

THE TIGER WOODS SEX SCANDAL:
AN ANALYSIS OF
IMAGE REPAIR
IN SPORTS

by

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ABSTRACT

In the world of public figures, high-profile athletes may be the most highly scrutinized. These men and women hold the precarious distinction of both celebrity and hero. Many times they are asked and expected to live their lives in the same manner that they play their sports; with extreme discipline and dedication. In today's world of ubiquitous and viral news coverage the ability of these athletes to escape even the most innocent of human failures is nearly impossible. In this regard, an athlete's image has become one of his or her most highly volatile possessions.

This study attempts to shed more light on the nature of image repair in sports in today's society by studying and testing the image repair strategies used by Tiger Woods after revelations of multiple affairs surfaced in the fall of 2009. Qualitative and quantitative content analyses were conducted to determine the use of Benoit's (1995) image repair theory (IRT) strategies and their effects on the perception of Woods as seen through the eyes of YouTube users who commented on the video of his public apology posted by CNN on February 19, 2010. Two thematic analyses were conducted as part of this study. The first pinpointed strategies used by Woods in his apology speech. The second thematic analysis grouped comments into emerging themes to better understand the motivations behind users' reactions. All user comments were coded for positive or negative reactions, and tests were conducted to determine both frequency distribution and significance.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my wife, without whose constant encouragement I may never have had the resolve to finish.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

BALCO	Bay Area Lab Co-operative
CNN	Cable News Network
ESPN	Entertainment Sports Programming Network
IRT	Image Repair Theory
MLB	Major League Baseball
NBA	National Basketball Association
NFL	National Football League
SCCT	Situational Crisis Communication Theory
<i>N</i>	Total Number
<i>P</i>	Asymptotic Significance
χ^2	Chi Square

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

At approximately 2:25 a.m. on the morning of November 27, 2009, Tiger Woods, widely regarded as the greatest professional golfer in history, crashed his Cadillac Escalade into a fire hydrant and then into a neighbor's tree while leaving his home in Orlando, Florida (Curtis & Willoughby, 2009). His wife, Elin Nordegren, used a golf club to break the rear window of the vehicle and pulled him out. Initial reports indicated that Woods was in serious condition after being rushed to Health Central Hospital in Ocoee, Florida. However, after news of his admission to the hospital began to circulate through national and global media, Woods' agent released a statement downplaying the incident, saying Woods was treated for minor cuts and bruises and was released the same night (Smith, 2009). Local news outlets reported that Woods was treated for facial lacerations and that alcohol was not a factor in the accident. In the days that followed, shocking and disappointing news would come to light that Woods had engaged in multiple extramarital affairs over the course of his 3 ½ year marriage. In the next few weeks, nearly one dozen women would step forward claiming to have had an affair with the golfer (Helling, 2010).

Tiger Woods

Eldrick "Tiger" Woods was born on December 30, 1975, in Cypress in southern California (Strege, 1997). His mother, Kutilda, a native of Thailand, decided on the name Eldrick, but it would be the name "Tiger" by which the golf prodigy would be known: a name given to him by his father, Earl, in honor of a friend and fellow soldier in the Vietnam War to

whom Earl also gave that nickname. Earl had only taken up golf one year before his son was born but fell in love with the sport immediately and introduced it to Woods when he was only 6 months old. While sitting in his high-chair, Woods would watch his father hit golf balls into a net in their garage. By the time he could walk at age 2, Woods had been carrying an old sawed-off putter around the house for over a year. It was then that Woods appeared on the Mike Douglas Show and had a putting contest with Bob Hope (“About Tiger,” 2013). By age 3, Woods had shot a 48 for nine holes and was featured in Golf Digest by age 5. To put this into perspective, the average male golfer’s handicap is 16.1 (Preston, 2013). This would mean that on an average, 18 hole, par 72 course, the average male golfer’s score would be approximately 88.1 and his average nine hole score would be 44.5, just 3.5 strokes lower than a 3-year-old Tiger Woods.

