potential external cause and not associated with alternative possible causes.

Consensus affords the individual a level of increased confidence in one's judgments. In other words, support from others may lead the individual to hold a higher level of adherence to this belief in the face of contradiction. Temporal consistency also enables increased confidence. For example, if two events are contiguous in time and space and are constantly joined so that the one event always precedes another, based on our experience, we can conclude that the preceding event causes the succeeding event. Distinctiveness enables the individual to recognize that the response is associated uniquely with the stimulus of interest. In concert, the three criteria form the groundwork for the individual assignment of causality.

Kelley's approach to causal attributions proves the most fruitful for examination of consumer behavior for it is more common for object perception to occur, such as the evaluation of products than with person-perception (Mizerski et al. 1979). However, for the purposes of this dissertation, it will be important to include the moderating effects of person-perception in the evaluation of the spokesperson or source of the message.

Although numerous approaches have been put forth to explain the dimensions of attribution (Anderson 1983; Frieze 1976), the operationalization of attribution theory has been built primarily off the work of Kelley's (1973) three criteria for validity. The classification approaches are:

1. <u>Stability:</u> are the causes perceived to be of a permanent or temporary nature? (Rotter 1966).

2. <u>Locus:</u> is the issue related to the consumer or the marketplace? (Weiner, Frieze, Kukla, Reed, Rest, and Rosenbaum 1971).

3. <u>Controllability:</u> are the causes under the volitional control of the suspected causal element or related to uncontrollable factors? (Rosenbaum 1972).

Attribution theory has been of limited interest to marketers over the past decade (Folkes 1988). Although the theory has enjoyed immense popularity in the field of psychology, there has been limited support for its application in the field of marketing (Mizerski et al. 1979).

Mizerski (1982) investigated the influence of unfavorable information in the marketplace and how attribution theory could help explain its disproportionate effects. Mizerski found across products that negative information resulted in stronger attributions and beliefs about the experimental attributes. However, in certain instances an attribution threshold may have been operating resulting in unfavorable information being discounted.

Attribution theory has also been applied to better understand why consumers make certain choices. Tybout and Scott (1983) and Scott and Yalsch (1980) found that selection of products may be related to liking the product or because of an incentive such as a coupon. Richins (1983) remarks that consumers must make attributions reflecting why a product or service failed. These explanations reflect a range of internal and external attributions including the product being defective to the consumers' misuse of the product (Curren and Folkes 1987).

For the purposes of this study the above criteria will be utilized to generate a simplified attribution by the respondent. By modifying these dimensions, a negative publicity message can be developed that will generate an internal or external attribution in the consumer. An internal attribution suggests that the firm was primarily responsible for the incident resulting in the negative publicity. An external attributions results in the respondent determining that the cause of the event referred to by the negative publicity message was not connected to the target company.

Since negative and/or unexpected events increase motivation to develop causal explanations (Kelley 1973), it is the argument of this dissertation that consumers' information processing activities will differ according to whether the event results in an internal or an external attribution. The internal attribution scenario will reflect the combination of the three aspects of attribution evidence to yield a consumer attribution of corporate misconduct in the form of a deliberate deception or misrepresentation. Alternatively, an external attribution may result in the company being viewed as relatively blameless in the face of excessive government scrutiny or interference of special interest groups. The internal attribution should serve to modify the consumers' involvement levels sufficiently to generate elaborative thinking regarding the source, the message and the company. External attributions should not provide this result.

Source Credibility

Petty and Cacioppo (1986) have noted that one of the most important and least researched questions in psychology is "what makes an argument persuasive?" Petty and Cacioppo (1989) suggest that one of the factors influencing persuasion is peripheral cues. In fact, Kahle and Homer (1985) argue that physical attractiveness may transcend involvement levels and may become central to attitude change.

Kelman (1961) notes that source variables of attractiveness and expertise can, under certain conditions, affect the individual's motivation in a persuasive context more than might otherwise be expected via the process of identification. Identification influences result from a persuasive context being congruent with beliefs and current values. Kelman (1961) suggests that when the interpersonal needs of the individual can be satisfied by message's source, source variables, because of the increased involvement they engender, may motivate a more systematic processing of the persuasive message. This stream of research concludes that based on the levels of self-monitoring individuals exhibit in attempting to express socially appropriate beliefs, the motivation to process systematically (or centrally) is increased (Debono et al. 1988).

This dissertation hopes to extend this research and posits that the individual source factors of attractiveness and expertise may actually serve as fully elaborative cues under conditions of causal attribution analysis. In other words, the source variable itself will become a focus of elaboration, rather than merely increasing involvement levels which would trigger message relevant thinking.

Sternthal, Dholakia and Leavitt (1978) argue that a highly credible source inhibits counterargument development and therefore increases the persuasive power of the credible source. However, this finding holds for recipients with a negative predisposition toward the advocated position. For

individuals that favor the advocated opinion, these individuals should generate more support arguments and be more persuaded by a lower credibility source.

In developing a stimulus designed to encourage central and peripheral processing of incoming information, a peripheral cue must be present for the consumer to focus upon if peripheral processing is utilized. Source characteristics are chosen here due to their importance in the setting of negative publicity. Adequate source representation lends credibility to the publicity piece and enhances its persuasive impact. Attribution of internal/external causality will help encourage central route processing due to its impact on motivation levels exhibited by the consumer. Attribution theorists have shown that arousal levels may impact information processing and attractiveness will be used to operationalize this construct (Dienstbier 1978).

Chaiken (1980) and Kelman (1961) have shown support for both source credibility and attractiveness as dimensions of source perception. Previous research has shown that source credibility significantly affects persuasion only under conditions of low issue involvement (Rhine and Severence 1970) and low response involvement (Johnson and Scileppi 1969). This dissertation allows the investigation of the effects of AEI, increasing as a result of the attributional processes resulting from the negative publicity scenario, to lead to elaborative thinking on source issues and potentially

precipitating a path change from a previously peripheral to central processing paths.

Under conditions leading to formation of causal attributions, AEI levels should increase as the consumer becomes motivated to form an attitude toward the product, company and source of the message consistent with the attribution analysis results. It is this increased involvement with the message and situation that is proposed to lead to central route processing. Initially low issue involved respondents would be expected to continue to exhibit low involvement with the issue, yet exhibit higher involvement with the message and situation, resulting in a more elaborative processing approach with regards to the source and message itself.

Proposed Model Development and Hypotheses

Based on the discussion of the above literature review, it is now possible to develop a model depicting the impact of various attitudinal constructs and cognitions that lead to the formation of A_B and BI. This model will reflect not only the interrelationships between some previously investigated predictors of A_B, but will also include the addition of A_{Co}.

The development of attitudinal models in marketing is nothing new. Support has been generated for many approaches dating back to the initial cognitive models proposed by Fishbein (1967, 1972). A resurgence of

interest in the area of affect has encouraged the investigation of other attitudinal components to refine the prediction of A_B and BI. This dissertation introduces a conceptual model of attitude formation that will supplement previous work in the area and enable the inclusion of both affective and cognitive processes through the use of the ELM framework.

The model builds upon the early conceptual work of Zajonc (1980), Fishbein (1967, 1972) and Petty and Cacioppo (1986) in which two models are proposed to reflect varying levels of involvement. The overall model (see Figure 1.3, Chapter 1) reflects both possible paths. Each separate model (see Figures 1.4 and 1.5, Chapter 1) shows a consumer who chooses to utilize either the central or peripheral processing route.

As discussed earlier in the Chapter, the prediction of BI relies primarily on the construct of A_B. Although the Extended Fishbein Model includes subjective norm elements, this model will not reflect these issues. The lack of inclusion of the subjective norm components in the attitudinal model comes from Lutz (1977), in which the need for inclusion of these components is not generally believed necessary when the experimental manipulations deal only with the attitudinal components.

The predictors of A_B included in the general model are A_{Ad}, A_{Co}, and brand related cognitions. Each of these components is shown in the overall model. It should be noted that brand cognitions are not predicted to be significant predictors of A_B under conditions of peripheral processing.

Fishbein's model clearly discusses the primary role of brand cognitions in the development of A_B. This has been well supported within the literature (Mackenzie et al. 1989, 1986; Gardner 1985; Mitchell and Olson 1981; Lutz 1975, 1977; Fishbein and Azjen 1975, 1972; Ryan and Bonfield 1975; Fishbein 1967). As the model shows, brand cognitions are shown to be a significant and direct predictor of attitudes under the central route to persuasion. Consistent with the work of Petty and Cacioppo (1981, 1986), this approach reflects the central route to processing in which the ability and motivation to process the information and develop brand related cognitions is possible. Under conditions of peripheral processing, significant brand related cognitions are not proposed to exist (Petty and Cacioppo 1986; Mackenzie et al. 1986; Gardner 1985).

As supported by Mackenzie et al. (1986), A_{Ad} will influence brand related cognitions under the central route processing only. Under conditions of peripheral processing, A_{Ad} will directly influence A_B (Dröge 1989). Measures of central route processing will include evaluations of the perceived strength of claims made in an ad's copy ($A_{Ad\text{-}c}$) and the evaluation of non-claim elements ($A_{Ad\text{-}nc}$) regarding the advertisement as significant predictors of the overall A_{Ad}. This is consistent with prior research (Miniard et al. 1990). Inclusion of the construct of A_{Ad} as a predictor of A_B is also well documented within the literature (Mackenzie and Spreng 1992; Miniard et al. 1990;

Mackenzie et al. 1989,1986; Gardner 1985; Mitchell and Olson 1981; Shimp 1981).

As noted by Wilkie et al. (1984), the concept of A_{Co} is of potential interest to the firm facing any type of negative information dissemination. In particular, corrective ads and negative publicity can prove extremely damaging to the firm's A_{Co}. In the event that this occurs, no current attitudinal models specifically account for the impact of A_{Co} on A_B and BI.

Specifically, the concept of A_{Co} is proposed to function much like A_{Ad} under conditions of low involvement (peripheral processing). As noted in Figure 1.5, the role of A_{Co} is proposed to be a mediator of A_B and have a direct and indirect impact on BI. Under conditions of high involvement (central route processing) the development of company cognitions are expected by the respondent and are expected to impact A_{Co}. These cognitions are shown to be influenced by A_{Ad}. This approach is consistent with the approaches used by previous authors discussed above for other attitudinal component inclusion in models.

Resistance to Counterpersuasion Hypothesis Development

The focus of this dissertation revolves around the determination of attitudinal resistance to counterpersuasive under central or peripheral processing approaches. In this instance, the counterpersuasion stimulus is contained within a negative publicity message. As argued earlier, the ELM

supports the belief that attitudes formed via the central route to persuasion will be more resistant to counterpersuasive appeals than those formed peripherally.

The study design includes a two- stage experiment. Subjects' initial attitudes are formed via a central or peripheral route to persuasion and then subjects are confronted with a negative publicity message. The negative publicity message is designed to encourage subjects to either confirm or modify their initial attitudes. The sequence of elaboration processing routes chosen by subjects (i.e., central or peripheral) will be used to form groups to examine the extent of attitude change.

The proposed resistance to counterpersuasion of the centrally formed attitudes reflects the ability of the person holding centrally elaborated attitudes to develop the appropriate counterarguments to the new information. This ability to counterargue enables the subject to adequately defend his/her prior held beliefs and attitudes. Hence, the following general hypothesis is proposed:

H1: Attitudes resulting from the central route to persuasion will show significantly less change than those attitudes resulting from the peripheral route to persuasion.

By manipulating involvement levels in Stage I of the experiment, subjects are encouraged to process the initial stimulus information via the central or peripheral routes to persuasion. Using a negative publicity message

in Stage II which contains either an internal (company's fault) or external (company is not to blame) attribution manipulation will allow grouping of subjects after the Stage II manipulation into central or peripheral processing groups. Combining the results of Stage I and Stage II will provide four processing groups:

	Stage I	Stage II
(1)	Central - Central	
(2)	Central - Peripheral	
(3)	Peripheral - Peripheral	
(4)	Peripheral - Central	

Subjects in these four processing groups will be used to test attitude resistance to change. Thus, it will be possible to compare not only the two pure groups against each other, but also the combination groups that include both types of processing.

Attitudes formed under the central processing route in Stage I will come from highly involved subjects who should fully elaborate on the stimulus information. In Stage II, the central route stimulus contains information suggesting an internal attribution and company blame. Given the central route starting point for the attitude, it is hypothesized that the subject will discount the source of the contradiction and maintain the existent attitude. Petty and

Cacioppo (1986) and McGuire (1964) suggest that individuals with the requisite motivation and/or ability to develop counterarguments can successfully discount opposing messages.

The second case listed above has the same starting point of centrally formed attitudes. The Stage II stimulus will be designed to promote peripheral processing, using an external attribution of company innocence. No counterarguments should be generated, but A_{Ad} may by sufficiently positive to generate a weak impact on A_{Co} and A_B.

In case three, subjects will be encourage to form attitudes via the peripheral route and will be introduced to a second stage stimulus designed to motivate path switching. A negative publicity piece designed to be highly involving will be introduced to the subject. While previously unmotivated to process incoming information cognitively, subjects are now faced with a message encouraging an internal attribution, designed to motivate central processing. However, the cognitions necessary to counterargue will not be present due to earlier peripheral processing, and central processing of the contradiction will generate the greatest change in attitudes from Stage I to Stage II.

Case four highlights the situation in which subjects first peripherally process stimulus information with regards to the product and the firm. A Stage II negative publicity message will be presented to the consumer encouraging an external attribution of corporate innocence. Recency effects

from the Stage II message should play a role in generating a change in the

A_{Ad}, A_{Co} and A_B.

Given the above rationale, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1a: Attitudes formed initially under the peripheral route, upon introduction of centrally processed contradictory information will be the most susceptible to change of the four processing groups.

H1b: Attitudes formed initially under the central route, upon introduction of centrally processed contradictory information will be the least susceptible to change of the four processing groups.

H1c: Attitudes formed initially under the central route, upon introduction of peripherally processed contradictory information will show mild susceptibility to change and be comparable with those subjects whose attitudes are formed initially under the peripheral route and who are subsequently introduced to peripherally processed information (i.e., groups 2 and 3 will show equal change).

Also of interest to this study is the contribution and impact of subjects' attributional processes on how information is processed. As opposed to viewing the message as merely counterattitudinal, there are situations in the marketplace where the consumer, facing contradictory information, feels compelled to determine some type of causal explanation. In this setting, the individual seeking consistency with prior held beliefs may be **motivated** to further process this counter attitudinal information to better evaluate and determine whether the advertisement was initially deceptive or misleading. This is how the forces of consumer attributions and the explanatory power of the related theory may enable an expanded understanding of the ELM.

The study design encourages internal and external attributions by the subjects. It is of interest to determine whether the initial A_{C_0} is modified from Stage I to Stage II, depending upon the internal versus external attribution. Consequently, hypotheses are proposed:

H2: Attitude towards the company will show significantly more susceptibility to change when internal attributions are made regarding the company's causal role in the contradictory information, compared to those subjects exposed to the external attribution stimulus.

Development of the hypotheses for the resistance of attitudes to counterpersuasion completes the first emphasis of this study. Completion of the study relies on showing empirical support for the proposed causal model. The hypotheses to enable this support are developed in the following section.

Central - Peripheral Model Comparisons

The proposed causal model of attitude and behavioral intention formation requires the development of a series of hypotheses to test the effectiveness of the proposed models. As diagramed in Chapter 1, a model for the development of peripherally formed and centrally formed attitudes and intentions is presented. Empirical support for the superiority of the proposed peripheral paths vs. central paths of attitude formation across groups is necessary.

As shown in Figures 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, the model proposes that under conditions of central processing, different constructs will play a significant role

in the formation of attitudes and intentions. Logical support for these causal paths is developed throughout Chapter 2 and summarized briefly above under the heading of Proposed Model Development and Hypotheses.

Although four processing groups will result from the experimental manipulation of the study, the pure groups best enable clear determination of the significance of the attitudinal and cognitive components in the final formation of A_B and BI. Hence, two competing models are proposed to explain the formation of peripherally and centrally formed attitudes. These models are include as Figures 1.4 and 1.5, Chapter 1.

Centrally Formed Attitudes

As discussed by Petty and Cacioppo (1981) and Petty et al. (1983), involvement levels significantly predict the persuasive path chosen by the recipient. This path reflects a continuum of processing from "fully elaborative" thinking to a complete lack of consideration of issue relevant facts. Therefore, the individual highly motivated to process information will follow the central route to persuasion and is proposed to form cognitions with regards to the advertisement, the firm and the brand.

The causal paths proposed in Figure 1.4 as significant predictors of centrally formed A_B and BI are consistent with previously developed models by Mackenzie and Lutz (1992), Lutz (1975) and Petty and Cacioppo (1982).

These paths reflect the significance of cognitions in predicting A_B and BI under a central route to persuasion.

The major contributions of this model are two-fold. First, the determination of the significance of varying types of cognitions prior to the formation of A_B and BI is highlighted. These cognitions are proposed to aid in prediction of A_{Ad}, A_{Co} and A_B. Second, the contribution of the role of A_{Co} is developed in this model to reflect its antecedent significance in the formation of A_B and BI. Therefore, the following general hypothesis is proposed.

H3: Cognitions will be positively related to the formation of attitudinal components.

Secondary hypotheses that support the role of cognitions in the determination of attitudinal components are as follows:

H3A: Brand cognitions will be positively related to A_B.

H3B: Company cognitions will be positively related to the formation of A_{Co}.

H3C: Evaluations regarding both claim and non-claim items will be significant predictors of A_{Ad}.

H3D: A_{Ad} will be positively related to company and brand cognitions.

H3E: Company and brand cognitions will be significant predictors of A_{Co} and A_B.

H3F: A_{Co} and A_B will both be significant predictors of BI.

H3G: Involvement levels will be positively related to the formation of ad-related, brand and company cognitions

Peripherally Formed Attitudes

The formation of peripherally formed attitudes reflects the consumers' decreased involvement levels and decreased motivation to elaborate on information presented for scrutiny. As such, the expectation for a significant predictive role of cognitions is not made. Therefore, a peripherally based model of attitude formation would not include a causal role for cognitions in the determination of A_B or BI. Therefore, the following general hypothesis is generated:

H4: The predictive role of cognitions is absent in the peripheral model of attitude formation.

Secondary hypotheses to support this general proposition about the peripheral model are generated below.

H4A: Involvement will be negatively related to A_{Ad-nc}.

H4B: A_{Ad-nc} and A_{Ad-c} will be positively and significantly related to A_{Ad}.

H4C: A_{Ad} will be positively and significantly related to A_{Co} and A_B.

H4D: A_{Co} and A_B will be significantly and positively related to BI.

Summary Contributions of the Study

This dissertation will provide advances across two primary foci: the development of the causal model and the investigation of consumer attitude

resistance to counter persuasion. The development of the causal model provides for the inclusion of the construct of A_{Co}, previously not included specifically in models of attitude formation and change. This provides the first contribution of the study to the discipline.

Second, the dissertation will enable the investigation into the resistance of attitudes formed via the central and peripheral routes to persuasion. It is hypothesized that as the level of involvement increases through the attributional process, the type of processing may change from peripheral to central. Furthermore, the type of processing initially utilized by the consumer should enable predictions regarding the resistance these attitudes will have to counterpersuasive techniques.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Chapter Three continues development of the dissertation with a discussion of the research design and methodology. The research design will be discussed first, including the methods proposed for acquiring the information from the respondents; the sampling procedure; development of advertising message stimuli; and the experimental design used. Then, results of the three pretests conducted will include a discussion of the reliability of the measurement indicators utilized and a description of preliminary hypothesis support and the empirical relationships shown between the attitudinal constructs. The appendix will contain the pretest measurement instruments used in each of the 3 pretests conducted.

The two primary objectives of this dissertation are: 1) to ascertain the level of attitude resistance to counterpersuasion via the central versus the peripheral routes to persuasion using the ELM framework; and 2) to investigate the role of each of the attitudinal constructs in the proposed causal model in predicting A_B and BI. As developed in the earlier Chapters, the dissertation was framed in the setting of a negative publicity scenario which enables the investigation of the relationship that exists between the constructs of interest: brand and ad cognitions, A_{Ad}, A_{Co}, and the outcome variables of A_B, BI.

Proposed Methods

Study Layout

The experimental variables of interest in this study were issue involvement and attributional effects. The study involved the two-stage introduction of information to respondents in which Stage II information was contradictory on some level to the information provided in Stage I. Stage I involved the initial manipulation of the issue involvement construct to influence subjects' choice of central or peripheral processing of initial company and product information contained in an advertisement. Stage II utilized a negative publicity scenario to present a message containing an internal or external attribution manipulation. The attribution manipulation was intended to encourage central or peripheral processing of the negative publicity message. Belief and attitude measures were collected at each the end of each stage. Subjects were classified into one of four processing groups, according to their choice of central or peripheral processing routes in each of the two stages. The investigation of attitude change scores between the four processing sequence groups will enabled tests of the proposed hypotheses.

Sample Design

Determination of the needed sample size for the study proceeded on two tracks. The first consideration was the number of subjects required to

meet considerations of adequate statistical power. Cohen (1977) offers guidelines for determining appropriate sample size. Three types of information must be supplied by the researcher: a) the level of significance desired (probability of a Type I error), b) the level of statistical power desired, and c) the anticipated effect size. When using the conventional significance level of .05, Cohen (1977) recommends that behavioral scientists use .80 for a power value. With this conventional level of statistical power, Type I errors are seen as four times as serious as Type II errors (.20/.05).

The effect size anticipated for the study was defined as the average correlation between model components. For purposes of sample size determination, an average effect size of .25 was selected. With an expected effect size of .25, a significance level of .05, and a power value of .80, a sample size of 143 is recommended (Cohen 1977).

Sample size selection was also influenced by analysis considerations. The use of LISREL analysis suggests that a sample size of 200 (Joreskog and Sorbom 1987) provides the number of observations necessary for stable model estimates. Since there were four processing sequence groups, a total sample size of 800 was suggested by the statistical analysis technique proposed. Given the minimum sample size requirements of 143 for adequate statistical power and the sample size requirements of 800 for use of LISREL, the final sample size for the experiment was set at 800.

Development of Stimulus Materials

Stimulus Product Selection: The product chosen for this experiment was an electric automobile conversion package. The product description stated that the company is based in California and could take a conventional, internal combustion engine automobile and convert the car to an all electric (battery powered) automobile. This product was selected based on the results of the first pretest.

There were several criteria which the product category used in the experiment had to meet. The product should be relatively involving. This assured some respondents will engage in central processing. Second, the product selected should not exhibit significant differences in product involvement levels or familiarity across gender types.

The first pretest data was collected from approximately 60 undergraduate students. Initial products investigated included a 30-minute oil change service, soft drinks, automobiles and diet products. The electric automobile conversion product was selected as the category that most closely met the criteria outlined above. The pretest instrument used for this determination is provided as Appendix 1.

Initial Product Advertisement: The study design required the development of an advertisement about the product for administration to subjects in stage I. An ad was needed which contained sufficient information about the product and the company to enable subjects to form initial beliefs

and attitudes. In addition, the message should contain appropriate cues for subjects electing to process the message either through the central or peripheral route.

A pretest was completed to enable refinement of the components to include in the sample advertisement. The second pretest included two test ads, an advertisement containing a primarily affective message and an advertisement with a message designed to engender central processing. The pretest survey instruments are included as Appendices 2 and 3.

Central cues provided in the final advertisement included many of the technical specifications of the proposed conversion process such as top speed, frequency and time necessary for recharge, range of the vehicle and price. Peripheral cues available to the respondent included the styling of the pictured vehicle, the convenience of the product, and discussion of comfort and innovativeness of the product.

Negative Publicity Message: The manipulation of internal and external attributional effects in Stage II required the development of a negative publicity message. The setting developed for the message was one in which the respondent was presented with a newspaper article describing a problem with the product reported by a consumer protection agency.

The scenario designed to yield internal attributions was one in which the consumer protection agency had discovered a discrepancy in the

advertised performance values and the actual performance of the test vehicle. This discrepancy was one that the firm was aware of and chose to ignore.

The second scenario designed to produce external attributions was one in which the newspaper article stated that the consumer protection group had not found significant problems and the firm had acted quickly to correct any existing discrepancies and fully warranted the product.

Results of the second pretest included measures of subjects' attributions about the target firm after exposure to either the internal or external attribution message. The pretest results supported the effectiveness of this manipulation. Both scenarios are included in the Appendices to this Chapter.

Administrative Procedures

Booklets were prepared for the study in which the initial advertisement was presented following the cover page and the following section contained the dependent measures. The cover page explained that the study was concerned with subjects' reactions to advertising message and described the study procedures in general. These instructions also contained the issue involvement manipulation for Stage I. For both stages, subjects were randomly assigned to involvement conditions (Stage I) and attribution conditions (Stage II).

The manipulation of the issue involvement construct involved the presentation of a scenario in which the respondent was asked to imagine him/her self in a purchasing situation. The level of personal relevance is manipulated to increase or decrease the issue involvement construct. This manipulation occurred by applying the purchasing situation to the respondent (high issue involvement) or to a friend of their acquaintance living in another state (low issue involvement).

In Stage I the subjects were asked to peruse the advertisement and complete the attached questionnaire. Upon completion the subjects were debriefed. The debriefing included the requirement that they participate in next week's class session administration. The students were then thanked for their time. For the students, extra credit points were assigned for the award of extra credit points as additional incentive. Those students were allowed to complete a points awarded form after each survey was completed. Only those students completing both halves of the study were awarded the incentive points.

The first stage of the experiment also included the measurement of the initial attitudinal components in the proposed model. This measurement included initial brand and ad-related cognitions, A_{Ad}, A_{Co}, A_B and BI. These initial readings enabled the determination of the amount and direction of the changes in the attitudinal components after the second stage of the experiment.

Measurement of product, issue and environmental involvement levels also occurred after the introduction of the advertisement in Stage I. These measurements provided a check of the effectiveness of the manipulation in the experimental setting. Specific measurement techniques for these constructs are discussed later in the Chapter.

Subjects were randomly assigned to each of the 2 (involvement: high or low) groups. Thus, following the initial introduction to the advertisement, the measurement of the respondents' attitudes towards the firm, product and advertisement was collected. Additional information regarding demographics was also be collected at this time due to the fact that the Stage I survey was much shorter than the Stage II. Hence, the collection of demographics at this time helped ease concerns regarding respondent fatigue.

Stage II was presented in a booklet form in which the respondent was refamiliarized to the advertisement prior to introduction to the negative publicity piece. The remeasurement of attitudes followed the advertisement to assure that attitudes did not change significantly during the break between Stages I and II. The respondent was then introduced to the publicity piece with the attribution manipulations. Remeasurement of attitudes, intentions and need for cognition concluded this session.

The two types of publicity messages developed in the dissertation were fully crossed with both types of Stage I processors. Subjects in Stage II were

then classified as central or peripheral processors based on the same approach used at the conclusion of Stage I.

This grouping procedure allowed for the formation of four groups whose members followed one of the four possible processing sequences (central - central, central - peripheral, peripheral - peripheral, and peripheral - central). The same attitudes (toward the brand, company and ad), beliefs and intentions will be measured following Stage II. This enabled the prediction and analysis of attitude change from Stage I to Stage II based on processing routes initially utilized.

In situations in which peripheral processing was desired during Stage II a peripheral cue was provided for the respondent. For purposes of this study, source credibility was the peripheral cue provided due to its important role in the effectiveness of the setting chosen for the study, negative publicity. The central route stimulus chosen for the study was the manipulation of internal or external attributions. Internal attributions reflected the consumer determining that the firm was at fault regarding the situation at hand. External attributions reflected the respondent determining that the firm was relatively blameless and environmental factors were causal. This attribution manipulation provided a salient central route cue in that the respondent became more motivated to process information regarding the topic of the negative publicity piece when a determination of corporate misconduct or blame (internal attribution) occurs.

Stage II involved the random assignment of subjects to each of the two attribution manipulations: internal or external. The attribution manipulation was the summary manipulation conducted by varying levels of stability, locus and controllability. This enabled the completion of the second stage of the study through the manipulation of the attributional construct and the remeasurement of the individual respondents' involvement levels, attitudes and behavioral intentions.

The subjects were asked to respond in isolation from one another and within a single session all forms of the experimental conditions were administered to avoid any confounding effects. The total elapsed time for data collection was concluded within a two week period.

One requirement of the experimental design in stages I and II was the classification of subjects into processing route groups of central and peripheral processors. This classification not only provided verification of the functioning of the ELM, but was necessary for the formation of the final 2-stage processing groups.

The initial classification of individuals by processing route occurred through the use of protocol analysis and recall questions. Respondents were asked to recall all relevant thoughts with regards to the advertisement that they were exposed to. These thoughts were then classified as issue relevant or simple affective cues. This classification process of recollections enlightened the type of processing that occurred within the individual

respondent. Furthermore, the number of thoughts recalled were an indication of the type of processing that occurred (Petty et al. 1983). Additionally, the measurement of self-reported amounts of effort and cognitive processing supplemented this route determination. Hence, final processing route determination was a judgement call weighing the number and types of arguments recalled with the self reported amounts of effort and time expended on the exercise.

Measurement Concerns

Attitudinal Constructs: Subjects were asked to respond to items regarding attitudes towards the product, the endorser, the firm, advertising in general and the role of government in business. Further, purchase intentions and route to processing were verified. Route to processing were confirmed through recall checks in which the subject was asked to recall attributes of the product category.

Many scales for use in the measurement process were available in the literature for most items of interest. Attitudinal scales have been refined in the literature over the past several decades and have been proven reliable. A sample of the attitudinal scales used are included as Tables 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4. Their sources are discussed below.

Table 3.1
Measurement of Attitudinal Constructs

Construct	Semantic Differentials with Item Anchors
Attitude Toward the Brand Statement: My overall impression of the conversion package is ...	Bad/Good Unsatisfactory/Satisfactory Beneficial/Harmful Superior/Inferior
Attitude Toward the Company Statement: My general impression of the California Conversion Company is ...	Favorable/Unfavorable Good/Bad Negative/Positive Follower/Leader Successful/Unsuccessful
Attitude Toward the Advertisement Statement: I found the advertisement for Electro-Car ...	Interesting/Uninteresting Irritating/Not Irritating Held Attention/Did Not Hold Attention Informative/Uninformative Favorable/Unfavorable
Attitude Toward the Source (Consumer Advocate Group) Statement: I think consumer advocate groups are:	Knowledgeable/ Not Knowledgeable Uninformed/Informed Credible/Not Credible Not Truthful/Truthful

Table 3.2
Measurement of Remaining Dependent Variables

Construct	Semantic Differentials with Item Anchors
Attitude Toward the Source (the Consumer Advocate Agency) Statements: I believe the Consumer Advocate Agency is knowledgeable about product failures and misleading advertisements. I believe the Consumer Advocate Agency is making unfounded allegations against the CCC. Regardless of how you feel about Consumer Advocate Groups personally, do you feel they are qualified to speak out about consumer issues?	 Agree/Disagree Agree/Disagree Agree/Disagree
Behavioral Intentions Statements: It is ____ that the average person would purchase this product.	 Likely/Unlikely Probable/Improbable Impossible/Possible

Attitudinal measures were derived from Mackenzie and Lutz (1989) whereby semantic differentials enabled assessment of A_B, and credibility of the source and advertisement. Reported reliabilities for the performance of these scales are included in Tables 3.5 and 3.6. Reported reliabilities (Cronbach's alpha) for these scales were A_B, .8734 (Stage I) and .9646

(Stage II); source credibility, .9294; A_{Co}, .8916 (Stage I) and .9318 (Stage II). These reliabilities were well within accepted guidelines set by Nunnally (1978). Nunnally (1978) remarks that reported reliabilities of .70 or higher are sufficient and that attempts to increase reliability beyond .80 is often wasteful. Mitchell and Olson (1981) developed a scale for assessing A_{Ad} that has since been reliably used by a variety of authors including Gardner (1985). These scales performed reliably with a reported Cronbach's Alpha of .7262.

A_{Co} was assessed using semantic differential endpoints developed in the final two pretest studies. These scales performed extremely well with Cronbach's alpha scores of .8916 (Stage I) and .9318 (Stage II). These scales were used in the shown form for the final data collection.

Attitude toward the source was assessed via scales developed for this study. These scales were refined after the second pretest and in their final form exhibited a Cronbach alpha of .9294.

Behavioral intentions were assessed via scales provided in Mackenzie et al. (1992). Reported reliabilities for those scales were .8862 (Stage I) and .8087 (Stage II). Again, well within acceptability guidelines provided by Nunnally (1978).

Manipulation Checks: Checks to determine if the involvement manipulation were effective required the measurement of product, environmental and issue involvement, and attributional effects after the

administration of the experimental stimuli. This provided support for the involvement manipulations effectiveness.

Measurement of these constructs proved more difficult than the attitudinal constructs, reflecting a lack of proven scales for many of these constructs. Product involvement was measured with Zaichowsky's (1985) scale. Other items measuring issue and environmental involvement have been developed and pretested.

Involvement was measured across several dimensions: issue, product and environmental. Items for issue involvement were refined following the second pretest which reported very disappointing reliabilities of .4436. Reworking this scale resulted in the third pretest yielding reliabilities of .7801. The product involvement scale showed a reliability of .9337, consistent with previous research using this scale. The environmental involvement items reported reliabilities of .7801 and required slight adjustment for the final collection of data.

Table 3.3
Measures of Manipulation Checks

Construct	Semantic Differentials with Item Anchors
Product Involvement Statement: For me, shopping for an automobile is	Important/Unimportant Of no concern/Of concern Irrelevant/Relevant Trivial/Fundamental Not needed/Needed Essential/Nonessential Vital/Superfluous Valuable/Worthless Means a lot/Means Nothing Beneficial/Not beneficial
Issue Involvement Statements: The car purchase scenario described is ____ to me. In helping an out of state friend gather information, I would not spend a great deal of my time. At this point in time, purchasing a conversion package is ____ to me.	Important/Unimportant Agree/Disagree Important/Unimportant

Subjects were asked to respond to checks regarding the effectiveness of the attribution argument. Following both stages of the study, subjects were asked to assess if they interpreted the advertisement as misleading or deceptive. Attribution effects were tested for effectiveness through the consumers' response to the firm and the entity blamed for the product failures. Reported reliability for this scale was .7801.

Table 3.4
Measurement of the Attribution Effect

Construct	Semantic Differentials with Item Anchors
Attributional Processes Statements: The CCC was responsible for the inferior product performance.	Agree/Disagree
I believe the CCC places profits ahead of consumer satisfaction and truthful advertising.	Agree/Disagree
The failure of the converted vehicles to perform as the ad claimed was the fault of the CCC.	Agree/Disagree

Reliabilities for each of the scales used to measure A_{Ad}, A_{Co}, A_B, issue involvement, source credibility, attribution effects, product involvement and environmental involvement were assessed. The results of these investigations are summarized on the following pages in Tables 3.5 and 3.6.

Table 3.5
Stage 1
Scale Reliabilities

Scale	Alpha (Non-Stand.)
Issue Involvement	.5182
Product Involvement	.9546
Behavioral Intentions	.8862
Attitude Toward the Ad	.7262
Attitude Toward the Firm	.8916
Attitude Toward the Brand	.8734

Table 3.6
Stage II
Scale Reliabilities

Scale	Alpha (Non-Stand.)
Attitude Toward the Brand	.9646
Attitude Toward the Firm	.9318
Behavioral Intentions	.8087
Source Credibility	.9294
Product Involvement	.9337
Issue Involvement	.6826
Attribution Measure	.7801
Environmental Involvement	.7801

<u>Hypothesis Analysis</u>

A set of research hypotheses concerning the resistance to change of several attitudinal constructs in the model was proposed in Chapter 2. Analysis of these hypotheses required the use of MANOVA techniques to determine if significant differences existed between experimental groups. MANOVA analysis requires the meeting of several assumptions, primarily that the error distribution ϵ be normally distributed. The large sample size suggested by the use of LISREL analysis (i.e., a total sample size of 800) suggested that the assumptions of the MANOVA technique had a good chance of being met.

<u>Structural Model Analysis</u>

The comparison of attitude change models between different processing sequence groups required the use of an analysis technique that considers structural equations simultaneously. LISREL was an appropriate analysis tool for this situation where the "equations that exist in the (proposed) model represent causal links rather than mere empirical associations" (Joreskog and Sorbom 1988, p.1).

The LISREL application to this particular experiment enabled the determination of the best model under a given set of conditions. The two models developed in this dissertation suggested that under a central route to persuasion the use of brand and company cognitions will play a significant role

in the determination of A_B and BI. The peripheral route does not rely on these components significantly in the determination of the final attitude toward the brand and behavioral intentions. LISREL facilitated the testing of these alternative models across the four processing sequence groups to determine the most appropriate model under central or peripheral processing.

The use of a LISREL application was not, however, without its pitfalls. Primarily, the number of respondents required across experimental manipulations increased dramatically when compared to a more traditional regression analysis. The LISREL programs require that the data be normally distributed and utilize fairly large sample sizes. As a result, the proposed method for the study requires the gathering of survey information from approximately 800 respondents (across the 2-stage process). This sample size was necessary due to the investigation of the competing causal models across each of the 4 experimental groups. In other words, does the central or peripheral model of attitude formation best explain the behavior of each of the final 4 experimental groups.

Pretest Results

Three pretest studies were completed for this dissertation. The first pretest consisted of 60 undergraduate students completing a product selection survey. Additionally, this survey was designed to determine gender

differences in product involvement levels and familiarity. The second pretest included 88 respondents completing the full two stage survey. This study helped refine the advertisement used in stage I, the negative publicity message in stage II, and help pinpoint any problem areas in measurement as well as any existing problems with the experimental manipulations. The appropriate refinements made to the survey enabled instrument to enable effective manipulation of the experimental variables.

The third pretest of the study included 52 undergraduate respondents. The third pretest was a modified and shortened version and confirmed the appropriateness of the modifications to the experimental manipulations and confirm their effectiveness. Results of the experimental manipulations are summarized in the Tables below.

Table 3.7 highlights the distribution of respondents into the final four processing groups. Note that while a few cross over individuals did occur, the manipulations designed to predispose respondents to either the central or peripheral processing route at each stage generally held.

Table 3.7
Distribution of Group Membership

Group 1 Central-Central	16
Group 2 Central-Peripheral	11
Group 3 Peripheral-Central	15
Group 4 Peripheral-Peripheral	10
Total Number of Respondents	52

As shown in Tables 3.8 and 3.9, the second pretest resulted in clean manipulations for the involvement manipulation. Both approaches to determining its significance were successful. The first issue involvement measurement utilized the amount of time and effort the respondent was willing to invest as the issue involvement measure. This manipulation was significant at the .0001 level. The second measurement of issue involvement utilized the summated score for the issue involvement construct. It proved significant to the .05 level. Hence, multiple support for the effectiveness of this measure occurred. Note that the high involvement group showed a lower mean score, reflecting the coding of 1 to 5 (1 = high or important) for the responses.

Table 3.8
Significance of the
Involvement Manipulation
Variable - Time and Effort

Experimental Group	Mean	No. of Obs.
High Involvement	3.74	25
Low Involvement	5.44	27
F 17.1392	Significance .0001	

Table 3.9
Significance of the
Involvement Measure
Variable - Issue Involvement Total

Experimental Group	Mean	No. of Obs.
High Involvement	6.08	25
Low Involvement	7.30	27
F 4.2211	Significance .0452	

Table 3.10 highlights the effectiveness of the attribution manipulation. For the 2 groups formed with the internal and external attribution manipulation, the groups differed significantly at the .001 level using the summated attribution scale scores.

Table 3.10
Significance of
Attribution Manipulations

Experimental Group	Mean	No. of Obs.
Internal Attributions	7.34	29
External Attributions	14.61	23
F 85.8814	Significance .0000	

Difference scores enable the determination of the resistance to counterpersuasion shown by the experimental groups representing the processing strategies available. These results are summarized below in Tables

3.11 - 3.13. Note that significant differences in the amount of change are supported in the pretest results. Reported significance levels are in excess of .0001. These amounts of change are consistent with those hypothesized in Chapter 2 of this dissertation. This provided encouraging support for completion of the full study.

Table 3.11
Changes in Attitude Toward the Company

Group	Mean	Cases
C-C	-11.06	16
C-P	-1.45	11
P-C	-9.67	15
P-P	-1.60	10
F 10.9489	Significance .0000	

Table 3.12
Changes in Attitude Toward the Brand

Group	Mean	Cases
C-C	-9.50	16
C-P	-1.00	11
P-C	-9.93	15
P-P	-2.40	10
F 8.8502	Significance .0001	

Table 3.13
Changes in Behavioral Intentions

Group	Mean	Cases
C-C	-3.75	16
C-P	-.09	11
P-C	-2.40	15
P-P	-.90	10
F 2.5079	Significance .07	

Preliminary investigation into the proposed causal model wa necessary to determine if the attitudinal constructs were significant in predicting A_B and BI. Of primary interest to this study was to highlight the importance of the role of A_{Co} in the prediction of A_B and BI. Preliminary results were very encouraging for the importance of this construct in predicting attitudinal changes and BI. Although other attitudinal constructs such as A_{Ad} and cognitions did not prove significant, the levels and direction of relationship were encouraging.

It is possible that the insignificance of these constructs in the correlational analysis merely reflected a sample size problem. Adjustments in the sample size and the measurement of the cognition constructs should correct this problem. It is proposed that the measurement of cognitions should not only consist of classification of the number of recalled thoughts, but also the type of thought generated to aid in their significance in the model.

The correlation results for the pretest are presented with the entire

sample as well as a report on the two pure experimental Groups (C-C and P-P). Correlation was used at this point to investigate the model because the use of LISREL at this time was inappropriate due to sample size concerns. The preliminary investigation was designed to highlight the worthiness of investigating the A_{Co} construct in A_B and BI model development.

Table 3.14
Correlations Among the
Attitudinal Components
of the Model with
Attitude toward the Brand
Total Pretest Sample
Stage 2

Variables	Cases	Mean	Std. Dev.	Correlat.
A_{Ad}	52	10.92	3.48	-.02
A_{Co}	52	17.42	5.79	.88**
A_{CA}	52	8.96	3.53	-.37*

**Significant to the .001 level
* Significant to the .01 level

Table 3.15
Correlations Among the Attitudinal
Components of the Model with
Attitude toward the Brand
(C-C Group)
Stage 2

Variables	Cases	Mean	Std. Dev.	Correlat.
A_{Ad}	16	9.06	3.36	-.15
A_{Co}	16	19.63	6.12	.87**
Inv	16	7.88	2.55	.001

**Significant to the .001 level
* Significant to the .01 level

Table 3.16
Correlations Among Attitudinal
Components of the Model with
Attitude toward the Brand
(P-P Group)
Stage 2

Variables	Cases	Mean	Std. Dev.	Correlat.
A_{Ad}	10	12.20	2.89	-.23
A_{Co}	10	14.20	3.88	.71
Inv	10	10.70	2.21	.32

**Significant to the .001 level
* Significant to the .01 level

Table 3.17
Correlation Between
Attitude Toward the Ad
and Attitude Toward the Company
Stage 2

Variables	Cases	Mean	Std. Dev.	Correlat.
A_{Ad}	52	8.96	3.53	-.34**
A_{Co}	52	17.42	5.79	

**Significant to the .001 level
* Significant to the .01 level

Table 3.18
Correlation Between
Attitude Toward the Company
and Behavioral Intentions
Stage 2

Variables	Cases	Mean	Std. Dev.	Correlat.
A_{Co}	52	17.42	5.79	.73**
BI	52	15.73	3.28	

**Significant to the .001 level
* Significant to the .01 level

Table 3.19
Correlations Among the Attitudinal
Change Scores
(C-C Group)

Variables	Cases	Mean	Std. Dev.	Corr with Diff2	Corr with Diff4
A_{Ad}	16	9.06	3.36	.52	.52
A_{Co}	16	-11.06	7.02	.82**	.56
TInv	16	5.37	.72	.14	.01
Diff2	16	-9.50	6.62		
Diff4	16	-3.75	3.84		

**Significant to the .001 level
* Significant to the .01 level

Difference scores included in this analysis reflect changes in A_{Co} (Diff1), A_B (Diff2), number of cognitions recalled (Diff3) and BI (Diff4). TInv reflects the measure of issue involvement reflecting time and effort the respondent was willing to put into the task.

Table 3.20
Correlations Among the Attitudinal
Change Scores
(P-P Group)

Variables	Cases	Mean	Std. Dev.	Corr with Diff2	Corr with Diff4
A_{Ad}	10	12.20	2.90	.23	.20
A_{Co}	10	-1.60	4.55	.76**	.51
TInv	10	4.20	1.55	-.48	-.38
Diff2	10	-2.40	4.70		
Diff4	10	-.90	2.28		

**Significant to the .001 level
* Significant to the .01 level

Table 3.21
Correlations Among Cognitive
Components and Involvement Levels
Post Stage 2

Variables	Cases	Mean	Std. Dev.	Correlat.
Cog2	52	4.67	1.94	-.38*

**Significant to the .001 level
* Significant to the .01 level

Correlational relationships between the number of cognitions recalled and the involvement construct provided support for the effectiveness of the involvement manipulation. Note the correlation was negative due to the scoring of the involvement construct as 1 to 5 (high to low). Support for the

hypothesis that attributional effects increase involvement levels was generated by the significance of the relationship between the number of cognitions generated and the attribution scale.

Table 3.21
Correlations Among Number of Cognitive
Components Recalled and the Attribution Measures
Post Stage 2

Variables	Cases	Mean	Std. Dev.	Correlat.
Cog2	52	4.67	1.94	-.38*

**Significant to the .001 level
* Significant to the .01 level

Consistent with the projections of the model and research hypotheses, a significant relationship has been demonstrated in the pretest between the recall of the respondents of message arguments and the internal attribution of blame. This reflects the proposed relationship in which involvement levels are increased through the evaluation of attributional processes. Note that the correlations reflect negative relationships due to the coding of involvement levels from 1 to 5 (1 being highly involved) and attribution (1 = internal attribution).

Summary

Through the results of the pretest of this dissertation, it was demonstrated that there is empirical support for the hypotheses generated in this

dissertation. Furthermore, support for the construct of A_{Co} in predicting A_B and BI was also developed through this initial study of the dissertation. Through the development of the proposal and these preliminary study results, it was believed that the completion of this study would provide meaningful and contributive results to the field.

CHAPTER FOUR

DEVELOPMENT OF MEASURES AND HYPOTHESIS TESTING

This Chapter will present an overview of the full study results. The overall objective of this Chapter is to report the validity and reliability of the measures, the effectiveness of the experimental manipulations and determination of support for the hypotheses developed in Chapter 2. To achieve this goal, the Chapter will be presented in six major sections: 1) a review of the improvements and amendments suggested through the pretest results; 2) discussion of the measurement model; 3) determination of the effectiveness of the experimental manipulations; 4) amendments to the methods as a result of preliminary full study analyses; 5) results of MANCOVA tests used for determination of support for Hypotheses 1-2 and 6) results of the structural equations model to investigate support for Hypothesis 3-4.

Review of Overall Methods Improvements

Chapter Three concluded with the development of overall study design. The use of the multiple pretest format enabled the determination of reliable experimental manipulations and yielded improvements in assessments of the effectiveness of these manipulations. Specifically, a systematic method for

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the classification of processing group membership, as well as additional measures for the determination of attribution effects were added.

Classification Improvements

At Stage 1 group membership was determined through the use of a weighted average of the individual's self-reported depth of processing, number of cognitions generated and the estimated time the respondent reported would be spent on the task presented. Relative weights for these items were 20%, 40%, and 40%, respectively. This weighting system was used because the artificial nature of the experiment tended to result in inflated self-reported scores on depth of processing. This weighting system enabled compensation against the other, more valid assessments of processing type. In other words, this weighted approach enabled a more systematic classification schema than the strictly judgmental procedure utilized in the pretests. Overall judgement of group membership was monitored through the use of three additional judges that assisted in the coding process.

The coding process consisted of examining each respondent's questionnaire on an individual basis in a three step process.

Step 1 - The number and type of cognitions generated were noted. Self-reported task effort was also investigated to facilitate tie breaks. Scores of 1 and 2 were considered highly involved, central processors. All others

wereconsidered to be peripheral processors. Overall judge agreement was very high with only 28 cases of 722 proving problematic. In these situations, cases were classified based on a two out of three judge agreement on the additional tie breaking questions. Overall interjudge agreement was 96%.

The type of cognitions generated were coded by across judge agreement regarding the primary type of thoughts recalled. In the event of a tie or indecision among the judges, additional research was conducted by reviewing other open-ended questions to enlighten the type of processing that occurred in the respondent. These additional questions asked the respondent to comment on the product and brand. Indepth and thoughtful comments with regards to product attributes were considered to indicate central route processing. Discussion or recollection of cues or very limited remarks were indicative of peripheral processing.

Step 2 - The self reported depth of processing measure was examined. The item that assessed this process was an agreement score indicating how much thought and effort was put into the survey. Scores of 3 and higher resulted in an initial flag that the respondent was a peripheral processor. Agreement scores of 1 and 2 were generally classified as central processors.

Step 3 - Issue involvement was further analyzed by investigating the amount of time the respondent was willing to spend on the situation described in the

scenario. Responses ranged from 0-3 hours to more than 3 days. Alternatives of less than 12 hours total were classified as low involvement respondents. The 12 hour cutoff represented the midpoint of respondent options.

As a result of these three measures, natural breaks appeared in the pattern of responses. In general, respondents that scored a 1 or 2 on the depth of processing measure, a 4 or greater on the effort scale and generated cognitions of 6 or greater represented the average central processor.

Group results across these measurements are as follows:

Table 4.1
Classification of Respondents
by Processing Group
Stage 1

Variable	Group 1 (Central)	Group 2 (Peripheral)	F-Value	Sign.
Time and Effort	5.64	2.65	49.32	.000
Depth of Processing	3.94	2.95	185.75	.000
Number of Cognitions	7.47	4.17	35.19	.000
Weighted Scores	6.03	3.32	70.95	.000

Processing group classification in Stage II consisted of examining the attribution scales as well as the overall number of cognitions generated. Traditional questions with regards to the number of cognitions recalled, effort expended and self-reported depth of processing were utilized to determine group membership using the procedure described in Stage 1 classification.

Results for these classifications followed a similar process as described

above on a case by case basis. Results are included in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2
Classification of Respondents
by Processing Group
Stage 2

Variable	Group 1 (Central)	Group 2 (Peripheral)	F- Value	Sign.
Effort Expended	3.92	3.12	118.13	.00
Depth of Processing	3.98	2.93	198.66	.00
Number of Cognitions	6.12	5.80	1.81	.07
Weighted Scores	4.81	4.15	87.71	.00

Attribution Assessment Improvements

Measures were added to the questionnaire for the determination of

internal and external attributions as a result of pretest analysis. One problem

was that the possibility existed that the assumption of external causation

(primary responsibility for the situation being attributed to the consumer

advocate agency) generated by the respondent could be attributed to the

consumer advocate agency or some other outside factor. Adjustments were

made to assess the extent of the causality assessment across not only the

two parties involved in the experimental manipulation, but also to allow for

the attribution of blame to outside, random factors. These additional constant

sum measures are included in Appendix 4.

Measurement Approach

Many variables of theoretical interest are not directly observable and are referred to as latent variables or factors. These latent variables or constructs are defined as "a concept which the researcher can define in conceptual terms, but which cannot be directly measured" (Hair et al. 1992, p.3). Since these theoretically defined constructs are the basis of the formation of causal relationships, it is necessary to determine a set of measurement indicators that will best approximate these underlying constructs. Hence, the purpose of the measurement model is to determine how well the observable indicators function as a measurement instrument for these constructs (Jöreskog and Sörbom 1988).

The analysis of the measurement model via confirmatory factor analysis enabled the determination of the effectiveness of the measurements used to operationalize the study constructs. This study was able to utilize many established scales for the measurement of most of the attitudinal constructs under investigation, thereby facilitating the analysis and minimizing the reconfiguration of the measurement model.

The specification of the confirmatory model requires the determination of the number of common factors, the number of observed variables, the variances and covariances among the unique factors, the relationship among the observed variables and the latent factors, and the relationship among the

observed variables and the unique factors (Long 1984). The confirmatory

model was specified with the following indicators being utilized initially as

measurement items for the specified attitudinal constructs (Table 4.3).

Table 4.3
Measurement of Attitudinal Constructs

Construct	Semantic Differentials with Item Anchors
Attitude Toward the Brand Statement: My overall impression of the conversion package is ...	Bad/ Good Unsatisfactory/ Satisfactory Beneficial/Harmful Superior/Inferior
Attitude Toward the Company Statement: My general impression of the California Conversion Company is ...	Favorable/Unfavorable Good/Bad Negative/Positive Follower/Leader Successful/Unsuccessful
Attitude Toward the Advertisement Statement: I found the advertisement for Electro-Car ... I felt ____ about the CCC's advertisement.	Interesting/Uninteresting Irritating/Not Irritating Held Attention/Did Not Hold Attention Informative/Uninformative Favorable/Unfavorable Favorably/Unfavorably
Behavioral Intentions Statement: It is _____ that the average person would purchase this product. Indicate which statement you most agree with: I would _____ buy this product.	Likely/Unlikely Probable/Improbable Impossible/Possible definitely, probably, might or might not, probably not, definitely not

Confirmatory factor analysis enabled the investigation of a congeneric model which assumes unidimensionality and enables the loadings and error variances to differ from indicator to indicator. Unidimensionality is defined as "the existence of a single trait underlying a set of indicators," (Hattie 1985). Investigation of the unidimensionality requires an analysis of both the internal and external consistency of the measurement items. Investigation of the measurement model proceeded with the use of the statistical package SPSS for the determination of Cronbach's alpha and LISREL for the investigation of discriminant validity through the confirmatory factor analysis.

Three steps were undertaken to assure the effectiveness of the measurement model: 1) an analysis during the pretest of internal consistency of the relevant constructs and adjustment to items not shown to meet established criteria; 2) analysis of the external consistency and discriminant validity assessed via LISREL after completion of the full study; 3) modification of the confirmatory model to exclude measurement items that did not meet established criteria. After completion of the steps the model was again investigated to assess the improvement and generation of final fit indices and Cronbach's alphas. The guidelines used to analyze the measurement items are listed in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4
Measurement Model Test Statistics

Statistic	Guideline	Source
Cronbach's Alpha	.5 or better	Nunnally (1978)
T-values	t-values > 2.576	Anderson and Gerbing (1982)
Normalized Residuals	should not exceed 2.0	Hair et al. (1992)
Modification Indices	should not exceed 3.86	Hair et al. (1992)
Chi-Square	Lower values advocated	Fornell (1983)
GFI	values toward 1.0	Jöreskog and Sörbom (1988)
RMSR	no clear guidelines	Bagozzi and Yi (1988)
AGFI	.9 or better	Hair et al. (1992)
Normed Fit Index	.9 or better	Bentler and Bonnett (1980)
Tucker-Lewis	.9 or better	Tucker and Lewis (1973)

After the analysis of the measurement items included in the initial confirmatory model, 5 items were determined not to meet the above requirements and were removed from the model. The final items included in the analysis are included as Table 4.5.

Table 4.5
Measurement of Attitudinal Constructs

Construct	Semantic Differentials with Item Anchors
Attitude Toward the Brand Statement: My overall impression of the conversion package is ...	Bad/ Good Unsatisfactory/ Satisfactory Beneficial/Harmful Superior/Inferior
Attitude Toward the Company Statement: My general impression of the California Conversion Company is ...	Favorable/Unfavorable Good/Bad Negative/Positive
Attitude Toward the Advertisement Statement: I found the advertisement for Electro-Car ...	Interesting/Uninteresting Irritating/Not Irritating Held Attention/Did Not Hold Attention
Behavioral Intentions Statement: It is _____ that the average person would purchase this product.	Likely/Unlikely Probable/Improbable Impossible/Possible

Removal of these items were based on tests to confirm unidimensionality of the constructs. Items removed from the model exhibited standardized residuals in excess of 2.0, modification indices above 3.86 or t-values in excess of 2.576. Items failing to meet these criteria are typically not significantly related to their specified constructs and should be removed from the measurement model (Hair et al. 1992). Offending items were removed and these checks were conducted again to assure unidimensionality.

Items not investigated through the confirmatory factor analysis were the single-item measures for brand and company cognitions and ad non-claim and claim cognitions. Traditional approaches in the literature for assessing these characteristics have utilized a single item indicator (e.g., Petty and Cacioppo 1989). For the purposes of the structural model investigation, a reliability of .75 was assumed for single item measures.

Internal consistency was assessed after the removal of problematic items from the confirmatory model using Cronbach's alpha for the overall sample and for each experimental group. These estimates are shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6
Reliability of Measurement Items
Full Study - Stage II Measures

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha				
	Full	C-C	C-P	P-C	P-P
Attitude toward the Ad	.84	.80	.85	.83	.85
Attitude toward the Company	.99	.96	.97	.92	.94
Attitude toward the Brand	.97	.92	.94	.92	.94
Behavioral Intentions	.86	.75	.91	.81	.88
# Cases	723	205	160	151	197

As described in Chapter 3, a series of measures were developed to assess the respondent's attitude about the source, product involvement, issue involvement, overall processing involvement and the attributional processes.

These measures were used as checks on the effectiveness of the experimental manipulations. Reliabilities for these measurements are included below as Table 4.7.

Note that the issue involvement measure continues to be problematic. The third pretest yielded poor reliability for these measures thereby requiring the development of additional measures. These adjustments failed to yield more reliable indicators when used in the full study.

Table 4.7
Scale Reliabilities
Experimental Manipulation Assessments
Full Sample

Scale	Alpha (Non-Standardized)
Product Involvement	.93
Issue Involvement	.25
Environmental Involvement	.78
Source Credibility - General	.90
Source Credibility - Specific	.95
Summed Involvement Measure (Stage I)	.54
Summed Involvement Measure (Stage II)	.58
Summed Attribution Measure	.80

The final confirmatory measurement model resulted in the following statistics (Table 4.8). These resulting statistics shown in Table 4.8 all met established guidelines.

Table 4.8
Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results
Full Sample (n = 689)[1]

Construct	λ	θ	Item Rel.	Average Variance Extracted	Composite Reliability
A(Ad) $\lambda_{(1,1)}$	.85	.28	.72		
$\lambda_{(2,1)}$	.68	.54	.47		
$\lambda_{(3,1)}$	.86	.26	.74	.64	.84
A(Co) $\lambda_{(4,2)}$	.96	.07	.93		
$\lambda_{(5,2)}$	.98	.04	.96		
$\lambda_{(6,2)}$	.91	.16	.84	.91	.97
A(B) $\lambda_{(7,3)}$	.93	.13	.87		
$\lambda_{(8,3)}$	.94	.12	.88		
$\lambda_{(9,3)}$	.93	.14	.86		
$\lambda_{(10,3)}$	.79	.38	.62		
$\lambda_{(11,3)}$	.86	.27	.74	.75	.95
BI $\lambda_{(12,4)}$	.84	.30	.70		
$\lambda_{(13,4)}$	.93	.14	.86		
$\lambda_{(14,4)}$	.79	.53	.47	.69	.87
Chi-Square (71 df)	279.38	p - level .00			
GFI	.95				
RMSQR	.02				
Tucker- Lewis	.93				

[1] A_{Ad-nc}, A_{Ad-c}, CoCog and BCog are all indicated with single items and reliabilities for these items were set at .75.

Experimental Manipulations

Determination of the effectiveness of the experimental scenarios in this dissertation was crucial. Without adequate functioning of the experimental manipulations, it would be impossible to analyze the group's resistance to counterpersuasion. Therefore, the effective measurement of the constructs in question and a resulting clear separation across experimental groups was crucial to the effectiveness of the full study.

Data collection proceeded with the goal of attaining sample size of 800 total. This consisted of 200 respondents for each of the four processing groups. Statistical requirements, however, only mandated that approximately 700 respondents be attained, 200 for each of the pure groups (C-C and P-P) and approximately 150 for each of the cross over groups (C-P and P-C). The relatively smaller sample size resulted from the intention to test the structural model only with the two consistent processing groups (C-C and P-P). Total sample size attained and the distribution across the processing groups is included as Table 4.9.

Final sample groups were composed of college students from two Southeastern universities selected on a convenience basis. Surveys were administered to the students on two consecutive class meetings. Stage I was administered on day 1, and students were encouraged to participate in both parts of the study. Stage II was administered on the second class meeting

with refresher directions given regarding the mechanics of the study and directions for completion. As an incentive to complete both halves of the survey, the students were awarded 5 extra credit points only if both parts of the survey were completed.

Table 4.9
Distribution of Group Membership

Group 1 Central-Central	205
Group 2 Central-Peripheral	160
Group 3 Peripheral-Central	144
Group 4 Peripheral-Peripheral	188
Total Number of Respondents	697

Manipulation Checks

After attaining the appropriate sample sizes and entering the survey data, it was then necessary to assess the effectiveness of the experimental manipulations. Without attaining distinct experimental groups, further analysis for hypothesis testing would not be possible. Procedures for testing the effectiveness of the experimental manipulations were similar to those utilized in the pretest. The additional attribution variables were also utilized to assess the assignment of blame across the company, the consumer advocate agency,

and random occurrences. These results are included as Tables 4.10. Note that involvement levels are clearly separated across high and low involvement groups.

Table 4.10
Manipulation Check Mean Comparisons[A]

Involvement Measures (Stage I)	Low (n = 347)	High (n = 371)	F-value	p-level
Summed Involvement Scale	10.06 (1.96)	12.42 (1.58)	121.54	.00
Involvement Measure (Stage II)	Low (n = 357)	High (n = 357)	F-value	p-level
Summed Involvement Scale	10.61 (2.11)	12.49 (1.80)	166.80	.00
Attribution Measures	External (n = 357)	Internal (n = 357)	F-value	p-level
Blame Consumer Advocate	36.54 (23.18)	22.27 (22.35)	6.65	.000
Blame Company	49.57 (24.67)	68.35 (24.82)	10.63	.000
Summed Attribution Measure	10.29 (3.21)	6.40 (2.59)	316.88	.000

[A] Numbers in parentheses indicate scale standard deviations.

Involvement was measured through a series of items designed to highlight the individual's involvement with the situation presented in the

Stage I manipulation.   Operationalization of this was accomplished by developing a low and high issue involvement scenario. The high involvement scenario asked the respondent to imagine him/her self in a situation in which a car for personal use was about to be purchased. The low involvement scenario developed scenario about a friend living in a distant state needed assistance in a purchase. This is consistent with the manipulation approaches traditionally used by Petty and Cacioppo (1989, 1986, 1981) and enables the development of lower involvement in the respondent.

Measurement of the involvement construct was completed using items asking respondents to indicate the level of effort they would expend on the task, how much thought would be used in the situation and the importance of the particular purchase situation presented. Measures for these items were gathered after both the Stage I and Stage II manipulations.

Three separate measures were used to assess the effectiveness of the attribution manipulation. The first measurements were the additional constant sum scales developed at the conclusion of the third pretest. These measures utilized a constant sum scale in which the respondent was asked to distribute 100 points to three possible alternative causal agents: the California Conversion Company, the consumer advocate agency, and random events. Hence, the mean scores in Table 4.10 represent the proportion of 100 points assigned internally and externally to the firm and advocate agency. It is interesting to note that the internal attributors assigned almost 70% of the

blame for the product failure to the company versus 50% of blame to the company by the external attributors. The high report of blame from the external attribution group may reflect the general level of skepticism associated with any negative publicity that consumers encounter in the marketplace.

The final attribution manipulation check consisted of developing a summed scale to assess blame. The measures included items assessing the firm's responsibility for the failure of the product to meet ad claims, whether the consumer advocate agency was making unfounded claims against the company, whether the firm was responsible for the inferior product performance, and whether the California Conversion Company was placing profits ahead of consumer satisfaction and truthfulness in advertising. Reported reliabilities for both of these scales were reported in Table 4.7.

As shown in Table 4.10, the experimental manipulations developed in the research design held up in the full study. The involvement manipulation used in Stage 1 held firm and resulted in clearly differentiated groups. Stage 2 manipulations for the attribution effect generating central or peripheral processing were also effective. The two new measures assessing the amount of blame across the three factors: corporate, agency and random events were found to be significantly different across experimental groups. Furthermore, total attributions across the 4 groups were also found to be significantly different, with the internal attribution groups tending to blame the company,

and the external attribution groups blaming the consumer advocate agency or factors other than the company (Table 4.11).

Table 4.11
Assessment of the Significance of
the Attribution Manipulation
by Total Attribution Assessment
(Stage II)

Group	Mean	Cases
C-C (1)	6.33	205
C-P (2)	10.34	160
P-C (3)	6.50	151
P-P (4)	10.23	197
F 104.98	Significance .00	

To conclude the investigation into the effectiveness of the experimental manipulations, it was also necessary to investigate the number of respondents who were classified opposite of their expected group membership. It was of interest to note the number of subjects who were exposed to the high involvement or internal attribution manipulation who did not engage in central processing and vice versa for those subjects exposed to peripheral processing manipulations. Table 4.12 highlights the number of cross-over individuals. An average of 10% of respondents failed to respond adequately to the high involvement or the attribution manipulation. This 10% of respondents read the scenario but failed to generate the appropriate internal or external

attribution.

Table 4.12
Crossover Respondents
by Experimental Manipulation
Involvement Manipulation

Processing Group

Involvement Manipulation	Central (1)	Peripheral (2)	Total
High (1)	327 (88%)	43 (12%)	371 (51.5%)
Low (2)	43 (12%)	306 (88%)	349 (48.5%)
Total	370	349	720

Examination of cross-over individuals in the attribution manipulation are included as Table 4.13. Note that approximately 7% of the internal attributors failed to process the information centrally. Recipients of the external manipulation failed to respond adequately in approximately 4% of the cases.

Table 4.13
Crossover Respondents
by Experimental Manipulation
Attribution Manipulation

Processing Group

Attribution Manipulation	Central (1)	Peripheral (2)	Total
Internal (1)	341 (93%)	24 (7%)	365 (50.7%)
External (2)	16 (4%)	339 (96%)	355 (49.3%)
Total	357	363	720

Crossover individuals are included here for reference only. The importance of classifying the respondents in the appropriate processing groups is what is of relevance when investigating the attitude change of individuals by processing type. Therefore, although it is important to investigate the number of individuals that failed to respond to the manipulations correctly, the study truly hinges upon the correct classification of individuals by processing group and how these individuals' attitudes changed during the study.[1]

[1]Re-analysis of the MANCOVA was performed to determine if the crossover individuals impacted the results in a significant way. Crossover individuals were removed from the sample population, and the MANCOVA analysis was performed again. Results of this reanalysis indicated that the same pattern and magnitude of differences was found among the attitudinal and intention constructs. Significant effects were found for both the source credibility factor and the processing group effect.

Attitudinal Measures

Once the establishment of effective experimental manipulations occurred, it was necessary to determine if a difference existed in measurement incidences of the attitudinal constructs. As evidenced by the attached survey instruments, the attitudinal constructs were measured at Stage 1 after the initial involvement manipulation and at the beginning of the second questionnaire administration, prior to experimental manipulation 2. It was necessary to determine if the time span between surveys 1 and 2 resulted in any change in the attitudinal groups. They were not found to have changed significantly and the use of the Stage 1 measures was deemed appropriate. These findings are included in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14
Determination of Changes in Attitudes
from Stage 1 to Stage 2
(Prior to the Stage 2 Manipulation)
Low Involvement Group[A]

Attitudinal Measures	Low Inv	t-value	p-level	Sample Size
A(Ad)	10.65 10.67	-.19	.85	318
A(B)	11.64 11.44	1.39	.16	329
A(Co)	10.95 10.99	-.25	.80	336
BI	24.60 24.02	2.71	.01	325

[A] Means are indicated in cells from Stage 1 to pre-Stage 2.

Table 4.15
Determination of Changes in Attitudes
from Stage 1 to Stage 2
(Prior to the Stage 2 Manipulation)
High Involvement Group[A]

Attitudinal Measures	High Inv	t-value	p-level	Sample Size
A(Ad)	9.28 9.27	.11	.91	370
A(B)	10.21 10.05	1.22	.22	370
A(Co)	9.62 9.78	-1.32	.19	370
BI	23.39 23.17	1.12	.26	325

[A] Means are indicated in cells from Stage 1 to pre-Stage 2.

While the results of the analysis of the experimental manipulations were encouraging, it became clear that the development of the internal and external attribution scenario may have inadvertently resulted in differential perceptions of source credibility between attribution groups. Even though the same source, a consumer advocate agency, was used in both scenarios, it was necessary to investigate whether the source credibility factor varied across experimental manipulation groups.

Experimental Controls

It was the intention of this dissertation to manipulate two variables (involvement and attributional effects) to encourage central and peripheral processing during the two-stage study. Any additional variables included in

the dissertation to aid in development of the scenarios were stipulated to be held constant. Hence, the role of source credibility was designed to be held constant in the dissertation.

The layout of the study required the development of a two-stage design. The Stage I manipulation was designed to encourage central and peripheral processing through the manipulation of subject involvement. The second stage of the study required the manipulation of attributional effects. Although the source of the message did not change, (an unnamed consumer advocate agency), the scenario and circumstances surrounding the New York Times article did vary. These changes included a description of the past behavior of the firm and the consumer advocate agency to enable the manipulation of control, stability and locus to encourage either attributions of company blame or external blame.

The external attribution was designed to lead the respondent to conclude that the California Conversion Company was not responsible for any corporate misconduct or product failure. The scenario described in the newspaper article characterized the consumer advocate agency as conducting relatively superficial investigations and releasing premature findings. Comparatively, the internal attribution focused not on the consumer advocate agency, but on the California Conversion Company's primary role in the product failure described in the newspaper article. Hence, by manipulating

attribution effects via controllability, stability and locus, an unforeseen variance in source credibility across processing groups apparently resulted.

Source credibility was measured using established semantic differential scales designed to assess the respondent's attitude toward the source. A general source credibility scale used to describe the items measuring the respondents' overall impression of all consumer advocate groups' credibility. Respondents were asked to evaluate their view on consumer advocate groups in general on semantic differentials designed to assess knowledge, informativeness, credibility and truthfulness. The situational measure of source credibility utilized the same semantic differentials with an opening statement designed to assess the specific consumer advocate agency described in the newspaper article presented.

Results in Table 4.16 indicate that although the design of the study specified that source credibility be held constant, the actual perceptions of source credibility differed across groups. Source credibility levels were fairly constant at the general level with the exception of the C-C processing group. This may reflect a carry effect of the overall emotional, knee-jerk reaction generated by the internal attribution scenario. It seems apparent, however, that more dramatic differences in source credibility perceptions appeared across Stage II manipulation groups of internal vs. external attributions.

Table 4.16
Assessment of the Perceived Source Credibility
Across Experimental Groups
General Credibility vs. Situational Credibility
(Stage II)

Group	Means		Cases
	General	Situational	
C-C(1)	11.76	9.61	205
C-P(2)	12.53	13.80	160
P-C(3)	12.68	10.14	149
P-P(4)	12.69	14.04	193
F-Value	6.77[1]	73.66[1]	

[1] denotes significance at the .000 level

The greater variance associated with the situational measurement most likely reflects the type of attribution scenarios presented to the processing groups. Groups 1 and 3 received the internal attribution resulting in very inflamed and polarized attitudes toward the firm and brand. Groups 2 and 4 received external attribution scenarios that by nature appeared to moderate emotional reactions and result in more temperate responses by the reader.

It should be noted, however, that many respondents in these groups (external attributors), however, noted disbelief or anger towards the firm (to lesser degrees than the internal attributors) irrespective of the external scenario. This is highlighted by results in Table 4.17 where crossover individuals are diagrammed. Approximately 27% of external processors exhibited high levels of source credibility.

Table 4.17
Source Credibility by Attribution Manipulation

Source Credibility[B]	Attribution Manipulation[A]		
	1	2	Total
1	257	98	355
2	98	260	358
Total	355	358	713

[A] Attribution Group 1 = Interval Attribution, Group 2 = External Attribution
[B] Source Credibility Group 1 = High Levels of Source Credibility; Group 2 = Low Levels of Source Credibility

In light of the inadvertent manipulation of source credibility in the dissertation, it was necessary to investigate the impact this occurrence had on the hypothesized differences across the proposed attitudinal constructs. MANCOVA was selected for the analysis of these hypotheses for it enabled the effects of the source credibility issue to be included in the analysis. It was determined that source credibility acted primarily as a covariate and should be accounted for in the investigation of the hypotheses related to attitudinal resistance to counterpersuasion.

MANCOVA allows the inclusion of a metric independent variable into the data analysis. Source credibility was determined to be a significant covariate, for it is highly correlated with the dependent variables, yet exhibits an independent effect from the processing group.

Tables 4.18-4.20 highlight the MANCOVA results. Dependent variables used were changes in behavioral intentions, A_B, A_{Ad}, and A_{Co}. The

independent measure was the processing group effect and source credibility was analyzed as a covariate.

As shown in Table 4.18, a main effect was found for processing group, while the source credibility perceptual difference yielded a significant covariate factor. After the influence of differential source credibility perceptions is accounted for, processing group identity does exert a significant main effect on attitudes and behavioral intentions for the subjects in this study.

Table 4.18
MANCOVA Results
Changes in Attitudinal Constructs[A]

MANCOVA Covariate: Source Credibility	Sum of Squares	D.F.	MSE	F	p	Effect Size
ANCOVA						
A_{Co}	1351.51	1	1351.51	49.94	.000	.12
A_B	890.06	1	890.06	26.30	.000	.08
BI	451.04	1	451.04	26.94	.000	.03
	Value					
Wilk's Lambda	.9114		3	17.46	.000	

Significant Contrasts[A] By Group Membership:

High Source Credibility

A_B	A_{Co}	BI
(1 = 3) > (2 = 4)	(1 = 2) > (2 = 4)	(1 = 3) > (2 = 4)

Low Source Credibility

A_B	A_{Co}	BI
(1 = 3) > (2 = 4)	(1 = 3) > (2 = 4)	(1 = 3) > (2)
		(3) > (4)

**Main Effect:
Processing Group**

	Sum of Squares	D.F.	MSE	F	p	Effect Size
ANCOVA						
A_{Co}	228.96	3	686.88	25.87	.000	.08
A_B	144.88	3	434.65	16.53	.000	.06
BI	145.21	3	135.64	7.50	.000	.04
Wilk's Lambda	.8527		9	9.87	.000	

[A] Dependent measures are change scores, calculated as (Stage I measure - Stage II measure).

Table 4.19
Attitude and Intention Mean Comparisons by Processing Group
Controlling for Source Credibility Levels

Dependent Variable	Processing Group	Source Credibility			
		High		Low	
Attitude (Company)	C-C	20.49	(3.25)[A]	18.37	(5.26)
	C-P	14.72	(5.61)	12.46	(4.18)
	P-C	21.51	(3.44)	17.88	(4.27)
	P-P	16.04	(5.81)	13.38	(4.99)
Attitude (Brand)	C-C	19.81	(4.93)	18.31	(4.99)
	C-P	15.78	(5.32)	13.03	(4.32)
	P-C	20.51	(4.50)	18.59	(4.54)
	P-P	16.78	(5.63)	13.57	(4.05)
Behavioral Intentions	C-C	16.12	(2.93)	15.84	(3.06)
	C-P	14.32	(4.20)	12.54	(3.37)
	P-C	17.12	(2.77)	15.39	(2.58)
	P-P	14.96	(4.38)	13.23	(3.76)

[A]Numbers in parentheses are scale standard deviations.

Significant Contrasts[B]

A_B	A_{Co}	BI
(1 = 3) > (2 = 4)	(1 = 3) > (2 = 4)	(1 = 3) > (2 = 4)

[B] Groups are represented numerically (1 = C-C; 2 = C-P; 3 = P-C; 4 = P-P)

Table 4.20
Attitude and Intention Change Score Comparisons by
Processing Group Controlling For Source Credibility Levels

Dependent Variable	Processing Group	Source Credibility High		Low
Change in Attitude-Co.	C-C	-10.92	(4.47)[A]	- 8.86 (5.67)
	C-P	- 5.88	(6.82)	- 2.74 (4.14)
	P-C	-11.02	(5.49)	- 6.83 (6.40)
	P-P	- 5.06	(5.57)	- 2.59 (5.56)
Change in Attitude -Brand	C-C	- 9.48	(5.25)	- 8.49 (5.89)
	C-P	- 6.10	(5.41)	- 2.68 (4.45)
	P-C	- 9.35	(5.98)	- 6.18 (6.89)
	P-P	- 4.87	(5.47)	- 2.46 (4.98)
Behavioral Intentions	C-C	7.51	(6.17)	7.84 (4.95)
	C-P	8.78	(6.69)	10.89 (5.43)
	P-C	6.91	(7.01)	9.48 (6.24)
	P-P	9.50	(6.78)	10.71 (6.19)

[A]Numbers in parentheses are scale standard deviations.

Significant Contrasts[B]:

A_B	A_{Co}	BI
$(1=3) > (2=4)$	$(1=3) > (2=4)$	$(1=3) > (2=4)$

[B] Groups are represented numerically (1 = C-C; 2 = C-P; 3 = P-C; 4 = P-P)

In an attempt to further assess the nature of the impact of source credibility on attitudes and behavioral intentions, subjects were divided into high and low source credibility groups on the basis of a median split on their scale scores for situational source credibility. Then, the two pure processing groups (C-C and P-P) were analyzed separately using a one-way ANOVA to determine the nature of the source credibility effect. Source credibility had a positive and significant ($p < .05$), effect for A_{Co} and A_B for both the C-C and P-P groups (A_{Co}: F = 11.53, $p < .01$) (P-P group: F = 9.19, $p < .003$; A_B: C-C, F = 4.46, $p < .04$; P-P: F = 18.05, $p < .01$). Source credibility had a significant, positive effect on BI for the P-P group (P-P: F = 6.86, $p < .01$), but not for the C-C group. Higher levels of source credibility were associated with higher levels of attitude change and lower levels of mean attitude. The lower attitude level impact reflects the nature of the negative publicity scenario used, since the stimulus led to more negative attitudes if it was perceived as credible.

The significant main effect for processing group is also displayed in Table 4.18. As the pattern of significant contrasts shows, even after source credibility is accounted for, both Stage II central processing groups (C-C and P-C) exhibit greater change in attitude than peripheral processing groups. This pattern is reversed for the behavioral intention scores, with peripheral processing groups (C-P and P-P) showing significantly greater change in behavioral intentions than the central processing groups.

Table 4.18 includes analysis of effect size for each of these factors. As shown above, the source credibility factor explained approximately 12% of the variance in the A_{Co} construct, approximately 8% of the explained variance in A_B and 3% of the variance explained in BI. The processing group effect resulted in explained variance of 8% in A_{Co}, 6% in A_B, and 4% in BI. Overall explained variance between the two factors was approximately 20% for A_{Co}, 14% for A_B, and 7% for BI.

In evaluating the obtained effect size few useful benchmarks are available to judge the impact of findings (Peterson, Albaum and Beltramini 1985). Prior research has found that effect sizes for consumer behavior experiments tend to be quite small, generally are around 9% when using college student samples. Thus, the effect sizes generated in this study are consistent with prior studies done in the area. Cohen (1977) has set some guidelines of 0.01, 0.06 and .14 respectively as small, medium and large effects.

Figure 4.1 illustrates the lack of interaction between source credibility and processing group and highlights some important findings. Note that the C-C processors maintain a greater level of attitude change for both the hi and low source credibility groups. Note that the changes in behavioral intention scores are higher for the P-P group than the C-C group. It was also demonstrated that the high and low source credibility groups within the C-C
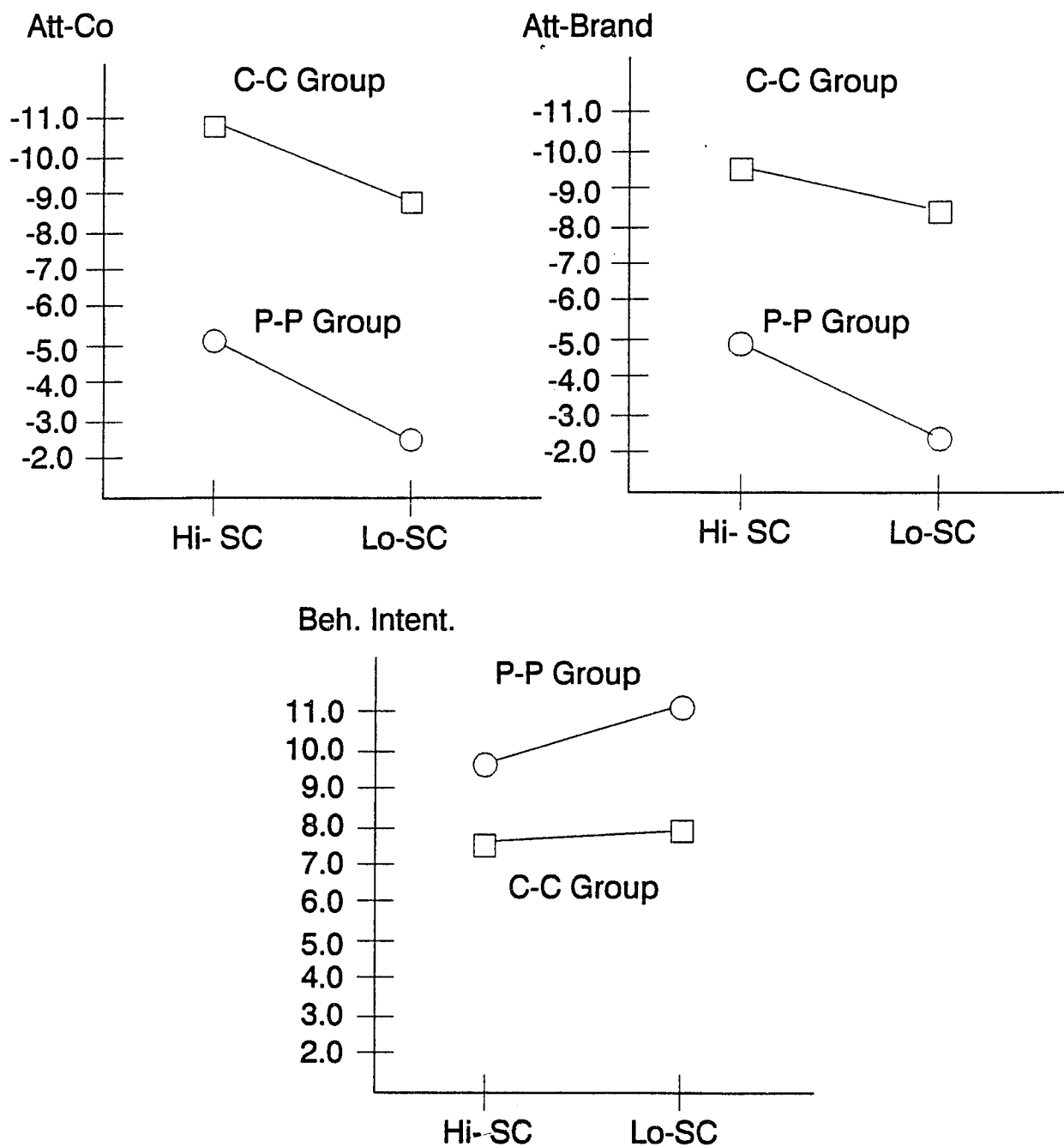
Figure 4.1
Attitude/Intention Change Scores by
Processing Group and Source Credibility Level

and P-P processing groups maintained significantly different attitudinal mean scores.

Tables 4.19 and 4.20 reflect the attitude and intentions mean and differences comparisons. Note the consistent pattern in the data in which the central groups (C-C and P-C) tend to exhibit the greatest amounts of change in the attitudinal components. Likewise, these two groups exhibit the more negative attitudes with regards to the product, the firm and behavioral intentions. This pattern shows quite consistent reactions across the central processing groups at both the mean and difference levels.

Hypothesis Testing

At the conclusion of Chapter 2, four primary research hypotheses were generated. Determination of support for these hypotheses was done through a combination of MANCOVA and structural model analysis. These primary hypotheses are summarized below in Table 4.21.

Table 4.21
Research Hypotheses

H1	Attitudes resulting from the central route to persuasion will show significantly less change than those attitudes resulting from the peripheral route to persuasion.
H2	Attitude towards the company will show significantly more susceptibility to change when internal attributions are made regarding the company's causal role in the contradictory information, compared to those subjects exposed to the external attribution stimulus.
H3	Cognitions will be positively related to the formation of attitudinal components.
H4	The predictive role of cognitions is absent in the peripheral model of attitude formation.

MANCOVA analysis was used to investigate support for hypotheses 1 and 2 enabling the determination of differences in attitudinal means across the experimental groups while accounting for the source credibility issue. Structural equations modeling was performed to determine support for hypotheses 3 and 4 by investigating the relationships that exist between the constructs of interest. SPSS was

utilized for the MANCOVA work and LISREL was used for the structural equations modeling.

Attitudinal Change Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1 states that the attitudes formed initially under central route processing should be shown as significantly more resistant to change than those attitudes formed peripherally. Attitudinal constructs utilized in this analysis were A_{Co} and A_B. Initial groups found to process centrally were groups 1 and 2. Results:

Hypothesis 1 was weakly supported.

Group 1 (C-C) processors were the most cognitively oriented of all of the experimental groups. Central processors at the conclusion of Stage 1 were then subjected to a highly involving scenario with regards to the internal attribution of corporate blame in a negative publicity situation. These processors were found to exhibit the greatest changes in A_{Co} and A_B, hence being the least resistant to attitude change.

Respondents in group 2 (C-P), however, were able to quickly dismiss the incoming counter-messages and resulting attitudinal changes were significantly less than those individuals in group 1. These attitudes proved reasonably resistant to counterpersuasion and in general showed

the most resistance to counterpersuasion. These results are summarized in Table 4.19.

Hypothesis 1A states that those attitudes initially formed under the peripheral route and exposed to central information at Stage 2 would be the most susceptible to change. Results:

Hypothesis 1A was weakly supported.

This hypothesis was weakly supported in that BI did exhibit the greatest level of change for this group across the experimental manipulations. Other attitudinal components exhibited change second only to the C-C processors.

Hypothesis 1B stated respondents that held centrally formed initial attitudes would be least susceptible to change with the introduction of centrally processed contradictory information. Results:

Hypothesis 1B was soundly rejected.

Results indicate that those attitudes initially formed via the central route exhibited the **greatest** change when introduced to the internal attribution stimulus in Stage 2. This most likely reflects the negative emotion associated with the Stage 2 stimulus.

Hypothesis 1C stated that attitudes initially formed via the central route would show only mild susceptibility to change when introduced to contradictory information that was designed to be processed peripherally. Results:

Hypothesis 1C was supported.

While these individuals did appear to have only mild susceptibility to change in attitudes, this group behaved very similarly to the P-P processors as opposed to the P-C processors. Again, this may reflect the inflammatory nature of the Stage 2 internal attribution stimulus. It shows a polarization of attitudes that was not necessarily anticipated in the design of the study.

Hypothesis 2 states that experimental groups exposed to the internal attribution stimulus exhibited the greatest change in A_{Co}. Results:

Hypothesis 2 was supported.

It was also found that the amount of change in this construct did not differ significantly between Groups 1 and 3. This indicates a similar response in both direction and magnitude.

Tables 4.19 and 4.20 summarize the behavior of the attitude and intention constructs. Mean differences across processing and source credibility groups as well as changes in attitudes and intentions (difference scores) are included. Reported mean scores indicate that the higher the reported mean, the less favorably the consumer felt toward the brand or company. Items were coded to indicate lower scores for more favorable feelings toward the object of interest.

Higher mean scores (more negative attitudes) indicated by the central route processors reveal in-depth processing led to a higher level of skepticism for this group with regards to this product. Comments on the free recall questions reflected respondent concerns about specific technical points that were not reported by the peripheral groups. Consequently, more favorable overall attitudes were held by the predominantly peripheral processors.

Hence, the MANCOVA analysis suggests that the resistance to counterpersuasion of central route processors so often posited in the literature may not be appropriate for all situations. Specifically, situations that involve elements of internal attribution in which deceit or misrepresentation may be involved can yield attitudes that are quite malleable. In other words, in certain situations, generalizations about the resistance and persistence of attitudes may be subject to other factors

beyond the traditional explanations of the respondents' ability to counterargue incoming contradictory information.

The ELM deals with cognitive processing or the lack of processing. The model was not designed to include situations in which the emotional elements of a response assume the primary role in final attitude formation. The emotional elements appear to override the cognitive processing that occurred yielding attitudes that may quickly polarize.

While this lack of support for these hypotheses is troubling, it highlights some implications associated with negative publicity scenarios. The deceit and fraudulent elements of these publicity occurrences yield processing and attitude formation patterns that are quite different from previously investigated models. Hence, while these results are not supportive of the hypotheses, the results are quite helpful for understanding the increasingly common occurrence of negative publicity.

Structural Equations Analysis

Relationship Hypotheses

The dissertation proposed a theoretical model that stated that alternative processing routes would result in different approaches to the formation of A_B and BI. This model is presented as Figure 4.2. The hypotheses developed to test this model deal with the significance and

direction associated with the proposed causal paths across the two pure processing groups (C-C and P-P).

The analyses of Hypotheses 3 and 4 requires the investigation of this model and how the processing groups differ in the process of . forming attitudes and intentions. Analysis required the use of the full model (Figure 4.2) to determine the significance and direction of possible paths to the formation of attitudes and intentions. By using the full model for the analysis, both of the pure processing groups could be examined in detail.

The full model provided for the formation of central route attitudes by relying on different constructs than those formed via the peripheral route. For centrally formed attitudes, the model posited that cognitions regarding the firm and the brand were positively associated with the resulting A_{Co} and A_B. Claim elements (A_{Ad-c}) of the advertisement were predictive of A_{Ad}, and A_{Ad} would be positively associated with the formation of the brand and company cognitions. The resulting A_{Co} and A_B would be predictive of BI.

To test the effectiveness of this model, a structural equations analysis was performed. The covariance matrix was used in the analysis. The measurement model was fixed by setting the loadings for each scale to the square root of the scale reliability X its variance. Measurement error terms were fixed as 1 - (scale reliability X variance).
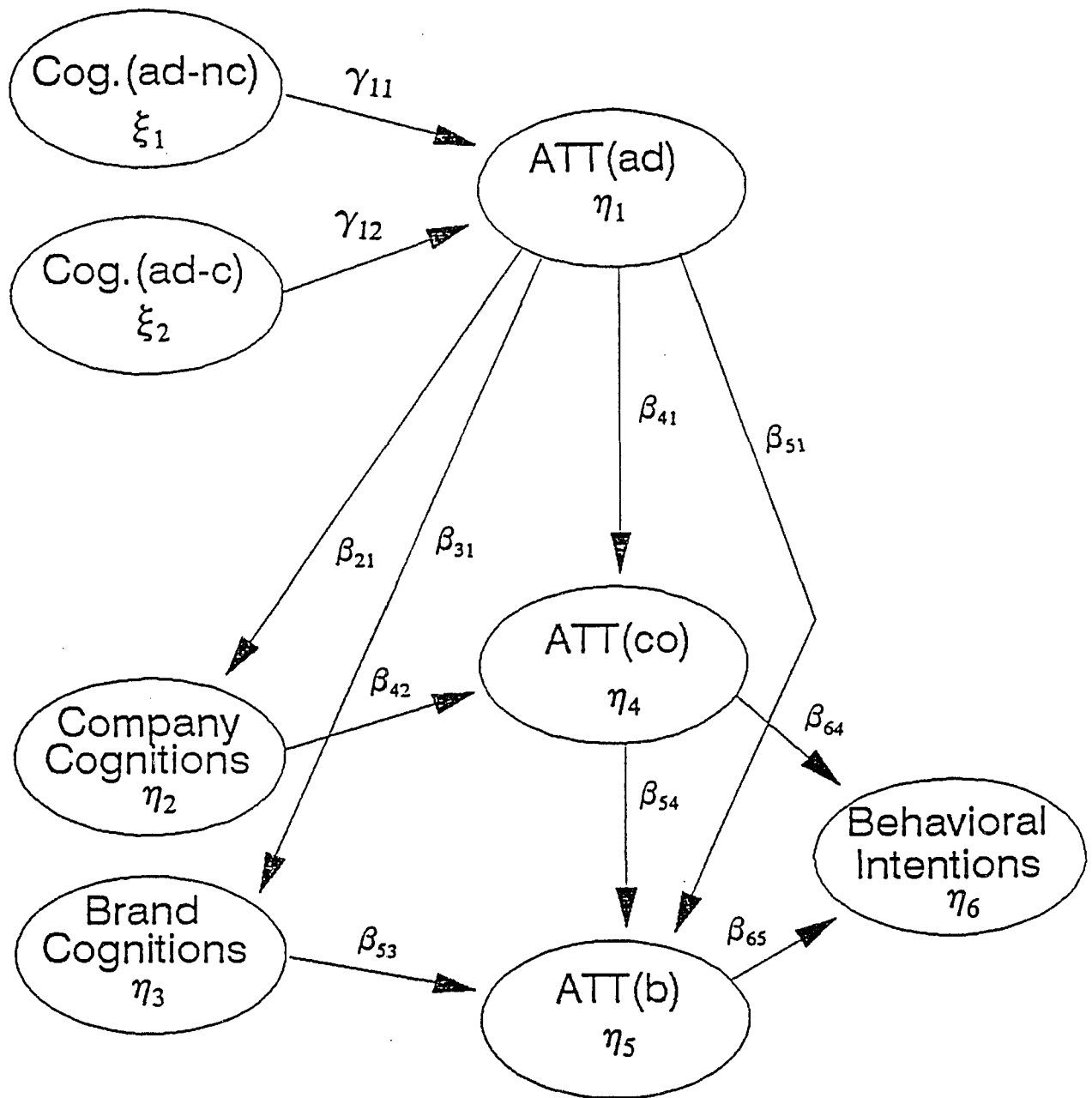
Figure 4.2
Full LISREL Model Tested
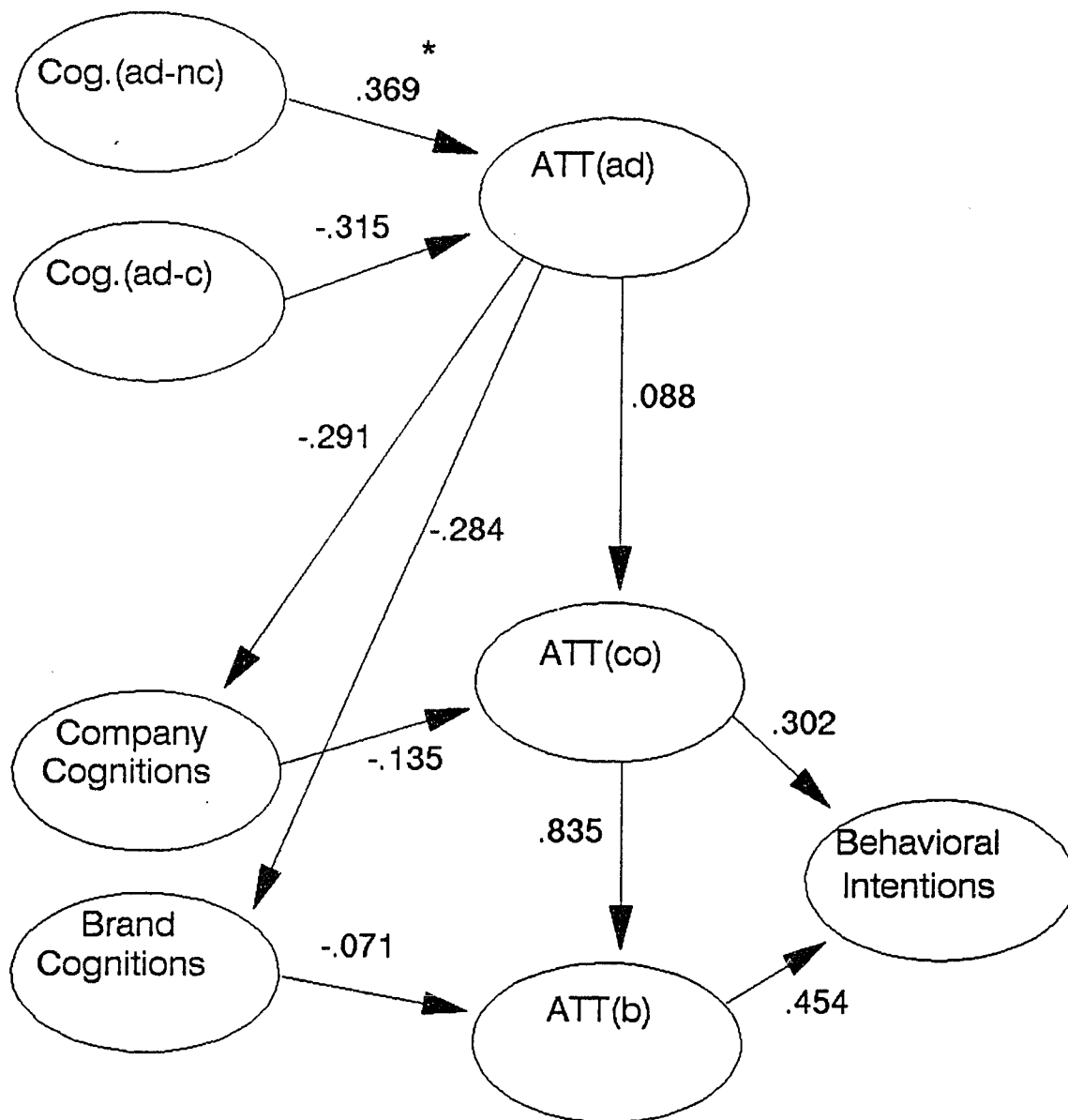
X2, 15df = 19.88

p < .176

GFI = .974

AGFI = .937

* RMSQR = .206

Coeff. sig. at p < .10

Figure 4.3
Parameter Estimates - Central/Central Group
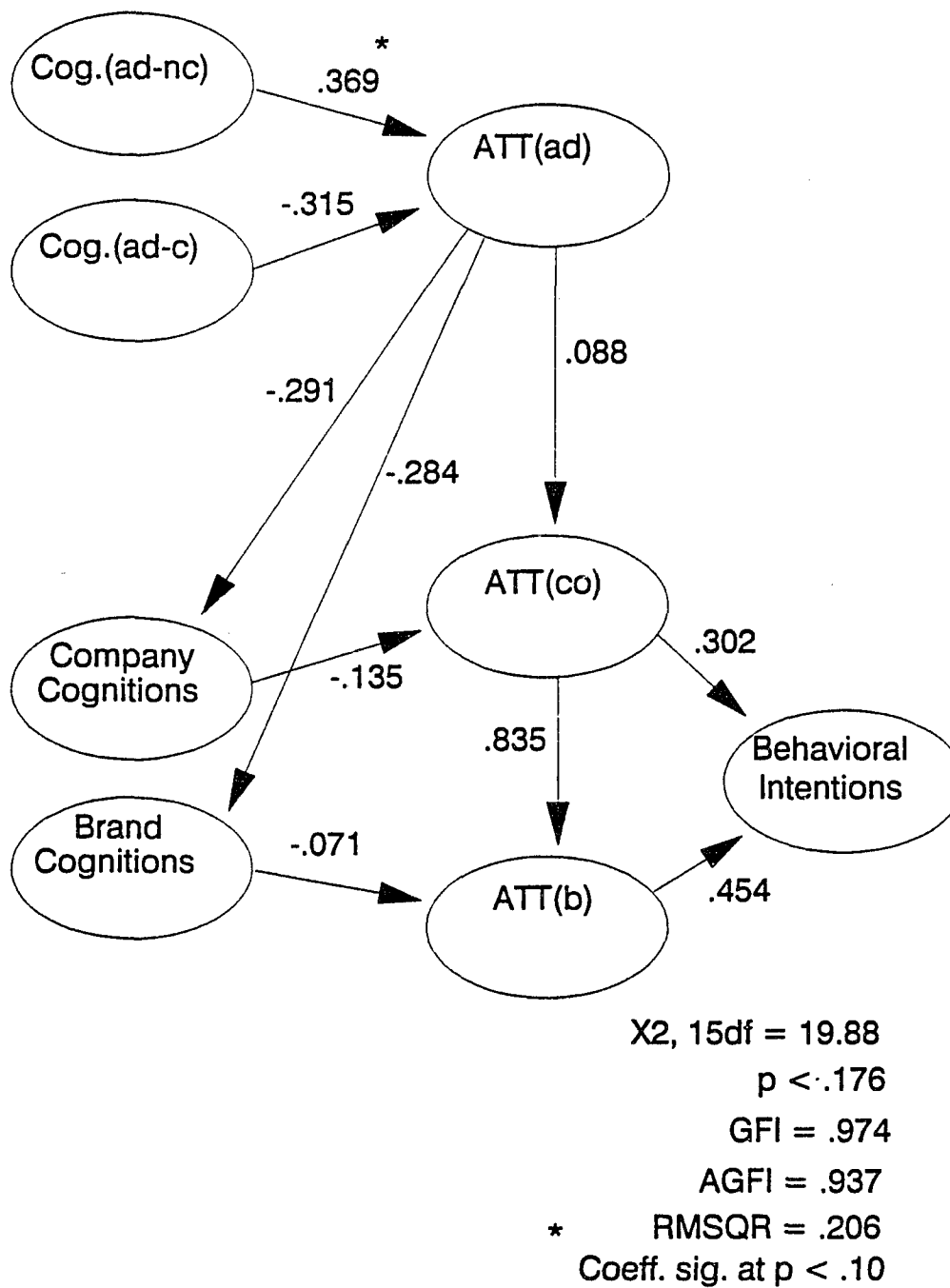
Figure 4.4
Parameter Estimates -
Peripheral/Peripheral Group

The same model was then tested with each of the two pure groups and the results compared. The LISREL model used is illustrated as Figure 4.2. Results for this comparison analysis are included as Table 4.22. Note that the fit of the model is slightly better for the P-P group. Also interesting to note is the paths generated in the final analysis. No paths were generated for the role of cognitions for the C-C processing group, which is counter to current thinking in the literature. Alternatively, weak, but significant paths were generated with negative signs for the P-P processing group.

The relationship between the primary attitudinal constructs is also interesting to note. While positive relationships are generated between A_{Co} and A_B, A_{Co} and BI and A_B and BI, the strength of these relationships is much stronger in the P-P processing group. Again, this is an interesting finding that runs counter to current thinking with regards to the strength and persistence of peripherally formed attitudes.

Table 4.22
Structural Model Comparisons
by Processing Group[a]

| | Group | |
Model Linkage	C-C	P-P
A_{Ad-nc} ---> A_{Ad}	.426[b]	.369[b]
A_{Ad-c} ---> A_{Ad}	-.310[b]	-.315[b]
A_{Ad} -----> CoCog	----	-.291[b]
A_{Ad} -----> BCog	----	-.284[b]
A_{Ad} -----> A_{Co}	----	----
A_{Ad} -----> A_B	----	.088[b]
CoCog ----> A_{Co}	----	-.135[b]
BCog -----> A_B	----	-.071[b]
A_{Co} -----> A_B	.755[b]	.835[b]
A_{Co} -----> BI	.174[b]	.302[b]
A_B -------> BI	.470[b]	.454[b]
χ^2 (15df)	23.90[b]	19.88[c]
GFI:	.972	.974
RMSQR:	.250	.206
Akaike Information Criteria:	-22.95	-20.94
Tucker-Lewis	.65	.63

[a] Entries represent standardized coefficients
[b] Coefficient significant at p <.10.
[c] p-value = .176

Relationship Hypotheses Results

Hypothesis 3 discusses the nature of the role of cognitions in the formation of attitudinal components. It stated that the formation of

cognitions would be positively related to the formation of attitudinal components of central processors. Results:

Hypothesis 3 was partially supported.

This hypothesis was supported in a manner counter to hypothesized. In other words, support for the role of cognitions in the formation of attitudinal components was generated, but only with the peripheral processing group. This is counter to the anticipated support generated by the theoretical development in Chapter 2.

Hypothesis 3A suggested that the formation of brand cognitions would be positively related to A_B. Results:

Hypotheses 3A was rejected.

Results indicate that brand cognitions were only related to A_B for the peripheral processors (as opposed to central processors), but in a negative direction.

Hypothesis 3B discussed the role of company cognitions in the formation of A_{Co}. Company cognitions were proposed to be positively related to the formation of A_{Co} in central route processors. Results:

Hypothesis 3B was rejected.

Results indicate that company cognitions were unrelated to the formation of A_{Co} for central route processors and found to be negatively related to the formation of A_{Co} in the peripheral processing group. This is counter to the hypothesis in both direction and processing group. It was proposed that the role of cognitions would be positively associated with the formation of A_{Co} for C-C processors.

Hypothesis 3C stated that claim and non-claim items would be predictive of A_{Ad} under central processing. Results:

Hypothesis 3C was partially supported.

Results indicated that these constructs were solid predictors of A_{Ad} in the peripheral and central processing groups. A_{Ad-nc} was related positively to A_B in both models. A_{Ad-c} was related negatively. While this was expected in the peripheral group, this was not fully anticipated in the central group.

Hypothesis 3D stated that A_{Ad} would be positively related to company and brand cognitions. Results:

Hypothesis 3D was rejected

A_{Ad} was not found to be related to brand cognitions or company cognitions in the central group. A negative relationship was found in the peripheral processing group between A_{Ad} and brand cognitions and company cognitions. Furthermore, A_{Ad} was not related to A_B for the central group. A_{Ad} was related only weakly in the peripheral processing group.

Hypothesis 3E stated that company and brand cognitions would be significant predictors of A_{Co} and A_B for central processors. Results:

Hypothesis 3E was rejected.

Brand and company cognitions were not found to be significant predictors of A_B in either of the processing groups. A slight negative relationship was found for the peripheral group.

Hypothesis 3F stated that A_{Co} and A_B would be significant predictors of BI. A_{Co} and A_B were determined to be significant predictors of BI.

Hypothesis 3F was supported.

A strong, positive relationship was noted between A_{Co} and A_B and A_B and BI. This is an encouraging result due to the previously unsupported role of A_{Co} in the role of attitude and intention formation.

Hypothesis 4 states that the predictive role of cognitions would be absent from the peripheral processing group. Results:

Hypothesis 4 was rejected.

As indicated in Table 4.22, the role of cognitions was not only absent from the C-C processing groups, but present for the P-P processing group. Both of these results are counter to current thinking in the area and suggest that the emotional elements associated with the negative publicity piece have a significant impact on the processes that lead to attitude formation.

Hypothesis 4A stated that involvement would be negatively related to A_{Ad-nc}. Results:

Hypothesis 4A was partially supported.

Results highlighted in Table 4.24 indicate that involvement is positively related to the non-claim elements of the advertisement for issue involvement. Note that the issue involvement measure was subject to reliability problems. Surrogate measures of time spent do support the hypothesis that A_{Ad-nc} are significantly and negatively associated with involvement.

Hypothesis 4B states that A_{Ad-nc} and A_{Ad-c} would be positively related to A_B. Results:

Hypothesis 4B was partially supported.

Results indicate that the relationship between A_{Ad-c} and A_{Ad}, while substantial, is negative.

Hypothesis 4C proposed that A_{Ad} would be positively related to A_{Co} and A_B. Results:

Hypothesis 4C was rejected.

Results indicated that the relationships between A_{Ad} and A_{Co} and A_B was quite weak in the peripheral processing group and non-existent in the central processing group.

Hypothesis 4D stated that A_{Co} and A_B would be positively related to BI. Results:

Hypothesis 4D was supported.

The relationship between A_{Co}, A_B and BI was substantial but not as great as the relationship between A_{Co} and A_B. This indicates weak support for Hypothesis 4D, which stated that A_{Co} and A_B would be significant predictors of BI. This does highlight the significance of consumer held attitudes toward the firm and how that translates into lower BI.

Involvement Hypotheses Results

The role of involvement and its impact on the proposed models was also investigated in this dissertation. The investigation of the role

of involvement provided support for the adequate functioning of the ELM. Results for the involvement hypotheses are generated in Table 4.23.

Hypothesis 3G was designed to look at the relationship between involvement and the formation of cognitions. It was hypothesized that involvement levels would be positively related to the formation of ad-related, brand and company cognitions. Results:

Hypothesis 3G was supported.

Involvement levels were proposed to be positively related to the formation of ad-related, brand and company cognitions. Results indicate that the relationship between cognition formation and involvement levels supports Hypothesis 3G. Time spent on the presented task (a surrogate for issue involvement) was measured consistently with the number of cognitions generated and hence yielded a significant positive correlation.

Table 4.23
Correlations Among Involvement Measures
and Cognition Formation

Variables	Brand Cognitions	Co. Cognitions	Emot. Focus	Technical Focus
Environmental Involvement	-.06	-.074	.18**	-.04
Issue Involvement	-.11*	-.11*	.22**	.11**
Time Spent on the Situation	.72**	.61**	-.12**	.17**

* reflects significance at the .01 level
** reflects significance at the .001 level
A The negative correlation reflects scaling considerations. The higher levels of involvement were coded as nearer to 1 on a 1 to 5 scale.

Table 4.23 also reflects the investigation of the relationship between the claim and non-claim focus of the advertisement to involvement levels. This highlighted the relationship between cognitions and type of advertisement focus with involvement levels. As noted, mixed support was found. The positive relationship between involvement levels and a technical focus to the advertisement was expected, as was the negative relationship between emotional appeals and time spent of the situation. The positive correlation between issue involvement and emotional focus of the advertisement was unexpected.

This positive relationship, while unexpected, is consistent with other findings of the dissertation. The dissertation results indicate that central route processors seem to be responding positively to emotional reactions to the advertisements and scenarios presented. Although not an inclusive finding for explaining the results of the dissertation, this finding helps highlight the emotional focus that respondents exhibited with in this dissertation.

Investigation of Competing Models

The dissertation also proposed two alternative models to explain the attitude formation of central and peripheral route processors. These models are included as Figures 1.4 and 1.5. Central processors were hypothesized to utilize brand and company cognitions to directly impact A_{Co} and A_B. A_{Ad} was proposed to only impact the attitudinal structures through its influence on the formation of cognitions. Alternatively, the peripheral model proposed that the formation of cognitions was not a prerequisite to the formation of A_B and A_{Co} and that A_{Ad} would be positively and directly predictive of A_{Co} and A_B. A_B and A_{Co} were considered to be the primary predictors of BI. Both of these models were tested across the experimental groups.

These alternative models were tested in the same manner as the main structural model noted previously. The covariance matrices from

the C-C processing group and the P-P processing group were used for the analysis. The summed scales for each construct were fixed at the square root of the reliabilities times the scale variance. The error term was fixed at 1 - scale reliability times the scale variance. The alternative models shown in Figures 1.4 and 1.5 were run for the C-C group and the P-P group, resulting in four model tests. The objective was to see which model provided the best fit for the data from the two processing groups. While the structural model test was designed to assess the significance of the various hypothesized linkages between constructs, the present analyses were aimed at assessment of the which complete model (central or peripheral) fit the sample data the best. Table 4.25 shows the results of the four model test runs.

Although the differences in fit are not significant, the results show the central model had the best fit for both the central and peripheral processing groups. As a matter of fact, the peripheral structural model achieved its worst fit for the peripheral processing group ($\chi^2 = 33.17$ (17 df)).

Table 4.24
Alternative Structural Model Comparisons

Model	C-C	P-P
Central		
χ^2 17df	23.92	24.65
	p < .12	p < .10
GFI	.97	.97
AGFI	.94	.93
RMSQR	.25	.38
Tucker-Lewis	.647	.620
Peripheral		
χ^2 17df	24.19	33.17
	p < .11	p < .01
GFI	.97	.96
AGFI	.94	.91
RMSQR	.25	.31
Tucker-Lewis	.643	.506

Summary

This dissertation sought to investigate the resistance of attitudes to counterpersuasion and the differences that exist in the formation of attitudes across central and peripheral processing groups. It should be noted that the experimental manipulations in this dissertation were effective and verified using a number of manipulation checks. These checks were discussed earlier in this chapter and include the

investigation of involvement levels, time and effort spent, number of generated cognitions and assignment of causality.

Measurement scales used throughout the dissertation have performed reliably and the confirmatory factor analysis enabled the inclusion of items that appear to adequately measure the constructs under investigation. Therefore, as a result of the completion of these analyses, investigation of the hypotheses is warranted and results are valid within the framework designed for the dissertation.

Table 4.25 provides a summary of the results in determining support levels for the hypotheses developed in Chapter 2. Although all of the hypothesized relationships and changes were not supported, the dissertation was able to highlight some important theoretical and managerial problems associated with current theory.

Primarily, it should be noted that the current research developing attitudinal theory has yet to incorporate the importance of many situational variables that may lead to counter results. Specifically, in emotion generating situations, previously held attitudes appear to be quite susceptible to change, irrespective of processing route selected (central or peripheral).

Additionally, the role of A_{Co} has been investigated and shown to be of value in predicting A_B and BI. It is necessary to note that the role of this construct may be inflated in this particular setting due to the

negative publicity stimulus. Even discounting the significance of these findings due to the experimental setting, the role of A_{Co} in predicting the consumers attitudes towards the brand and behavioral intentions cannot be ignored. This relationship is certainly worthy of continued investigation.

Table 4.25
Summary of Hypothesis Testing

H1	Weakly Supported
H1A	Weakly Supported
H1B	Rejected
H1C	Supported
H2	Supported
H3	Partially Supported
H3A	Rejected
H3B	Rejected
H3C	Partially Supported
H3D	Rejected
H3E	Rejected
H3F	Rejected
H3G	Supported
H4	Rejected
H4A	Rejected
H4B	Partially Supported
H4C	Rejected
H4D	Supported

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

The statistical results of testing the hypotheses generated in Chapter 2 are included in Chapter 4. The purpose of this chapter is to summarize and discuss the results of the dissertation and expound upon their contribution to the marketing literature. This chapter will be presented in three primary sections: 1) a recapitulation of results; 2) a discussion of the implications and explanation of these results; and 3) directions for further research to extend the field of study presented in this dissertation.

Summary

This dissertation developed a study designed primarily to investigate three areas of attitudinal research. First, the dissertation sought to extend the earlier work of Petty and Cacioppo (1981, 1986, 1989) in investigating the resistance of attitudes to counterpersuasion. It has been previously postulated that centrally formed attitudes are both more persistent and resistant to counterpersuasion than those attitudes formed via the peripheral route. This postulate has not been empirically tested in the literature (Petty and Cacioppo 1989). This dissertation sought to lend support to this hypothesis.

Second, a model was developed to enable investigation of the relevant influence of cognitions, A_{Ad}, A_{Co}, and A_B in predicting BI in a negative publicity situation. Previous examinations of attitudinal interrelationships had failed to fully investigate the role of A_{Co}.

Third, the role of attribution theory in assisting in predictions of attitude resistance to change was examined. Attribution theory states that in the event of the formation of causal ascriptions an individual will be more motivated to seek additional information. This study investigated a causal determination and evaluated its impact on the reformation of attitudinal structures. The contributions of this theory to the dissertation setting were viewed as significant in the development of support for attribution theory in the discipline. In light of continued incidences of negative publicity, corrective advertising and liable suits in the marketplace, the impact of these causal attributions on attitudinal structures is imperative.

The dissertation utilized the ELM framework to investigate resistance to counterpersuasion of attitudes formed via the peripheral and central route. It was hypothesized that attitudes formed via the central route to persuasion should inherently be more resistant to counterpersuasion than those attitudes formed via the peripheral route. Additionally, it was hypothesized that A_{Co} would be significantly more susceptible to change when internal attributions were generated by the consumer. Lastly, the role of cognitions on the

formation of A_{Ad}, A_{Co}, A_B and BI was hypothesized to differ significantly across processing groups.

The study design included the administration of a two-stage survey in which the respondent was exposed to two experimental manipulations designed to encourage either central or peripheral processing. The first stage manipulation varied levels of issue involvement to encourage varying levels of depth of processing. The second stage manipulation varied internal and external attributions of causality to generate central or peripheral processing. This two stage process enabled the formation of the four processing sequence groups (C-C, C-P, P-C and P-P). These groups provided a forum for the examination of resistance of attitudes to counterpersuasion and the determination of the role of attitudinal constructs in the formation of BI.

The model developed in the dissertation hypothesized that cognitions would be positively related to the formation of attitudinal components and that the relevance of these cognitions would be minimal in predicting BI in a peripheral processing situation. Additional hypotheses were generated to test specific linkages in the theoretical model.

Analysis of the results of the dissertation required the determination of reliability and validity of measures and the effectiveness of the experimental groups prior to the testing of specific hypotheses. MANCOVA analysis enabled the investigation of attitude changes across the experimental manipulations. LISREL and the corresponding structural equations modeling

enabled the interpretation of the relationship between the attitudinal constructs and their varying influence on the formation of BI.

Findings

Results from the study are mixed. Although several important findings were generated, several of these outcomes were not fully anticipated in the design of the study. This section will be broken into a brief review of the hypotheses and discussion of the varying degrees support and its implications.

Findings with Respect to Attitude Resistance

The results indicate that in the setting of a negative publicity scenario, attitudes formed under the central route to persuasion proved to be the least resistant to change. In other words, individuals possessing attitudes formed by initial exposure to an advertisement designed to encourage central processing exhibited the greatest level of change in attitude upon introduction to the Stage II internal attribution manipulation.

While these results are contradictory to current thinking with regards to resistance to counterpersuasion, it is interesting to speculate why these results occurred. The formation of the Stage II manipulation designed to encourage central processing was operationalized by introducing a situation that required the assignment of causality for a product problem. The use of

this particular stimulus enabled not only the investigation of attributional effects in advertising but specifically allowed the investigation of the role of A_{Co} in the formation of A_B and BI.

An unanticipated result of this manipulation was the emotional reaction of the respondents to the stimulus itself and its the subsequent impact on attitude structures. Traditional measurement approaches for classification of processing routes relies primarily on recall and recognition (Petty and Cacioppo 1986, 1984, 1979). Individuals exhibiting higher levels of free recall of relevant facts generally symbolize those consumers that are classified as cognitive processors. Unfortunately, this measurement approach falls short in truly assessing the type of processing that occurs in individuals exposed to negative publicity.

Measurement techniques such as this are focused on determining the depth of processing that occurs within the individual. These measurements, however, fail to assess the range of emotional responses that occur within the individual. In this setting and many other counterpersuasive situations, the assessment of emotional responses as well as depth of processing is necessary for full examination of the determination of resulting attitudes. It is not sufficient to assume, however, that the issue-relevant thinking is the sole determination of the resulting attitudinal structures in situations requiring the assessment of causality. Additional measures reflecting the level of

perceived deceit or betrayal, gut reactions and affective responses must be included to enable their inclusion in fully developed causal models.

Individuals that process cognitively may not in fact exhibit greater resistance to counterpersuasion in this situation due to the inflammatory nature of the presented stimulus. The perceived credibility of the source, combined with the emotional response to the stimulus, resulted in highly malleable attitudes that quickly polarized.

This can be partially explained by the fact that the highly involving Stage 2 manipulation utilized a credible source attributing significant corporate misconduct to the California Conversion Company. Respondents that initially formed positive opinions about the product and invested processing time and effort in forming these opinions seemed especially affected by feelings of betrayal and deceit by the firm. The "central" stimulus included in Appendix 4 portrayed the firm as being consciously aware of inflated advertising claims.

The reactions included statements such as:

"What jerks! They should be run out of business!"

"I knew it! This product was just too good to be true!"

"I would never buy anything from these clowns!"

"Companies always only care about money."

"I wonder what other problems exist that we don't even know about!"

"They can't be trusted - they lied!"

These types of reactions permeated the group of respondents that received the internal attribution stimulus. As a result, although a great deal of recall and generation of cognitions occurred, the feelings of anger and betrayal overwhelmed the cognitive processes and resulted in the largest shifts that occurred from initial attitude structure.

Support for the proposition that initially formed peripheral attitudes would be the most susceptible to highly involving counterpersuasive material was found. These individuals, while upset by the material, did not respond so irrationally due to the limited up front investment in the product and firm. Therefore, they merely found material that was supportive of underlying concerns about an innovative product.

Comments included:

"Figures!"

"I knew it was too good to be true."

"You should never buy anything when it first comes out! You expect problems."

In all cases where respondents encountered negative publicity designed to result in the internal attribution of blame, irrespective of the depth of processing that occurred, the emotional reaction generated by the unspoken element of deceit tended to override any rational discounting or weighing of

the informations' merit. Additionally, the stimulus, while designed to promote in-depth processing, was also developed to be credible to the respondent. Hence, the resulting problems with the respondent possibly being unable to generate sufficient counterargumentation. Attitudes proved to be neither persistent or resistant in the face of the negative publicity.

It does seem reasonable, in light of the negative publicity stimulus, that the cognitive processors would weigh the value of the incoming information more seriously than those individuals subjected to the external attribution scenario. Furthermore, these individuals indicated from their comments that they were particularly inflamed at the deceit, in light of their initial enthusiasm for the product itself. Hence, the credibility of the source combined with the negative (as opposed to comparative) nature of the counterpersuasive material led to dramatic changes in respondents' attitude structure.

Respondent's exposed to the negative publicity scenario designed to encourage external attributions (peripheral processing) did exhibit reduced changes in attitudes relative to the internal attribution group. However, it appears that the mere hint of deceit or dishonest intentions caused some adjustment in the attitude from the initial exposure.

Attitudes for peripheral processors changed at significant levels for A_{Co}, A_B and BI across the Stage 1 to Stage 2 manipulations. These attitudinal adjustments were mild relative to the internal attributors and still yield overall favorable feelings for the product and firm.

Free form comments seem to imply that most respondents anticipate some problems with innovative products and discount their overall seriousness and applauded the firm's environmental efforts. These anticipated problems tend to enable discounting of the incoming counter-information when developing the attitudinal components, but the formation of very low behavioral intentions was still exhibited.

Hence, although the pattern of differences among the four experimental groups after the Stage II manipulation is significant, changes in the attitudinal components within groups also appear at significant levels. These changes reflect consumers' overall cynicism of innovative products and their ability to feel favorably towards these offerings while not exhibiting strong behavioral intentions.

This pattern of responses seems to indicate that one of two things occurred with this group of processors. It is possible that the peripheral processors acted in a traditionally affective pattern and merely reacted to the negative cues in the newspaper article resulting in the shift downward in held attitudes toward the conversion package. This pattern of response, however, should have yielded a rejection of the central model for this group of processors and insignificant paths between cognitions and A_B and A_{Co}. This was not the result of this dissertation.

Alternatively, it seems more likely that the processing groups classified as peripheral processors engaged in processing at some level and were able

to attribute minimal causality to the product and firm. This was supported in mean assessments of blame. As a result, attitudinal structures, while shifting, remained relatively intact as compared to the central processors. While this result may seem troubling, Petty and Cacioppo (1989) do not remark that peripheral processors function in complete absence of cognitive processing, just that the two groups differ across involvement levels, and amount and type of processing. The study did yield two distinctly different groups of processors.

The distinction in these processing groups reveals the effectiveness of the manipulations, but highlights the difficulties associated with developing scenarios that involve new, innovative products. The innovative nature of the product was deliberately included in the scenario development to yield respondents that held few preexisting beliefs with regards to the product, category or firm. This effectively removed problems with preexisting attitudes, but yielded the side effect of increased need and desire for processing across experimental groups.

Findings with Regards to the Role of A_{Co}

Although the unanticipated emotional reaction of the attribution manipulation impacted the hypothesized attitude resistance findings, the stimulus also enabled the investigation into the role of A_{Co} in the formation of A_B and BI. Previous research has tended to overlook the role of A_{Co} in

predicting consumers' A_B and BI. This study was interested in investigating this construct and its impact on the attitudinal structure of respondents.

Results indicate that within the study's confines, A_{Co} played a significant role in the formation of A_B and BI. When a consumer is introduced to publicity (whether it be negative or positive) the company becomes more prominent in the mind of the potential consumer. As a result, when respondents are exposed to publicity pieces, the role of this construct becomes very prominent in the formation of A_B.

Results also indicate that in the event of a negative publicity stimulus in which internal attributions are made by the respondent, the respondent's A_{Co} is highly malleable. In the event of introduction to the internal attribution stimulus A_{Co} quickly shifts to reflect this negative information. In the event that the respondent is introduced to the external attribution, the respondent's A_{Co} shifts to reflect the hint of disrepute, yet the overall attitude structure remains much more stable.

One interesting aside is that in the free answer sections, several comments were made with regards to the firm and its innovative nature. Even in the situations in which the firm was clearly at fault for the inferior product performance, many respondents commented that the firm was a breakthrough or cutting edge establishment and problems should be expected early in the development process.

Respondents generally exhibited a fairly low BI even in the event of possessing strong positive feelings towards the product. This may account for the lack of significance of the relationship between A_B, A_{Co} and BI. From respondent comments it appears that there is a great deal of hesitancy when the respondent is asked about intentions with regards to an innovative or untried product. Additionally confounding the evaluation of this relationship was the student sample. Although respondents were clearly instructed to assume that sufficient funds existed for the purchase of this product, open ended responses indicated that there was a tendency to negate or forget this assumption. Statements such as "I couldn't buy this if I wanted to," or "I'd never have the money for this" permeated the open ended questions.

Findings with Regards to the Theoretical Model

The dissertation argues for the existence of two separate models that describe the formation of attitudes and intentions. The central model describes the structure of attitudinal components for individuals that engage in active processing when viewing persuasive communications. The peripheral model highlights earlier research that states that peripheral processing tends to rely primarily on affective reactions generated by cues (Petty and Cacioppo 1981).

The proposed peripheral model spotlighted the importance of cues and the minimal influence of cognitions in the formation of attitudes and

intentions. The proposed central model spotlighted the primary role of cognitions in the development of the individual's attitude structure.

Findings with regards to the significance of cognitions in the formation of attitudes were disappointing. Although the internal attribution scenario yielded individuals that had a clear recollection of the arguments of the advertisement and the newspaper article, the role of cognitions did not surface as a significant predictor of A_B or A_{Co} in the central processing groups.

Ironically, the role of cognitions did surface as significant in the peripheral processing group. This can be partially explained due to the fact that peripheral processors were exposed to the external attribution scenario that was designed to generate <u>minimal</u> processing. The effectiveness of this manipulation was demonstrated with the formation of fewer recollections and lower levels of self-reported depth of processing. However, the hint of deceit stimulated an average of four recollections per peripheral processor versus seven recollections per central processor. It should be noted, however, that the peripheral processors were not found to be abstaining from any cognitive activity. Therefore, cognitions seemed to play a role in attitude formation.

It seems that the introduction of credible information, even if only remotely suspect, generates a fair amount of processing that probably explains the resulting role of cognitions. Sufficient processing had to occur to discount the seriousness of the company's role in the product failure. This led to the generation of sufficient cognitions to produce reliable predictions.

The dissertation strove to maintain equal perceived source credibility across the experimental groups. Results indicate that the successful development of the attribution manipulation suffered the side effect of differing levels of source credibility across the central and peripheral processors. This result tended to confound the results and yielded peripheral processors that were motivated to discount the credibility of the consumer advocate agency. It appears that the increased involvement levels resulting from the hint of negativity prompted the peripheral processors to form lower opinions of the advocate agency. The resulting lower opinions aided in the formation of A_{Co} and A_B and moderated their reduction relative to the internal attribution group.

Claim and non-claim elements of the advertisement were also found to behave counter to traditional theory. The role of the non-claim elements was found to be a significant predictor in both the peripheral and central model. Claims were found to be negatively related to attitude change in the peripheral and central model, and this result was only anticipated in the peripheral model. Again, this most likely reflects the emotional responses generated by the stimulus.

Findings with Regards to Involvement

Results were supportive in examining the relationship between involvement and generation of cognitions. Prior research has stated that central route processors develop significantly more issue-relevant thoughts

than peripheral processor (Petty and Cacioppo 1986). The respondent generates these cognitions as a result of an increased motivation to process the incoming information being presented. Hence, it was expected that central route processors would not only exhibit higher levels of involvement (issue or response), but also report significantly greater recall of issue relevant arguments.

As hypothesized the formation of cognitions was correlated significantly with higher levels of involvement. This supports the proposition that central processors tend to be more highly involved (issue or response) than peripheral processors.

This support helps clarify that the central processors resulting from the two-stage manipulation were not misclassified, but merely did not follow traditional models of attitude formation in the face of internal attribution settings. While a depth of processing did occur, the resulting negative information caused an unanticipated emotional response in the respondent that overrode cognitive thought generation and counterargumentation.

The relationship between the ad claim and non-claim elements and involvement levels was generally as expected. Previous work by Gardner (1985), Mackenzie et al. (1992, 1986) and Miniard et al. (1990) revealed that the A_{Ad-nc} and A_{Ad-c} would be significant predictors of A_{Ad}. The role of A_{Ad-c} is expected to be greater in situations in which cognitive processing and higher levels of involvement are present.

Correlation between the technical aspects of the advertisement and involvement were positive and significant. Also as anticipated, the relationship between the emotional aspects of the advertisement and the time spent on the situation were negative and significant. Only was the relationship between the emotional aspects of the advertisement and issue involvement surprising in light of the hypothesized relationships. This relationship was significantly positive. However, in light of the emotional response of the highly involved group of respondents, this relationship follows the unanticipated emotional reactions as would be expected.

Theoretical Implications

Petty and Cacioppo (1979, 1981, 1986, 1989) developed a model designed to explain information processing, and its resulting impact on attitudes towards the brand. This model details that attitudes formed via the peripheral route are generally not as resistant to counterpersuasive communications or as persistent as attitudes formed via the central route. This belief, however, has been relatively undocumented in the existing literature and was subjected to test in this dissertation.

Findings indicate that generality of this statement may not be reasonable. Within the confines of this dissertation, resistance to counterpersuasion of attitude structures was tested utilizing negative publicity

as the counterpersuasive stimulus. Negative publicity is an increasingly common phenomena and in itself an area worthy of investigation. In light of the investigation of resistance levels, the stimulus seemed like a natural choice. The results indicate that in this particular situation, attitudes formed initially under the central route to persuasion were generally not as resistant to counterpersuasion as peripherally formed attitudes.

The lack of resistance highlights an important issue not previously discussed in the marketing literature. Petty and Cacioppo (1979, 1981, 1986, 1989) have tested the ELM and its many propositions exhaustively. However, the breadth of these tests has been fairly limited. Exposure to potentially inflammatory or causal information appears to stimulate different mechanisms than anticipated in the development of the model. In instances where causal inferences must be made, the attribution literature states that additional information will be sought and processed due to increased involvement levels. While this may in fact be true and stimulate central processing, the previously held attitudes may be less resistant to counterpersuasion than anticipated.

Results indicated in this study are quite enlightening considering the current tenor of the marketing environment in this country. Analysis of this study generated supportive results for the effectiveness of the manipulations and a reasonable approximation of a real-world occurrences that management must deal with on a daily basis. These real world phenomena include not only

negative publicity, but also corrective advertisement orders and product liability issues.

It appears that the internal locus of causality, the stability of effect, and controllability along with the highly credible source undeniably produced significantly higher involvement and processing levels when compared to the peripheral conditions (i.e., external locus of control, instability of effect and low controllability). The resulting central processors behaved in the manner that the ELM framework and attribution theory suggest.

Results indicate, however, that the central processing model developed in Chapter 2 was not supported as expected. A review of the experimental manipulations indicates that these factors all performed as expected in the development of the study design. At the conclusion of Stage I, involvement levels differed significantly across the experimental groups. Classification of individuals across the experimental groups revealed minimal cross over of respondents (12% misclassified as peripheral after receiving the high involve-ment manipulation and 14% misclassified as central processors after receiving the lower involvement manipulation). As a result, classification indices performed as expected across groups. All indices used for classification purposes for central and peripheral processor differed significantly across groups both for individual items and composite weighting. Furthermore, attitudinal measures from Stage I to pre-Stage II indicated no significant

changes across time enabling the use of the Stage I measures in the final MANCOVA analysis.

Significant differences were reported among the experimental groups for the attribution manipulation. Misclassification rates were reported at 7% for respondents that received the internal attribution and 5% for respondents that received the external attribution. The minimal crossovers indicates the clean manipulation of this effect.

Stage II effectiveness was further supported through a clean discrimination between groups. The matchup between the attribution manipulation, reported involvement levels and classification of central vs. peripheral processors were significantly different between groups and consistent with each other.

Lastly, all measures utilized in the final model evidenced discriminant validity and reliability. Some constructs were measured with a single item, however, and this may have lead to some inadequate representation of certain constructs. Single item measures included cognitions for the company and brand and technical versus emotional focus of the advertisement. Additional measures may have enabled better definition of these constructs.

Potentially troubling is the source credibility issue. Although the experimental design specified that the level of source credibility be held constant, the development of sufficiently different attribution scenarios inadvertently resulted in varying levels of source credibility between the

processing groups. Specifically, those groups subjected to the external attribution exhibited significantly less credibility in the consumer advocate agency source. In retrospect the selection a more moderate source (or scenario) or including in the design a manipulation for source credibility may have proven more effective.

Hence, it appears that while the respondent may be willing to process and comprehend the incoming information, once the assignment of causality is established, the rational processing of the individual tends to be overshadowed by emotional factors. An emotional reaction occurs following sufficient processing that determines that the firm lied to the public (i.e., the internal attribution). This possibility most likely resulted in the use of strong attitudinal reactions without the attendant influence of cognitions. In other words, once the respondent processed sufficient information to determine that the company was at fault, they formed their attitudes and intentions on the basis of an emotional reaction without referring to the cognitions that were previously formed. Hence, the attitude structure shifts irrespective of depth of processing.

The ELM framework is designed to interpret situations in which high or low motivation to process is present. The implicit assumption behind the framework is that there are no strong emotional cues present in the ad message. The operation of the ELM is still supposed to take place in either a cognitively oriented, high involvement setting, or in a low-involvement

(passive learning), affect-oriented (peripheral cue) setting. The ELM framework, as it currently stands does not allow for strong emotional reactions which build-off cognitive processing. In hindsight, this is the type of situation that arises in a negative publicity scenario.

This result implies that the generalizability of the ELM may be more limited than previously thought. In situations where emotion is a primary response to a stimulus such as corrective advertising or negative publicity, the consumer may follow cognitive processing routes, yet fail to maintain established attitudes due to the inflammatory nature of the information.

Further complicating the issue is the credibility of the source. This particular type of stimulus is delivered by a source typically viewed as highly credible. This increased credibility empowers the source and disables the traditional derogation processes that often occur with central processors limiting inoculations that should be present from previous cognitive thought.

The generalizability of the ELM in a negative publicity scenario is also questioned with regards to the role of cognitions in attitude formation. The central route results in issue relevant thinking by the respondent. It is anticipated that the generation of these cognitions would in some way impact the formation of the A_B or A_{Co}, however, even in the presence of generated cognitions, the model does not perform as anticipated. The cognitions are present, yet insignificant in the formation of the global attitudes. This

provides an instance when the role of cognitions may be essentially supplementary to the actual attitude formation.

Particularly gratifying for the study was the generated support for the role of A_{Co}. Although traditionally not a primary attitudinal component in attitude formation models, this dissertation sought to impress the importance of this construct to the discipline. Under certain conditions where the credibility of the company is questioned, it is important to recognize the primary role of A_{Co} plays in the formation of A_B.

A_{Co} played a significant role in the formation of A_B, and the relationship between these two constructs represented the strongest associations in the proposed models. Previous attitudinal models have dealt thoroughly with the role of A_{Ad} (Mackenzie and Lutz 1989; Mackenzie et al. 1986; Gardner 1985) in the formation of A_B and BI. These models, however, have failed to incorporate the role of A_{Co} in the formation of A_B or incorporate A_{Co} as one of many antecedents of A_{Ad}. These treatments seem inadequate for development of an opinion in settings in which the firm's integrity are involved.

Classification of individuals into disparate processing groups was effective and generated significant differences across multiple variables of interest. The central processors engaged in sufficient processing to determine that the firm had engaged in misleading behavior. Hence, the generated

attitude changes for this group were significantly different from the peripheral processing group.

Peripheral processors indicated reduced but still existent attitudinal changes across the manipulations. While it is clear that this category of processors is significantly different than the central processing group in the amount and type of processing that occurred, it seems reasonable to assume that a sufficient amount of processing occurred to enable the discounting of the source and the information presented. As a result, two processing groups were formed.

Petty and Cacioppo (1989) set no predetermined cutoff for determination of central and peripheral processors. It is only deemed that significant differences exist between the groups in processing amount and type and involvement levels. This clearly occurred with these respondents, however, the hint of negative information appears to have motivated the peripheral processors to be more attentive than the traditionally peripheral groups generated in past studies utilizing very uninvolving stimuli.

As a result, the dissertation has spotlighted the processes that occur across motivation groups in a negative information setting. This setting appears to not be fully explainable by the existing ELM framework.

Managerial Implications

The results of this dissertation may seem disappointing with regards to the existing theoretical frameworks in the discipline. However, as a result, important theoretical implications are highlighted. Of primary significance is the strategic use of the results highlighted in this study.

Management typically responds to negative publicity crises with the attitude that an advertising campaign should be developed to stall or short circuit the formation of negative brand attitudes. Reactive advertising campaigns typically spotlight product improvements or question the credibility of the source of the negative information. In light of the findings of this study, this approach seems inadequate at best.

The result of the negative publicity campaigns tends to be a highly polarized A_{Co}. This resulting shift is quite predictive of shifting A_B. Hence, damage control strategies should reflect the strategic use of institutional advertising as opposed to continued programs designed to improve A_B by utilizing a brand advertising campaign. Damage control must revolve around the goal of repairing the firm's credibility. It is the loss of faith and trust in the firm that overshadows the formation of attitudes. Once the credibility of the firm is established, the resulting A_B will improve correspondingly.

The results also highlight the seriousness of any negative publicity incidence. Even in scenarios in which the firm was determined to be virtually

blameless by the consumer, the attitudes held by the consumer were significantly altered from the initial impressions generated from the advertising exposures. The mere hint of negativity or deceit was sufficient in the consumer to justify an adjustment or realignment of the consumers' attitude. It is therefore necessary for the firm to respond proactively to negative publicity. Passive responses are certainly a riskier tactic than a simple proactive response to rebuild credibility. As long as the information goes unchallenged from a credible source the respondent often cues on the reputation of the deliverer or the medium and fails to thoroughly process the presented information and merely cues on the number and credibility of the arguments.

Future Research

The dissertation spotlights an opportunity to examine additional areas that impact the formation of A_B and BI or would increase the generalizability of findings. These additional areas of interest include peripheral cues being examined as central cues and expanding the dissertation setting to replicate results.

Investigating factors that typically are of peripheral importance (source expertise) in the ELM which may become central issues requiring elaboration in a negative publicity setting would be beneficial. As involvement levels

increase, due to the consumer being motivated to maintain correct attitudes, previously peripheral cues such as source credibility may now require the consumer to elicit increasing levels of elaboration to evaluate the credibility of the source. In effect, source credibility now becomes a central route cue. The negative publicity setting would enable the testing of this proposition.

Similarly, the role of source credibility in the situation of a negative publicity incident should be better defined. It appears that generally a higher level of credibility is given to sources generating publicity pieces. If the factors that determine this credibility could be better defined, it is possible that proactive strategies could be better developed by the firm to offset the impact of these incidence.

The investigation into the related stimulus areas such as corrective and comparative advertising to investigate the impact of emotional factors in these formats would be useful. It would enable the determination of the impact of emotional responses and deceit in these venues. Expansion of the setting also enables the investigation of the models while minimizing the emotional reactions.

The results of this dissertation are interesting for they reflect the troublesome nature of negative information to marketing managers. These results, however, highlight the need to investigate the effect of negative or contradictory information presented in other formats. Specifically, how would the ELM perform under conditions of comparative and corrective advertising.

Limitations

As with all studies, it is important to assess the potential weaknesses of the effort put forth. This study, while thoroughly pretested, did encounter some difficulties. Pretests revealed problems with the effectiveness of the attribution manipulation and the impact of credibility of the source. Redesign of the manipulation, however, may have yielded unforeseen problems. In attempting to control for source credibility and produce a clean attribution manipulation, the scenario yielded inflammatory responses.

These emotional responses caused the shortcircuiting of the central processing procedure and yielded a breakdown in attitude resistance. A more temperate stimulus should be investigated to see if generated results are duplicated.

Measurement issues are generally always an area of concern when investigating causal models. It is possible that the single item scale for cognitions was inadequate for capturing the construct. Results were disappointing with regards to the role of cognitions in the study and the investigation of improvement in these methods would be useful.

The study setting generated unanticipated emotional reactions that shortcircuited central processing routes and affective responses become primary. Although the classification of respondents was correct given today's

measurement techniques, the formation of cognitions appeared to be independent of the formation of attitudinal structures.

Traditional approaches to the classification of central and peripheral processors may need to be expanded to account for the occurrences of extreme emotional responses within the central processing phenomena. Better definition of these groupings and classification procedures should enable improved results in the models. It is possible that the design was weak by confounding the emotional reaction with the attribution stimulus, the deceit element caused difficulties in the separation of processing groups.

Additional confounds include reports from many of the respondents having very high levels of concern from the beginning with innovativeness of the product. Since they had little experience with the product line or the benefits of the product, performance letdowns were anticipated. This high degree of skepticism often seemed to predispose the respondents to cue initially on the negativity and view it as reinforcing existing doubts that they had with regards to the product itself.

Finally, the artificial nature of the test environment tends to inflate involvement levels to generally higher levels than would be exhibited in a real world sample. This inflated involvement level leads to groups of peripheral processors that are generally more involved that those peripheral processors that would be encountered in the real world. This may have compounded the emotional response problems encountered with the central processors.

Peripheral processors in this study tended to be more involved than traditional low-involvement consumers due to the sample of classroom students. This may have confounded the results and yielded the significant cognition results in the peripheral processing group.

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APPENDIX 1
Pretest 1
Determination of the Product for use in the Study

Consumers and Information Processing
LSU Marketing Department

This survey is being conducted to determine consumers' familiarity with certain categories of products. As you complete this survey, you will be asked to recall the number of brands in a category that you are familiar with, the frequency in which you make purchases of these products and how often you use these products.

For example:

Please list all the brands of toothpaste that you can recall:

Answer: Crest, Ultra-Brite, Colgate, Gleem, Aqua-Fresh

I purchase toothpaste ....

Frequently ____ : ____ : _X__ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : Never at all.

Completion of the survey should only take about 10 minutes of your time today. Before beginning, we would again like to thank you for your cooperation and assistance. Your participation is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Part I

Diet and prepared food products are currently widely available to consumers. These products offer benefits to consumers ranging from decreased caloric count to lower fat and sodium content. Currently these products are available in two primary forms, liquid meal substitutes and prepared frozen meals. We would like to know about your familiarity and use of these product types.

Do you currently use any diet food products?

____ yes   ____ no

If you answered "yes" above, please list all of the brands of diet food that you can recall. If you answered "no," please proceed to Part II.

Please list all of the brands of diet food products that you can recall.

Liquid Diet Products (meal substitutes or snacks):

_____

_____

_____

_____

Frozen Diet Meals:

_____

_____

_____

_____

I purchase diet foods ....

Frequently ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : Never at all.

Please check the appropriate response.

I use my favorite brand of diet food products ....

Daily _____   Monthly _____

Weekly _____   A couple of times a year _____

A couple of times   Once a year _____
a month _____

Part II

Quick service oil change firms have become very prominent over the last 15 years. We are interested in determining how often you use this service and how familiar you are with the various brands available.

I currently use a quick (30 minute or less) oil change service.

_____ yes _____ no

If you answered "no" to this question, please skip to Part III. If you answered "yes" please complete the remainder of Part II.

Please list all of the brands of 30-minute oil service that you can recall.

_____

_____

_____

_____

I purchase 30-minute oil service....

Frequently ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : Never at all.

Please check the appropriate response.

I use 30-minute oil change services ....

Monthly _____

A couple of times
a year _____

A couple of times
a month _____

Once a year _____

Part III

Variety in soft drink offerings has increased dramatically over the past 20 years. Currently, caffeine-free, diet and lemon-lime products are all readily accessible. We are interested in knowing about your consumption patterns for this product category.

Do you currently consume soft drinks?

_____ yes   _____ no

If you answered "no" to this question, please skip to Part IV. If you answered "yes" please complete the remainder of Part III.

Please list all of the brands of soft drinks that you can recall.

_____

_____

_____

_____

I purchase soft drinks....

Frequently ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : ____ : Never at all.

Please check the appropriate response.

I use my favorite brand of soft drink ....

Daily _____   Monthly _____

Weekly _____   A couple of times a year _____

A couple of times   Once a year _____
a month _____

Part IV

Automobile purchases in this country have been down for the past two years reflecting the recessionary environment existing in the economy. Please tell us about your familiarity with the brands available and your purchase rates.

Do you currently own or have use of a car?

_____ yes _____ no

If you answered "no" to this question, please skip to Part V. If you answered "yes" please complete the remainder of Part IV.

Please list all of the brands of automobiles that you can recall.

_____

_____

_____

_____

I tend to purchase automobiles ....

Frequently ____: ____: ____: ____: ____: ____: ____: Never at all.

Please check the appropriate response.

I use my car ....

Daily _____   Monthly _____

Weekly _____   A couple of times a year _____

A couple of times   Once a year _____
a month _____

Part V

Please take a few minutes to tell us about yourself. Please circle the appropriate response.

Sex:

a. Male
b. Female

Marital Status:

a. Married
b. Single
C. Divorced/widowed

Age:

a. under 18 years
b. 18 - 21 years
c. 22 - 25 years
d. 26 - 29 years
e. 30 - 35 years
f. 36 - 40 years
g. 41 - 45 years
h. 46 - 50 years
i. over 50 years

Present Work Status:

a. employed full-time
b. employed part-time
c. unemployed

Thank you very much for your patience in completing this questionnaire.

APPENDIX 2
Pretest 2
Full Stage Study with 2 Level Manipulation
of Involvement Attributional Effects

251

SS# _____

Consumers and Information Processing

This survey is being conducted through the LSU Department of Marketing. It is concerned with your reactions to advertising and publicity about certain products. As you are aware, interest in consumer reactions to advertising has long been of interest to researchers. This survey is designed to tell us about your feelings regarding advertising and product selection.

Completion of the survey should only take about 10 minutes of your time today and about 20 minutes of your time during the next class period. Before beginning, we would again like to thank you for your cooperation and assistance. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Instructions:

In the pages that follow, you will be asked to imagine yourself in a particular situation which will be described to you in detail. You will be provided with some information about a company and its product. Read the information carefully, taking as much time as you need. We are interested in your opinions and feelings about the company, and its product, given the setting in which you have been placed. Please try to answer the questions to the best of you ability.

Rest assured that the information that you provide us will be kept strictly confidential. The request for your social security number merely enable us to make sure everyone participates in both halves of the study.

Imagine yourself in the following situation:

* *

You are about to purchase a new car. You have just graduated from college and are ready to buy. You currently live in California and are very concerned about the new, stricter pollution laws. These new pollution laws will force the use of new, cleaner burning fuels for automobiles beginning in 1996.

You are also very concerned about environmental issues. Since entering college you have been active in several environmental causes. It is your desire to purchase a car that will be practical and long-lasting, yet meet the requirements of the new clean air laws.

You have recently become aware of a firm that can convert existing car models into electric powered vehicles. Therefore, you may purchase the type of car that you are most impressed with and then convert it to meet the clean air standards in 1995. You may assume that you have adequate funds for these purchases.

You are reading your favorite magazine and encounter an advertisement for the California Conversion Company, the firm mentioned above. Please read the advertisement and answer the questions to the best of your ability.

* *

Imagine yourself in the following situation:

* *

You have a friend that lives in California and is considering purchasing a car. Your friend is concerned about the new, stricter pollution laws that will force the use of new, cleaner burning fuels for automobiles beginning in 1996. It is of not that approximately 10 - 15% of cars in the state must convert to using cleaner fuels by the 1996 deadline.

You have recently become aware of a firm that can convert existing car models into electric powered vehicles. Therefore, if you had to convert to cleaner fuels, one of these firms could be utilized to convert your existing vehicle to meet the clean air standards in 1996.

You are reading your favorite magazine and encounter an advertisement for the California Conversion Company, the firm mentioned above. Your friend has asked for your opinion about purchasing a car. Please read the advertisement and answer the questions to the best of your ability.

* *

Advertising Opinion Study

Part I

Please answer the following questions regarding the advertisement. We are interested in your opinion of the products and the company. Without turning back to the product advertisement on the previous page, please list everything that you can remember about the advertisement you have just read.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please check the space that best represents your opinion for each set of adjectives. Remember, we are interested in your first impressions. Please try to answer each question completely, even if you don't have a strong opinion. For example, if you feel that a product that has been described to you is extremely interesting, you might check the space close to the adjective "interesting". If you are neutral in your interest toward the product, you might check the space halfway between the two adjectives, "interesting" and "boring".

I found the advertisement
for Electro-Car ....

Interesting	__: __: __: __: __: Boring
Irritating	__: __: __: __: __: Not Irritating
Held Attention	__: __: __: __: __: Did Not Hold Attention
Informative	__: __: __: __: __: Uninformative

I felt _____ about the
California Conversion Company's
ad.

Favorably __: __: __: __: __: Unfavorably

I generally like to purchase
new, innovative products ....

Immediately __: __: __: __: __: Later on

In general, I purchase
automobiles fairly .....

Frequently __: __: __: __: __: Infrequently

My overall impression of
the conversion package is ....

Bad   __: __: __: __: __: Good
Unsatisfactory __: __: __: __: __: Satisfactory
Favorable   __: __: __: __: __: Unfavorable
Beneficial   __: __: __: __: __: Harmful
Superior   __: __: __: __: __: Inferior

My general impression of the
California Conversions Company
is ...

Favorable   __: __: __: __: __: Unfavorable
Good   __: __: __: __: __: Bad
Negative   __: __: __: __: __: Positive
Follower   __: __: __: __: __: Leader
Successful __: __: __: __: __: Unsuccessful

I am _____ about
environmental issues.

Very concerned __: __: __: __: __: Not
                                      Concerned

It is each person's
responsibility to reduce
air pollution problems ...

Agree   __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

Being knowledgeable about
environmental issues is
_____ to me.

Unimportant   __: __: __: __: __: Important

It is _____ for me to make
the best possible purchase.

Important   __: __: __: __: __: Unimportant

Please indicate your level of agreement by checking the most appropriate statement.

I would definitely
buy this product _____

I would probably not buy it _____

I would probably
buy this product _____

I would definitely not buy it _____

I might or
might not buy it _____

It is _____ that I would
purchase this product.

Likely	__: __: __: __: __:	Unlikely
Probable	__: __: __: __: __:	Improbable
Impossible	__: __: __: __: __:	Possible

How much effort did you put
into this task?

A great deal __: __: __: __: __: Very little

For me, shopping for an
automobile is:

Important	__: __: __: __: __:	Unimportant
Of no concern	__: __: __: __: __:	Of concern
Irrelevant	__: __: __: __: __:	Relevant
Trivial	__: __: __: __: __:	Fundamental
Not needed	__: __: __: __: __:	Needed
Essential	__: __: __: __: __:	Nonessential
Vital	__: __: __: __: __:	Superfluous
Valuable	__: __: __: __: __:	Worthless
Means a lot	__: __: __: __: __:	Means nothing
Beneficial	__: __: __: __: __:	Not Beneficial

How much did you
think about this ad?

A great deal __: __: __: __: __: Very little

Please list any and all thoughts that went through your mind about the company while you were reading the ad.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

How familiar are you   **Not at all**   __:__:__:__:__: **Very**
   with this product category?   familiar

Completing this survey was...   Difficult   __:__:__:__:__: Easy

Please list any and all thoughts that went through your mind about the product while you were reading the ad.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____ _____

Part II

Please complete the following questions to allow us to more completely analyze the answers to the questions you have given us above. Simply circle the appropriate letter for each question. All answers will remain completely confidential. Again, thank you for your cooperation.

Sex: **Marital Status**

a. Male   a. Married
b. Female   b. Single
                                              c. Divorced/widowed

Age: **Present Work Status:**

a. under 18 years   a. employed full-time
b. 18 - 21 years   b. employed part-time
c. 22 - 25 years   c. unemployed
d. 26 - 29 years
e. 30 - 35 years
f. 36 - 40 years
g. 41 - 45 years
h. 46 - 50 years
i. over 50 years

Thank you very much for your patience in completing this questionnaire. We will see you again during the next class session and describe the administer the second questionnaire to you.

SS# _____

Consumers and Information Processing

This survey is being conducted through the LSU Department of Marketing. It is concerned with your reactions to advertising and publicity about certain products. As you are aware, interest in consumer reactions to advertising has long been of interest to researchers. This survey is designed to tell us about your feelings regarding advertising and product selection.

This is Part II of the survey you participated in earlier. Completion of this about 20 minutes of your time. Before beginning, we would again like to thank you for your cooperation and assistance. Your participation is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Instructions:

As you will recall from the last survey, you are participating in an advertising opinion study. Recall that you were asked to read an ad and answer some questions about the product and the company. Refresh your memory by reviewing the advertisement. It is included on the next page.

In the pages that follow the ad, you will be asked to read a newspaper article related to the product in the advertisement. Relate this experience to your product purchase situation described in the first part of the study. The newspaper article you will be provided with will include some additional information about the company and product from the earlier advertisement. Read the information carefully, taking as much time as you need. We are interested in your opinions and feelings about the company, its product and the ad itself, given the setting in which you have been placed. Please try to answer the questions to the best of you ability.

Remember, the information you provide us will be kept strictly confidential.

Instructions:

Please answer the following questions regarding the advertisement. We are interested in
your opinion of the products and the company. Without turning back to the product
advertisement on the previous page, please list everything that you can remember about
the advertisement you have just read.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please check the space that best represents your opinion for each set of adjectives.
Remember, we are interested in your first impressions. Please try to answer each
question completely, even if you don't have a strong opinion. For example, if you
feel that a product that has been described to you is extremely interesting, you might
check the space close to the adjective "interesting". If you are neutral in your
interest toward the product, you might check the space halfway between the two
adjectives, "interesting" and "boring".

My overall impression of the conversion package is	Bad	__: __: __: __: __: Good
	Unsatisfactory	__: __: __: __: __: Satisfactory
	Favorable	__: __: __: __: __: Unfavorable
	Beneficial	__: __: __: __: __: Harmful
	Superior	__: __: __: __: __: Inferior

My general impression of the California Conversions Company is ...	Favorable	__: __: __: __: __: Unfavorable
	Good	__: __: __: __: __: Bad
	Negative	__: __: __: __: __: Positive
	Follower	__: __: __: __: __: Leader
	Successful	__: __: __: __: __: Unsuccessful

Please indicate your level of agreement by checking the most appropriate statement.

I would definitely

Please indicate your level of agreement by checking the most appropriate statement.

I would definitely
buy this product _____

I would probably not buy it _____

I would probably
buy this product _____

I would definitely not buy it _____

I might or
might not buy it _____

It is _____ that I would   Likely   __:__:__:__:__: Unlikely
purchase this product.   Probable   __:__:__:__:__: Improbable
                                  Impossible __:__:__:__:__: Possible

How much did you   A great deal __:__:__:__:__: Very little
think about this ad?

How familiar are you   Not at   Very
with this product category?   all familiar __:__:__:__:__: Familiar

I found the advertisement   Interesting   __:__:__:__:__: Boring
for Electro-Car ....   Irritating   __:__:__:__:__: Not Irritating
                                  Held Attention __:__:__:__:__: Did Not Hold
                                                                  Attention
                                  Informative   __:__:__:__:__: Uninformative

I felt _____ about the   Favorably   __:__:__:__:__: Unfavorably
California Conversion Company's
ad.

Please check the statement that you feel indicates the main point of the advertisement.

Competitive price _____   Inform me about an innovative
                                                          product _____

Styling options _____   Performance options available__

Part II

Please read the following newspaper article and answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

Excerpted form the New York Times:

Ralph Nader, the consumer activist, has announced that the California Conversion Company will recall the first 100 of its conversion vehicles as a result of his agency's investigation. It was reported that the agency's independent investigation into the conversion vehicle's performance revealed several substantial discrepancies as compared to the company's advertising claims. Acceleration and speed promises for the converted vehicles failed to be achieved in repeated tests. Battery endurance was also found to be less than advertised.

Mr. Nader reports that his investigation revealed that the California Conversion Company was aware of these performance discrepancies prior to the start of the advertising campaign and failed to remedy the problem satisfactorily. Neither the product nor the advertising campaign was modified as a result of the company's discovery of poor performance. Mr. Nader also revealed that the company has a history of recalling products that dates back 10 years with other battery products it manufactures.

According to Mr. Nader, the company performed an internal cost/benefits analysis and determined the number of lawsuits and settlements resulting from the potential misrepresentation would be less costly than repairing the battery conversion units. Mr. Nader expected that some customers may file lawsuits.

Please read the following newspaper article and answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

Excerpted form the New York Times:

Ralph Nader, the consumer activist, reports that his consumer advocate agency has received reports that the California Conversion Company may be guilty of using misleading advertisements. These reports claim that the conversion vehicle's performance did not live up to the company's advertising claims. Acceleration and speed promises for the converted vehicles failed to be achieved in several cases. Battery endurance was also found to be less than advertised.

Mr. Nader received a test vehicle that had been converted to electric power to perform an initial investigation, and he became very upset with the California Conversion Company for the failure of the conversion vehicle to perform to the standards advertised. As a result, the ferociousness of Mr. Nader's investigation has increased.

The California Conversion Company has reported that the test vehicle Mr. Nader received was one of the first vehicles completed, and it did have some performance problems that have since been corrected. The Company has reported that any past problems with performance have been corrected and all current vehicles meet or exceed advertising claims. The firm is continuing to investigate the reports and has promised to repair any reported problems by its customers free of charge.

The California Conversion has a record of high customer satisfaction and responsiveness to customer complaints. The California Conversion Company has never had to recall any of its product lines.

Please answer the following questions regarding the newspaper article. We are interested in the impressions you have after reading the newspaper article. Without turning back to the article on the previous page, please list everything that you can remember about the article that you have just read.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please check the space that best represents your opinion for each set of adjectives. Remember, we are interested in the impressions you have after reading the newspaper ad. Please try to answer each question completely, even if you don't have a strong opinion. For example, if you feel that the that has situation described to you was serious, you might check the space close to the adjective "important". If you are neutral in your interest toward the product, you might check the space halfway between the two adjectives, "important" and "not important".

My overall impression of the conversion package is	Bad	__:__:__:__:__: Good
	Unsatisfactory	__:__:__:__:__: Satisfactory
	Favorable	__:__:__:__:__: Unfavorable
	Beneficial	__:__:__:__:__: Harmful
	Superior	__:__:__:__:__: Inferior

My general impression of the California Conversions Company is ...	Favorable	__:__:__:__:__: Unfavorable
	Good	__:__:__:__:__: Bad
	Negative	__:__:__:__:__: Positive
	Follower	__:__:__:__:__: Leader
	Successful	__:__:__:__:__: Unsuccessful

Please indicate your level of agreement by checking the most appropriate statement.

I would definitely
buy this product _____

I would probably not buy it _____

I would probably
buy this product _____

I would definitely not buy it _____

I might or
might not buy it _____

It is _____ that I would
purchase this product.

Likely   __:__:__:__:__: Unlikely
Probable   __:__:__:__:__: Improbable
Impossible   __:__:__:__:__: Possible

For me, shopping for an
automobile is:

Important   __:__:__:__:__: Unimportant
Of no concern __:__:__:__:__: Of concern
Irrelevant   __:__:__:__:__: Relevant
Trivial   __:__:__:__:__: Fundamental
Not needed   __:__:__:__:__: Needed
Essential   __:__:__:__:__: Nonessential
Vital   __:__:__:__:__: Superfluous
Valuable   __:__:__:__:__: Worthless
Means a lot   __:__:__:__:__: Means
                               Nothing
Beneficial   __:__:__:__:__: Not
                               Beneficial

I found the newspaper
article ....

Interesting   __:__:__:__:__: Boring
Irritating   __:__:__:__:__: Not Irritating
Held Attention   __:__:__:__:__: Did Not Hold
                                  Attention
Informative   __:__:__:__:__: Uninformative

I felt _____ about
the newspaper article ...

Favorably   __:__:__:__:__: Unfavorably

I generally like to purchase
new, innovative products ....

Immediately__: __: __: __: __: Later on

How much did you think about
the newspaper article?

A great deal__: __: __: __: __: Very little

Please list any and all thoughts that went through your mind about the company or product while you were reading the ad.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

In general, I purchase
automobiles fairly .....

Frequently   __: __: __: __: __: Infrequently

How familiar are you
with this product category?

Not at all
familiar

__: __: __: __: __: Very
Familiar

Compared to the average person,
I would consider myself

_____ with regards to the
product category.

Very
Knowledgeable
Knowledgeable

__: __: __: __: __: Not Very

Completing this survey was...

Difficult   __: __: __: __: __: Easy

I am _____ about

environmental issues.

Very concerned __: __: __: __: __: Not
concerned

It is each person's
responsibility to reduce
air pollution problems ...

Agree   __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

Being knowledgeable about
environmental issues is
_____ to me.

Unimportant   __: __: __: __: __: Important

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement. If you believe the statement and it is congruent with your thoughts, you would mark a spot near "strongly agree." If you disagree with the statement, you would indicate this by marking a spot near "strongly disagree.

The California Conversion
Company was responsible
for the inferior product
performance.

Agree   __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

I believe Mr. Nader is
knowledgeable about product
failures and misleading
advertisements.

Agree   __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

Ralph Nader is making unfounded
allegations against the
California Conversion Company
for his own personal gain.

Agree   __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

It is common for companies to
place profits ahead of
consumer satisfaction
and truthful advertising.

Agree   __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

Regardless of how you feel
about Mr. Nader personally,
do you feel he is qualified
to speak out about consumer
issues?

Agree   __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

The failure of the converted
vehicles to perform as the
ad claimed was the fault of
the California Conversion
Company.

Agree   __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

I tend to believe articles
I read in the newspaper.

Agree   _:_:_:_:_: Disagree

I think Mr. Nader is .....

Knowledgeable   _:_:_:_:_: Not Knowledgeable

Uninformed   _:_:_:_:_: Informed
Credible   _:_:_:_:_: Not Credible
Not truthful   _:_:_:_:_: Truthful

Part III
Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

I really enjoy a task that
involves coming up with
new solutions to problems.

Agree   _:_:_:_:_: Disagree

I believe that if I think hard
enough, I will be able to
achieve my goals in life.

Agree   _:_:_:_:_: Disagree

I find little satisfaction in
deliberating long and hard
for hours.

Agree   _:_:_:_:_: Disagree

I am an intellectual.

Agree   _:_:_:_:_: Disagree

Learning new ways to
think doesn't excite
me very much.

Agree   _:_:_:_:_: Disagree

I prefer to think about
small, daily projects
to long ones.

Agree   _:_:_:_:_: Disagree

I prefer to just let
things happen rather
than try to understand
why they turned out that way.

Agree   _:_:_:_:_: Disagree

I am hesitant about making
important decisions after
thinking about them.

Agree   _:_:_:_:_: Disagree

I think only as hard as
I have to.

Agree   _:_:_:_:_: Disagree

The notion of thinking
abstractly is appealing
to me.

Agree   _:_:_:_:_: Disagree

I think primarily because
I have to.

Agree   _:_:_:_:_: Disagree

Part IV

We would like to thank you for articipating in this study. It is important to us to review your feelings about the study itself. Briefly write down what you think the purpose of this study is.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you very much for your patience in completing this questionnaire.

APPENDIX 3
Pretest 3
Refinement of the Measures and Manipulations

SS#_____

Consumers and Information Processing

This survey is being conducted through the LSU Department of Marketing. It is concerned with your reactions to advertising and publicity about certain products. As you are aware, interest in consumer reactions to advertising has long been of interest to researchers. This survey is designed to tell us about your feelings regarding advertising and product selection.

Completion of the survey should take about 30 minutes of your time. Before beginning, we would again like to thank you for your cooperation and assistance. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Instructions:

In the pages that follow, you will be asked to imagine yourself in a particular situation which will be described to you in detail. You will be provided with some information about a company and its product. Read the information carefully, taking as much time as you need. We are interested in your opinions and feelings about the company, and its product, given the setting in which you have been placed. Please try to answer the questions to the best of you ability.

Rest assured that the information that you provide us will be kept strictly confidential.

Imagine yourself in the following situation:

****

You are about to purchase a new car. You have just graduated from college and are ready to buy. You currently live in California and are very concerned about the new, stricter pollution laws. These new pollution laws will force the use of new, cleaner burning fuels for automobiles beginning in 1996.

You are also very concerned about environmental issues. Since entering college you have been active in several environmental causes. It is your desire to purchase a car that will be practical and long-lasting, yet meet the requirements of the new clean air laws.

You have recently become aware of a firm that can convert existing car models into electric powered vehicles. Therefore, you may purchase the type of car that you are most impressed with and then convert it to meet the clean air standards required by 1995.

You are reading your favorite magazine and encounter an advertisement for the California Conversion Company, the firm mentioned above. You are considering using a firm such as this to convert your newly purchased vehicle into an electric car. This opportunity enables you to purchase your favorite car with its available styling options and yet conform to the new fuel requirements in your state. Please read the advertisement and answer the questions to the best of your ability.

You may assume that you have adequate funds for these purchases.

****

Before beginning this exercise try to imagine yourself in the situation described above. You are interested in utilizing conversion technology on your newly purchased vehicle. As you answer the questions posed, please answer them based on the scenario you are asked to envision yourself in. Again, thank you for your cooperation.

Imagine yourself in the following situation:

****

You have a friend that lives in California and is considering purchasing a car. Your friend is concerned about the new, stricter pollution laws that will force the use of new, cleaner burning fuels for automobiles beginning in 1996. Approximately 10 - 15% of cars in the state must convert to using cleaner fuels by the 1996 deadline.

You have recently become aware of a firm that can convert existing car models into electric powered vehicles. Therefore, if you had to convert to cleaner fuels, one of these firms could be utilized to convert your existing vehicle to meet the clean air standards in 1996.

You are reading your favorite magazine and encounter an advertisement for the California Conversion Company, the firm mentioned above. Your friend has asked for your opinion about purchasing a car. Please read the advertisement and answer the questions that follow to the best of your ability.

****

Before beginning this exercise try to imagine yourself in the situation described above. You are interested in utilizing conversion technology on your newly purchased vehicle. As you answer the questions posed, please answer them based on the scenario you are asked to envision yourself in. Again, thank you for your cooperation.

Can an Environmentally Smart Car and Beauty Come in One Package?
YES!

The California Conversion Company introduces

ELECTRO-CAR.

The California Conversion Company introduces state of the art technology that is now available to convert existing car models into electric powered automobiles. This conversion involves the removal of the typical combustion engine and replaces it with a battery powered electric motor. The featured conversion vehicle is the 1992 Dodge Stealth. This conversion offers the following features:

* A quieter, smoother ride compared to a conventionally powered car.

* 0 to 60 mph in 9.0 seconds.

* An emission-free vehicle.

* Top speed of 70 mph.

* Be the first on your block to own this innovative product!

* Range of 200 miles.

* Comfort, class and environmentally safe!

* Price range of $5,000 - $7,500 per conversion.

* Available for any car style.

* Fully rechargeable in 15 minutes.

* Convenience of never having to stop at a gas station!

* Fully conforms to 1996 California fuel requirements.

**So you see, Beauty and Brains.
An Unbeatable Combination.**

Electro-Car.

Advertising Opinion Study

Part I

Please answer the following questions regarding the advertisement. We are interested in your opinion of the products and the company. Without turning back to the product advertisement on the previous page, please list everything that you can remember about the advertisement you have just read.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please check the space that best represents your opinion for each set of adjectives. Remember, we are interested in your first impressions. Please try to answer each question completely, even if you don't have a strong opinion. For example, if you feel that a product that has been described to you is extremely interesting, you might check the space close to the adjective "interesting". If you are neutral in your interest toward the product, you 80-285might check the space halfway between the two adjectives, "interesting" and "boring".

**I found the advertisement
for Electro-Car ....**

Interesting   __:__:__:__:__: Boring
Irritating   __:__:__:__:__: Not Irritating
Held Attention __:__:__:__:__: Did Not Hold
                                             Attention
Informative   __:__:__:__:__: Uninformative

I felt _____ about the California Conversion Company's ad.

Favorably __: __: __: __: __: Unfavorably

I generally like to purchase new, innovative products ....

Immediately __: __: __: __: __: Later on

In general, I purchase automobiles fairly .....

Frequently __: __: __: __: __: Infrequently

My overall impression of the conversion package is ....

Bad __: __: __: __: __: Good
Unsatisfactory __: __: __: __: __: Satisfactory
Favorable __: __: __: __: __: Unfavorable
Beneficial __: __: __: __: __: Harmful
Superior __: __: __: __: __: Inferior

My general impression of the California Conversions Company is ...

Favorable __: __: __: __: __: Unfavorable
Good __: __: __: __: __: Bad
Negative __: __: __: __: __: Positive
Follower __: __: __: __: __: Leader
Successful __: __: __: __: __: Unsuccessful

I felt the advertisement appealed primarily to my emotions.

Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

I feel the advertisement provided too many technical specifications.

Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

I would generally spend a great deal of time searching for the right automobile to purchase.

Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

In helping an out of state friend gather information on a car purchase, I would not spend a great deal of my time.

Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

Owning the right vehicle is important to me.

Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

The car purchase described in this scenario is _____ to me.

Important __: __: __: __: __: Unimportant

At this point in time, purchasing a conversion package is _____ to me.

Important __: __: __: __: __: Unimportant

Please indicate the number of hours you would invest in shopping for the vehicle described in this situation.

0-3 hours _____   Approximately 1 day _____

4-6 hours _____   1-3 days _____

7-12 hours _____   More than 3 days _____

Please indicate your level of agreement by checking the most appropriate statement.

The average person would definitely
buy this product _____

The average person would probably not buy it

_____

The average person would probably
buy this product _____

The average person would definitely not buy it

_____

The average person might or
might not buy it _____

It is _____ that the average person would purchase this product.

Likely   __:__:__:__:__: Unlikely
Probable   __:__:__:__:__: Improbable
Impossible __:__:__:__:__: Possible

For me, shopping for an automobile is:

Important   __:__:__:__:__: Unimportant
Of no concern __:__:__:__:__: Of concern
Irrelevant   __:__:__:__:__: Relevant
Trivial   __:__:__:__:__: Fundamental
Not needed   __:__:__:__:__: Needed
Essential   __:__:__:__:__: Nonessential
Vital   __:__:__:__:__: Superfluous
Valuable   __:__:__:__:__: Worthless
Means a lot __:__:__:__:__: Means nothing
Beneficial   __:__:__:__:__: Not Beneficial

How much did you think about this ad?

A great deal __:__:__:__:__: Very little

How much effort did you put into this task?

A great deal __:__:__:__:__: Very little

Please list any and all thoughts that went through your mind about the company while you were reading the ad.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

**How familiar are you
with this product category?**   Not at all __: __: __: __: __: Very
                                  familiar   familiar

Completing this survey was...   Difficult __: __: __: __: __: Easy

Please list any and all thoughts that went through your mind about the product while you were reading the ad.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

**I am _____ about
environmental issues.**   Very concerned __: __: __: __: __: Not concerned

**It is each person's
responsibility to reduce
air pollution problems ...**   Agree   __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

**Being knowledgeable about
environmental issues is
_____ to me.**   Unimportant __: __: __: __: __: Important

It is _____ for me to make
the best possible purchase.

Important   __:__:__:__:__: Unimportant

Part II

Please complete the following questions to allow us to more completely analyze the answers to the questions you have given us above. Simply circle the appropriate letter for each question. All answers will remain completely confidential. Again, thank you for your cooperation.

Sex:

a. Male
b. Female

Marital Status:

a. Married
b. Single
c. Divorced/widowed

Age:

a. under 18 years
b. 18 - 21 years
c. 22 - 25 years
d. 26 - 29 years
e. 30 - 35 years
f. 36 - 40 years
g. 41 - 45 years
h. 46 - 50 years
i. over 50 years

Present Work Status:

a. employed full-time
b. employed part-time
c. unemployed

Thank you very much for your patience in completing this questionnaire. We will see you again during the next class session and describe the administer the second questionnaire to you.

Instructions:

You will now be asked to read a newspaper article related to the product in the advertisement. Relate this experience to your product purchase situation described in the first part of the study. The newspaper article you will be provided with will include some additional information about the company and product from the earlier advertisement. Read the information carefully, taking as much time as you need. We are interested in your opinions and feelings about the company, its product and the ad itself, given the setting in which you have been placed. Please try to answer the questions to the best of your ability.

Remember, the information you provide will be kept strictly confidential.

Part III

Please read the following newspaper article and answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

Excerpted from the New York Times:

A well-known consumer activist group reports that the agency has received reports that the California Conversion Company may be guilty of using misleading advertisements. These reports claim that the conversion vehicle's performance did not live up to the company's advertising claims. Acceleration and speed promises for the converted vehicles failed to be achieved in several cases. Battery endurance was also found to be less than advertised.

Independent investigation into these reports revealed that this particular consumer group has superficially investigated firms in the past and prematurely leaked information to the public sometimes resulting in unjust sales decreases. The California Conversion Company has reported that any performance problems have been corrected and all current vehicles meet or exceed advertising claims. The firm is continuing to investigate the reports and has promised to repair any reported problems by its customers free of charge.

The California Conversion has a record of high customer satisfaction and responsiveness to customer complaints. The California Conversion Company feels the agency's reports are unfounded and unsupported. The Company has never had to recall any of its product lines.

Part III

Please read the following newspaper article and answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

Excerpted from the New York Times:

A well-known consumer activist group, has announced that the California Conversion Company will recall the first 100 of its conversion vehicles as a result of the agency's investigation. It was reported that the agency's independent investigation into the conversion vehicle's performance revealed several substantial discrepancies as compared to the company's advertising claims. Acceleration and speed promises for the converted vehicles failed to be achieved in repeated tests. Battery endurance was also found to be less than advertised.

The agency reports that the investigation revealed that the California Conversion Company was aware of these performance discrepancies prior to the start of the advertising campaign and failed to remedy the problem satisfactorily. Neither the company nor the advertising campaign was modified as a result of the company's discovery of poor performance. The agency also revealed that the company has a history of recalling products that dates back 10 years with other battery products it manufactures.

According to the agency, the company performed an internal/cost benefits analysis and determined the number of lawsuits and settlements resulting from the potential misrepresentation would be less costly than repairing the battery conversion units. The agency expects that some customers may file lawsuits.

Advertising Opinion Study

Please answer the following questions regarding the advertisement. We are interested in your opinion of the products and the company. Without turning back to the product advertisement on the previous page, please list everything that you can remember about the advertisement you have just read.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please check the space that best represents your opinion for each set of adjectives. Remember, we are interested in your first impressions. Please try to answer each question completely, even if you don't have a strong opinion. For example, if you feel that a product that has been described to you is extremely interesting, you might check the space close to the adjective "interesting". If you are neutral in your interest toward the product, you 80-285might check the space halfway between the two adjectives, "interesting" and "boring".

My overall impression of the conversion package is ....

Bad __:__:__:__:__ Good
Unsatisfactory __:__:__:__:__ Satisfactory
Favorable __:__:__:__:__ Unfavorable
Beneficial __:__:__:__:__ Harmful
Superior __:__:__:__:__ Inferior

My general impression of the California Conversions Company is ...

Favorable __:__:__:__:__ Unfavorable
Good __:__:__:__:__ Bad
Negative __:__:__:__:__ Positive
Follower __:__:__:__:__ Leader
Successful __:__:__:__:__ Unsuccessful

Please indicate your level of agreement by checking the most appropriate statement.

The average person would definitely
buy this product _____

The average person would   probably
not buy it _____

The average person would probably
buy this product _____

The average person would   definitely
not buy it _____

The average person might or
might not buy it _____

It is _____ that the average
person would purchase this
product.

Likely __: __: __: __: __: Unlikely
Probable __: __: __: __: __: Improbable
Impossible __: __: __: __: __: Possible

For me, shopping for an
automobile is:

Important __: __: __: __: __: Unimportant
Of no concern __: __: __: __: __: Of concern
Irrelevant __: __: __: __: __: Relevant
Trivial __: __: __: __: __: Fundamental
Not needed __: __: __: __: __: Needed
Essential __: __: __: __: __: Nonessential
Vital __: __: __: __: __: Superfluous
Valuable __: __: __: __: __: Worthless
Means a lot __: __: __: __: __: Means
nothing
Beneficial __: __: __: __: __: Not
Beneficial

How much effort did you put
into this task?

A great deal __: __: __: __: __: Very little

Please list any and all thoughts that went through your mind about the company while you
were reading the ad.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

I generally like to purchase
new, innovative products ....

Immediately __: __: __: __: __: Later on

**How much did you
think about this ad?**
A great deal   __: __: __: __: __: Very little

**Please list any and all thoughts that went through your mind about the product while you
were reading the ad.**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

**In general, I purchase
automobiles fairly .....**
Frequently __: __: __: __: __: Infrequently

**How familiar are you
with this product category?**
Not at all   __: __: __: __: __: Very
familiar   familiar

Completing this survey was...
Difficult __: __: __: __: __: Easy

**I am _____ about
environmental issues.**
Very concerned __: __: __: __: __: Not concerned

**It is each person's
responsibility to reduce
air pollution problems ...**
Agree   __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

I would generally spend a great
deal of time searching for the
right automobile to purchase.

Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

In helping an out of state friend gather
information on a car purchase, I
would not spend a great deal of my time.

Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

Owning the right vehicle is important
to me.

Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

The car purchase described in
this scenario is _____ to me.

Important__: __: __: __: __: Unimportant

At this point in time, purchasing a
conversion package is _____ to me.

Important__: __: __: __: __: Unimportant

Being knowledgeable about
environmental issues is
_____ to me.

Unimportant __: __: __: __: __: Important

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement. If you believe the
statement and it is congruent with your thoughts, you would mark a spot near "strongly
agree." If you disagree with the statement, you would indicate this by marking a spot near
"strongly disagree.

The California Conversion
Company was responsible
for the inferior product
performance.

Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

I believe Consumer Advocate Agency is
knowledgeable about product
failures and misleading
advertisements.

Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

I believe the Consumer Advocate
Agency is making unfounded   Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree
allegations against the
California Conversion Company.

I believe the California Conversion   Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree
Company is placing profits ahead of
consumer satisfaction
and truthful advertising.

Regardless of how you feel   Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree
about Consumer Advocate groups personally,
do you feel they are qualified
to speak out about consumer
issues?

The failure of the converted   Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree
vehicles to perform as the
ad claimed was the fault of
the California Conversion
Company.

I tend to believe articles   Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree
I read in the newspaper.

I think Consumer Advocate
groups are .....   Knowledgeable __: __: __: __: __: Not Knowledgeable
                                     Uninformed   __: __: __: __: __: Informed
                                     Credible   __: __: __: __: __: Not Credible
                                     Not truthful __: __: __: __: __: Truthful

Part IV

We would like to thank you for articipating in this study. It is important to us to review your feelings about the study itself. Briefly write down what you think the purpose of this study is.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you very much for your patience in completing this questionnaire.

APPENDIX 4
Full Study
Survey and Experimental Manipulations

SS#_____

Consumers and Information Processing

This survey is being conducted through the LSU Department of Marketing. It is concerned with your reactions to advertising and publicity about certain products. As you are aware, interest in consumer reactions to advertising has long been of interest to researchers. This survey is designed to tell us about your feelings regarding advertising and product selection.

Completion of the survey should take about 30 minutes of your time. Before beginning, we would again like to thank you for your cooperation and assistance. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Instructions:

In the pages that follow, you will be asked to imagine yourself in a particular situation which will be described to you in detail. You will be provided with some information about a company and its product. Read the information carefully, taking as much time as you need. We are interested in your opinions and feelings about the company, and its product, given the setting in which you have been placed. Please try to answer the questions to the best of you ability.

Rest assured that the information that you provide us will be kept strictly confidential.

Imagine yourself in the following situation:

****

You are about to purchase a new car. You have just graduated from college and are ready to buy. You currently live in California and are very concerned about the new, stricter pollution laws. These new pollution laws will force the use of new, cleaner burning fuels for automobiles beginning in 1996.

You are also very concerned about environmental issues. Since entering college you have been active in several environmental causes. It is your desire to purchase a car that will be practical and long-lasting, yet meet the requirements of the new clean air laws.

You have recently become aware of a firm that can convert existing car models into electric powered vehicles. Therefore, you may purchase the type of car that you are most impressed with and then convert it to meet the clean air standards required by 1995.

You are reading your favorite magazine and encounter an advertisement for the California Conversion Company, the firm mentioned above. You are considering using a firm such as this to convert your newly purchased vehicle into an electric car. This opportunity enables you to purchase your favorite car with its available styling options and yet conform to the new fuel requirements in your state. Please read the advertisement and answer the questions to the best of your ability.

You may assume that you have adequate funds for these purchases.

****

Before beginning this exercise try to imagine yourself in the situation described above. You are interested in utilizing conversion technology on your newly purchased vehicle. As you answer the questions posed, please answer them based on the scenario you are asked to envision yourself in. Again, thank you for your cooperation.

Imagine yourself in the following situation:

****

You have a friend that lives in California and is considering purchasing a new car. Your friend is concerned about the new, stricter pollution laws that will force the use of new, cleaner burning fuels for automobiles beginning in 1996. The new law requires that approximately 10-15% of cars in the state must convert to using cleaner fuels by the 1996 deadline.

You have recently become aware of a firm that can convert existing car models into electric powered vehicles. Therefore, if you had to convert to cleaner fuels, one of these firms could be utilized to convert your existing vehicle to meet the clean air standards in 1996.

You are reading your favorite magazine and encounter an advertisement for the California Conversion Company, the firm mentioned above. Your friend has asked for your opinion about purchasing a car. Please read the advertisement and answer the questions to the best of your ability.

****

Before beginning this exercise try to imagine yourself in the situation described above. You are looking for information to assist a friend in California considering a car purchase. Please answer the following questions based on the scenario described for you above.

Can an Environmentally Smart Car and Beauty Come in One Package?
YES!

The California Conversion Company introduces

ELECTRO-CAR.

The California Conversion Company introduces state of the art technology that is now available to convert existing car models into electric powered automobiles. This conversion involves the removal of the typical combustion engine and replaces it with a battery powered electric motor. The featured conversion vehicle is the 1992 Dodge Stealth. This conversion offers the following features:

* A quieter, smoother ride compared to a conventionally powered car.

* 0 to 60 mph in 9.0 seconds.

* An emission-free vehicle.

* Top speed of 70 mph.

* Be the first on your block to own this innovative product!

* Range of 200 miles.

* Comfort, class and environmentally safe!

* Price range of $5,000 - $7,500 per conversion.

* Available for any car style.

* Fully rechargeable in 15 minutes.

* Convenience of never having to stop at a gas station!

* Fully conforms to 1996 California fuel requirements.

**So you see, Beauty and Brains.
An Unbeatable Combination.**

Electro-Car.

Advertising Opinion Study

Please answer the following questions regarding the advertisement. We are interested in your opinion of the products and the company. Without turning back to the product advertisement on the previous page, please list everything that you can remember about the advertisement you have just read.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please check the space that best represents your opinion for each set of adjectives. Remember, we are interested in your first impressions. Please try to answer each question completely, even if you don't have a strong opinion. For example, if you feel that a product that has been described to you is extremely interesting, you might check the space close to the adjective "interesting". If you are neutral in your interest toward the product, you 80-might check the space halfway between the two adjectives, "interesting" and "boring".

**I found the advertisement
for Electro-Car ....**

Interesting   __: __: __: __: __: Boring
Irritating   __: __: __: __: __: Not Irritating
Held Attention __: __: __: __: __: Did Not Hold
                                     Attention
Informative   __: __: __: __: __: Uninformative

**I felt _____ about the
California Conversion Company's
ad.**

Favorably   __: __: __: __: __: Unfavorably

**My overall impression of
the conversion package is ....**

Bad   __:__:__:__:__ : Good
Unsatisfactory __:__:__:__:__ : Satisfactory
Favorable   __:__:__:__:__ : Unfavorable
Beneficial   __:__:__:__:__ : Harmful
Superior   __:__:__:__:__ : Inferior

**My general impression of the
California Conversions Company
is ...**

Favorable __:__:__:__:__ : Unfavorable
Good   __:__:__:__:__ : Bad
Negative __:__:__:__:__ : Positive
Follower __:__:__:__:__ : Leader
Successful __:__:__:__:__ : Unsuccessful

**I felt the advertisement appealed
primarily to my emotions.**

Agree   __:__:__:__:__ : Disagree

**I feel the advertisement provided
too many technical specifications.**

Agree   __:__:__:__:__ : Disagree

**I would generally spend a great
deal of time searching for the
right automobile to purchase.**

Agree   __:__:__:__:__ : Disagree

**In helping an out of state friend gather
information on a car purchase, I
would not spend a great deal of my time.**

Agree   __:__:__:__:__ : Disagree

**Owning the right vehicle is important
to me.**

Agree   __:__:__:__:__ : Disagree

**The car purchase described in
this scenario is _____ to me.**

Important __:__:__:__:__ : Unimportant

**At this point in time, purchasing a
conversion package is _____ to me.**

Important __:__:__:__:__ : Unimportant

**Please indicate the number of hours you would invest in shopping for the vehicle described
in this situation.**

0-3 hours _____   Approximately 1 day _____

4-6 hours _____   1-3 days _____

7-12 hours _____   More than 3 days _____

Please indicate your level of agreement by checking the most appropriate statement.

The average person would definitely
buy this product _____

The average person would probably
buy this product _____

The average person might or
might not buy it _____

The average person would probably not buy it _____

The average person would definitely not buy it _____

It is _____ that the average person would purchase this product.

Likely __: __: __: __: __: Unlikely
Probable __: __: __: __: __: Improbable
Impossible __: __: __: __: __: Possible

Please indicate your level of agreement by checking the most appropriate statement.

I would definitely
buy this product _____

I would probably
buy this product _____

I might or
might not buy it _____

I would probably not buy it _____

I would definitely not buy it _____

It is _____ that I would purchase this product.

Likely __: __: __: __: __: Unlikely
Probable __: __: __: __: __: Improbable
Impossible __: __: __: __: __: Possible

For me, shopping for an automobile is:

Important __: __: __: __: __: Unimportant
Of no concern __: __: __: __: __: Of concern
Irrelevant __: __: __: __: __: Relevant
Trivial __: __: __: __: __: Fundamental
Not needed __: __: __: __: __: Needed
Essential __: __: __: __: __: Nonessential
Vital __: __: __: __: __: Superfluous
Valuable __: __: __: __: __: Worthless
Means a lot __: __: __: __: __: Means nothing
Beneficial __: __: __: __: __: Not Beneficial

Please list any and all thoughts that went through your mind about the company while you were reading the ad.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

How familiar are you
with this product category?
Not at all __: __: __: __: __: Very
familiar   familiar

Completing this survey was...
Difficult __: __: __: __: __: Easy

Please list any and all thoughts that went through your mind about the product while you were reading the ad.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

I am _____ about
environmental issues.
Very concerned __: __: __: __: __: Not concerned

It is each person's
responsibility to reduce
air pollution problems ...
Agree   __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

Being knowledgeable about
environmental issues is
_____ to me.
Unimportant __: __: __: __: __: Important

It is _____ for me to make
the best possible purchase.

Important   __: __: __: __: __: Unimportant

How much effort did you put
into this task?

A great deal   __: __: __: __: __: Very little

How much did you
think about this ad?

A great deal   __: __: __: __: __: Very little

Part II

Please complete the following questions to allow us to more completely analyze the answers to the questions you have given us above. Simply circle the appropriate letter for each question. All answers will remain completely confidential. Again, thank you for your cooperation.

Sex:

a. Male
b. Female

Marital Status:

a. Married
b. Single
c. Divorced/widowed

Age:

a. under 18 years
b. 18 - 21 years
c. 22 - 25 years
d. 26 - 29 years
e. 30 - 35 years
f. 36 - 40 years
g. 41 - 45 years
h. 46 - 50 years
i. over 50 years

Present Work Status:

a. employed full-time
b. employed part-time
c. unemployed

Thank you very much for your patience in completing this questionnaire. We will see you again during the next class session and describe the administer the second questionnaire to you.

SS#_____

Consumers and Information Processing

This survey is being conducted through the LSU Department of Marketing. It is concerned with your reactions to advertising and publicity about certain products. As you are aware, interest in consumer reactions to advertising has long been of interest to researchers. This survey is designed to tell us about your feelings regarding advertising and product selection.

This is Part II of the survey you participated in earlier. Completion of this about 30 minutes of your time. Before beginning, we would again like to thank you for your cooperation and assistance. Your participation is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Instructions:

As you will recall from the last survey, you are participating in an advertising opinion study. Recall that you were asked to read an ad and answer some questions about the product and the company. Refresh your memory by reviewing the advertisement. It is included on the next page.

In the pages that follow the ad, you will be asked to read a newspaper article related to the product in the advertisement. Relate this experience to your product purchase situation described in the first part of the study. The newspaper article you will be provided with will include some additional information about the company and product from the earlier advertisement. Read the information carefully, taking as much time as you need. We are interested in your opinions and feelings about the company, its product and the ad itself, given the setting in which you have been placed. Please try to answer the questions to the best of you ability.

Remember, the information you provide us will be kept strictly confidential.

Can an Environmentally Smart Car and Beauty Come in One Package?
YES!

The California Conversion Company introduces

ELECTRO-CAR.

The California Conversion Company introduces state of the art technology that is now available to convert existing car models into electric powered automobiles. This conversion involves the removal of the typical combustion engine and replaces it with a battery powered electric motor. The featured conversion vehicle is the 1992 Dodge Stealth. This conversion offers the following features:

* A quieter, smoother ride compared to a conventionally powered car.

* An emission-free vehicle.

* Be the first on your block to own this innovative product!

* Comfort, class and environmentally safe!

* Available for any car style.

* Convenience of never having to stop at a gas station!

* 0 to 60 mph in 9.0 seconds.

* Top speed of 70 mph.

* Range of 200 miles.

* Price range of $5,000 - $7,500 per conversion.

* Fully rechargeable in 15 minutes.

* Fully conforms to 1996 California fuel requirements.

So you see, Beauty and Brains.
An Unbeatable Combination.

Electro-Car.

Advertising Opinion Study

Please answer the following questions regarding the advertisement. We are interested in your opinion of the products and the company. Without turning back to the product advertisement on the previous page, please list everything that you can remember about the advertisement you have just read.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please check the space that best represents your opinion for each set of adjectives. Remember, we are interested in your first impressions. Please try to answer each question completely, even if you don't have a strong opinion. For example, if you feel that a product that has been described to you is extremely interesting, you might check the space close to the adjective "interesting". If you are neutral in your interest toward the product, you 80- might check the space halfway between the two adjectives, "interesting" and "boring".

I found the advertisement **for Electro-Car ....**	Interesting __:__:__:__:__: Boring Irritating __:__:__:__:__: Not Irritating Held Attention __:__:__:__:__: Did Not Hold Attention Informative __:__:__:__:__: Uninformative
I felt _____ about the **California Conversion Company's** **ad.**	Favorably __:__:__:__:__: Unfavorably
I generally like to purchase **new, innovative products ....**	**Immediately** __:__:__:__:__: **Later on**
In general, I purchase **automobiles fairly .....**	Frequently __:__:__:__:__: Infrequently

My overall impression of
the conversion package is ....

Bad   __: __: __: __: __: Good
Unsatisfactory __: __: __: __: __: Satisfactory
Favorable   __: __: __: __: __: Unfavorable
Beneficial   __: __: __: __: __: Harmful
Superior   __: __: __: __: __: Inferior

My general impression of the
California Conversions Company
is ...

Favorable __: __: __: __: __: Unfavorable
Good   __: __: __: __: __: Bad
Negative   __: __: __: __: __: Positive
Follower   __: __: __: __: __: Leader
Successful __: __: __: __: __: Unsuccessful

I felt the advertisement appealed
primarily to my emotions.

Agree   __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

I feel the advertisement provided
too many technical specifications.

Agree   __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

I would generally spend a great
deal of time searching for the
right automobile to purchase.

Agree   __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

In helping an out of state friend gather
information on a car purchase, I
would not spend a great deal of my time.

Agree   __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

Owning the right vehicle is important
to me.

Agree   __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

The car purchase described in
this scenario is _____ to me.

Important __: __: __: __: __: Unimportant

At this point in time, purchasing a
conversion package is _____ to me.

Important __: __: __: __: __: Unimportant

Please indicate the number of hours you would invest in shopping for the vehicle described in this situation.

0-3 hours _____

Approximately 1 day _____

4-6 hours _____

1-3 days _____

7-12 hours _____

More than 3 days _____

Please indicate your level of agreement by checking the most appropriate statement.

The average person would definitely
buy this product _____   The average person would probably not buy it _____

The average person would probably
buy this product _____   The average person would definitely not buy it _____

The average person might or
might not buy it _____

It is _____ that the average Likely __ : __ : __ : __ : __ : Unlikely
person would purchase this Probable __ : __ : __ : __ : __ : Improbable
product. Impossible __ : __ : __ : __ : __ : Possible

Please indicate your level of agreement by checking the most appropriate statement.

I would definitely
buy this product _____   I would probably not buy it _____

I would probably
buy this product _____   I would definitely not buy it _____

I might or
might not buy it _____

It is _____ that I would   Likely   __ : __ : __ : __ : __ : Unlikely
purchase this product.   Probable __ : __ : __ : __ : __ : Improbable
                                    Impossible __ : __ : __ : __ : __ : Possible

For me, shopping for an   Important   __ : __ : __ : __ : __ : Unimportant
automobile is: Of no concern __ : __ : __ : __ : __ : Of concern
                                    Irrelevant   __ : __ : __ : __ : __ : Relevant
                                    Trivial   __ : __ : __ : __ : __ : Fundamental
                                    Not needed   __ : __ : __ : __ : __ : Needed
                                    Essential   __ : __ : __ : __ : __ : Nonessential
                                    Vital   __ : __ : __ : __ : __ : Superfluous
                                    Valuable   __ : __ : __ : __ : __ : Worthless
                                    Means a lot __ : __ : __ : __ : __ : Means
                                                                         nothing
                                    Beneficial   __ : __ : __ : __ : __ : Not
                                                                         Beneficial

Please list any and all thoughts that went through your mind about the company while you were reading the ad.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

How familiar are you　　　　　　　Not at all __: __: __: __: __: Very
with this product category?　　　familiar　　　　　　　　　familiar

Completing this survey was...　　Difficult __: __: __: __: __: Easy

Please list any and all thoughts that went through your mind about the product while you were reading the ad.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

I am _____ about　　　　　　Very concerned __: __: __: __: __: Not concerned
environmental issues.

It is each person's　　　　　　　Agree　　　　　__: __: __: __: __: Disagree
responsibility to reduce
air pollution problems ...

Being knowledgeable about　　　Unimportant __: __: __: __: __: Important
environmental issues is
_____ to me.

It is _____ for me to make the best possible purchase. Important __:__:__:__:__: Unimportant

How much effort did you put into this task? A great deal __:__:__:__:__: Very little

How much did you think about this ad? A great deal __:__:__:__:__: Very little

Part II

Please read the following newspaper article and answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

Excerpted from the New York Times:

A well-known consumer activist group has announced that the California Conversion Company will recall the first 100 of its conversion vehicles as a result of the agency's investigation. It was reported that the agency's independent investigation into the conversion vehicle's performance revealed several substantial discrepancies as compared to the company's advertising claims. Acceleration and speed promises for the converted vehicles failed to be achieved in repeated tests. Batter endurance was also found to be less than advertised.

The agency reports that the investigation revealed that the California Conversion Company was aware of these performance discrepancies prior to the start of the advertising campaign and failed to remedy the problem satisfactorily. Neither the product nor the advertising campaign was modified as a result of the company's discovery of poor performance. The agency also revealed that the company has a history of recalling products that dates back 10 years with other battery products it manufactures.

According to the agency, the company performed an internal cost/benefits analysis and determined the number of lawsuits and settlements resulting from the potential misrepresentation would be less costly than repairing the battery conversion units. The agency expects that some customers may file lawsuits.

Part III

Please read the following newspaper article and answer the following questions to the best of your ability.

Excerpted from the New York Times:

A well-know consumer activist group reports that the agency has received reports that the California Conversion Company may be guilty of using misleading advertisements. These reports claim that the conversion vehicle's performance did not live up to the company's advertising claims. Acceleration and speed promises for the converted vehicles failed to be achieved in several cases. Battery endurance was also found to be less than advertised.

Independent investigation into these reports revealed that this particular consumer group has superficially investigated firms in the past and prematurely leaked information to the public sometimes resulting in unjust sales decreases. The California Conversion Company has reported that any performance problems have been corrected and all current vehicles meet or exceed advertising claims. The firm in continuing to investigate the reports and has promised to repair any reported problems by its customers free of charge. The California Conversion Company has a record of high customer satisfaction and responsiveness to customer complaints. The California Conversion Company feels the agency's reports are unfounded and unsupported. The company has never had to recall any of its product lines.

Advertising Opinion Study

Please answer the following questions regarding the newspaper article. We are interested in your opinion of the products and the company. Without turning back to the article on the previous page, please list everything that you can remember about the article you have just read.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Please check the space that best represents your opinion for each set of adjectives. Remember, we are interested in your first impressions. Please try to answer each question completely, even if you don't have a strong opinion. For example, if you feel that a product that has been described to you is extremely interesting, you might check the space close to the adjective "interesting". If you are neutral in your interest toward the product, you 80- might check the space halfway between the two adjectives, "interesting" and "boring".

My overall impression of
the conversion package is ....

Bad __:__:__:__:__ : Good
Unsatisfactory __:__:__:__:__ : Satisfactory
Favorable __:__:__:__:__ : Unfavorable
Beneficial __:__:__:__:__ : Harmful
Superior __:__:__:__:__ : Inferior

My general impression of the
California Conversions Company
is ...

Favorable __:__:__:__:__ : Unfavorable
Good __:__:__:__:__ : Bad
Negative __:__:__:__:__ : Positive
Follower __:__:__:__:__ : Leader
Successful __:__:__:__:__ : Unsuccessful

Please indicate your level of agreement by checking the most appropriate statement.

I would definitely
buy this product _____

I would probably not buy it _____

I would probably
buy this product _____

I would definitely not buy it _____

I might or
might not buy it _____

It is _____ that I would
purchase this product.

Likely __:__:__:__:__ Unlikely
Probable __:__:__:__:__ Improbable
Impossible __:__:__:__:__ Possible

For me, shopping for an
automobile is:

Important __:__:__:__:__ Unimportant
Of no concern __:__:__:__:__ Of concern
Irrelevant __:__:__:__:__ Relevant
Trivial __:__:__:__:__ Fundamental
Not needed __:__:__:__:__ Needed
Essential __:__:__:__:__ Nonessential
Vital __:__:__:__:__ Superfluous
Valuable __:__:__:__:__ Worthless
Means a lot __:__:__:__:__ Means nothing
Beneficial __:__:__:__:__ Not Beneficial

How much effort did you put
into this task?

A great deal __:__:__:__:__ Very little

Please list any and all thoughts that went through your mind about the company while you
were reading the article.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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I generally like to purchase
new, innovative products ....

Immediately __: __: __: __: __: Later on

How much did you
think about the article?

A great deal __: __: __: __: __: Very little

Please list any and all thoughts that went through your mind about the product while you were reading the article.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

In general, I purchase
automobiles fairly .....

Frequently __: __: __: __: __: Infrequently

How familiar are you
with this product category?

Not at all __: __: __: __: __: Very
familiar   familiar

Compared to the average person,
I would consider myself
_____ with regards to the
product category.

Knowledgeable __: __: __: __: __: Not
                              Knowledgeable

Completing this survey was...

Difficult __: __: __: __: __: Easy

I am _____ about
environmental issues.

Very concerned __: __: __: __: __: Not concerned

It is each person's
responsibility to reduce
air pollution problems ...

Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

I would generally spend a great   Agree   __: __: __: __: __: Disagree
deal of time searching for the
right automobile to purchase.

In helping an out of state friend gather   Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree
information on a car purchase, I
would not spend a great deal of my time.

Owning the right vehicle is important   Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree
to me.

The car purchase described in   Important__: __: __: __: __: Unimportant
this scenario is _____ to me.

At this point in time, purchasing a   Important__: __: __: __: __: Unimportant
conversion package is _____ to me.

Being knowledgeable about   Unimportant __: __: __: __: __: Important
environmental issues is
_____ to me.

It is _____ for me to make   Important   __: __: __: __: __: Unimportant
the best possible purchase.

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statement. If you believe the statement and it is congruent with your thoughts, you would mark a spot near "strongly agree." If you disagree with the statement, you would indicate this by marking a spot near "strongly disagree.

The California Conversion   Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree
Company was responsible
for the inferior product
performance.

I believe Consumer Advocate Agency is   Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree
knowledgeable about product
failures and misleading
advertisements.

I believe the Consumer Advocate
Agency is making unfounded   Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree
allegations against the
California Conversion Company.

I believe the California Conversion   Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree
Company is placing profits ahead of
consumer satisfaction
and truthful advertising.

Regardless of how you feel   Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree
about Consumer Advocate groups
personally, do you feel they are
qualified to speak out about consumer
issues?

The failure of the converted   Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree
vehicles to perform as the
ad claimed was the fault of
the California Conversion
Company.

I tend to believe articles   Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree
I read in the newspaper.

I think Consumer Advocate
groups are .....   Knowledgeable __: __: __: __: __: Not Knowledgeable
                            Uninformed __: __: __: __: __: Informed
                            Credible __: __: __: __: __: Not Credible
                            Not truthful __: __: __: __: __: Truthful

Part III

I think the consumer advocate
group described in this scenario is .....

Knowledgeable __:__:__:__:__: Not Knowledgeable
Uninformed __:__:__:__:__: Informed
Credible __:__:__:__:__: Not Credible
Not truthful __:__:__:__:__: Truthful

Listed below are three potential responsible parties for the alleged misrepresentation of product performance in company advertising discussed in the included newspaper article.

Please divide 100 points among the parties to indicate your feelings of responsibility.

For example:

If you believe that some misrepresentation occurred in the product advertisement, please weigh the 100 points more heavily to the California Conversion Company.

If you believe that the firm was not deliberately misrepresenting the product and the consumer advocate agency was misrepresenting the seriousness of the situation, please distribute the 100 points more heavily towards the consumer advocate agency or outside events.

Consumer Advocate Agency   _____

California Conversion Company   _____

Random or Outside Events   _____

                    Total   100 points

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

I really enjoy a task that   Agree __:__:__:__:__: Disagree
involves coming up with
new solutions to problems.

I believe that if I think hard   Agree __:__:__:__:__: Disagree
enough, I will be able to
achieve my goals in life.

I find little satisfaction in deliberating long and hard for hours.

Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

I am an intellectual.

Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

Learning new ways to think doesn't excite me very much.

Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

I prefer to think about small, daily projects to long ones.

Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

I prefer to just let things happen rather than try to understand why they turned out that way.

Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

I am hesitant about making important decisions after thinking about them.

Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

I think only as hard as I have to.

Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

The notion of thinking abstractly is appealing to me.

Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

I think primarily because I have to.

Agree __: __: __: __: __: Disagree

Part IV

We would like to thank you for articipating in this study. It is important to us to review your feelings about the study itself. Briefly write down what you think the purpose of this study is.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you very much for your patience in completing this questionnaire.

VITA

Melodie R. Phillips was born November 20, 1963, in McMinnville, Tennessee. She grew up in Tampa, Florida and graduated from Chamberlain High School in 1981. She studied Marketing and Business Administration at the University of South Florida and received a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1984. She then attended the University of Miami (FL) and received a Masters of Business Administration in 1985.

After completion of her M.B.A. she worked as an investment analyst for Florida Power and Light Company before returning to graduate school at Louisiana State University in 1988. She received her Ph.D. in Business Administration in May of 1993 (major field: Marketing, minor field: Sociology, support field: Quantitative Business Analysis).

DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Melodie R. Phillips

Major Field: Business Administration

Title of Dissertation: Attitude Formation and Development: An

Investigation of the Interrelationships Among Attitudinal Constructs

and Their Resistance to Counterpersuasion

Approved:

_____
Major Professor and Chairman

_____
Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

_____

_____

_____

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Date of Examination:

April 12, 1993