At age 38, Woods had won 105 professional tournaments, including 79 PGA Tour events, 14 of which were major championships (“About Tiger,” 2014). In his career, Woods has earned over \$132 million in prize money and garnered sponsorships from such global giants as Nike, EA Sports, Accenture, General Motors, American Express, Tag Heuer, AT&T, Titleist, Gillette and Rolex. In 2000, he signed a five-year contract extension with Nike worth \$105 million, making it the largest endorsement deal ever signed by an athlete at that time. Woods has also used his success to help others off the course. In establishing the Tiger Woods Foundation, Woods has helped to provide assistance to underserved youth through the Tiger Woods Learning Centers. Woods also runs two PGA Tour tournaments with all proceeds being used to benefit the Tiger Woods Foundation.

With such a tremendous amount of success it is no wonder that Tiger Woods became one of the most recognizable and influential professional athletes in the world. Beginning in just his first year on the PGA Tour, Sports Illustrated named Woods Sportsman of the Year for 1996

("About Tiger," 2014). The publication did so again in 2000, making him the first to win the award more than once. Also in 2000, L'Equipe, a prominent national daily sports publication in France, selected him as World Champion of Champions. In 1997, 1999, and 2000 the Associated Press chose Woods as Male Athlete of the Year. Woods joins Michael Jordan as the only other athlete to receive that award three times. Woods was named ESPY Male Athlete of the Year in 1997, 1999, 2000 and 2001. The World Sports Academy's founding members selected him as the 1999 and 2000 World Sportsman of the Year. Additionally, in 2008, Business Week selected Woods as the most influential person in sports.

Despite Woods' unprecedented stardom and global popularity, he managed to avoid the negative press that seems to find even the savviest celebrity (Helling, 2010). Until the revelations of Woods' infidelity, the only negative thing that could be written about Woods was that he could be cold, elusive, and a bit hot-headed on the golf course. But for most people these "shortcomings" were dismissed as a natural reaction to the type of life he was forced to live. After marrying Nordegren in October of 2004, even these types of negative behaviors began to disappear and recede into the background of a past life. Prior to 2004 Woods had hit a mini slump and had competed poorly in several events, only winning one, causing the talking heads to question his golfing immortality. But in 2005, after his marriage to Nordegren, Woods began a four-year run that saw him win 25 events including six major championships ("About Tiger," 2014). When describing Nordegren, Woods said, "I knew that she was the one for me. She's a special person and I know how lucky I am to have her...I married Elin because I see a long future with her" (Helling, 2010, pp. xi-xii).

While there had been rumors of partying, adulterous flirtations, drunken nights and elicit outings, most of these rumors remained locked in the world of tabloid journalism (Helling,

2010). Serious reporting and legitimately negative press never seemed to find its way through the many barriers Woods and his camp had created. When describing Woods, author Steve Helling wrote:

Sometimes candid and sometimes elusive—his manner really depended on his mood—Tiger was his own gatekeeper, painstakingly building his persona with each carefully crafted sentence. It took thirteen calculated years to meticulously shape his image. It took two weeks to destroy it (p. xiv).

In the two weeks following Woods' car accident, details would emerge that not only confirmed the many rumors surrounding his extramarital escapades, but brought to light a seemingly unfathomable lifestyle of partying, one-night stands, and even prolonged intimate relationships with numerous partners. Reports about the night of Woods' accident began to indicate suspicions of adultery from Nordegren, possible substance abuse by Woods, and elicit text messages from possible mistresses. The image that had been so meticulously built and controlled was now spiraling into a place that so many high profile athletes and celebrities have found themselves. The idea of repairing his image had never before been an issue but was now of paramount importance.

The Importance of Image Repair in Sports

The world of sport no longer occupies a space unto itself. Sport has become an integral part of our global society. It has become a billion-dollar industry with companies from all industries fighting for sponsorships, athlete endorsements, television deals and even real estate. Prettyman and Lampman (2011) described its reach as being “in our clothing, in our media, in our textbooks and schools, in our music and in our language” (p. 1). Over 30 million young people participate in sports or sport-related activities each year (Prettyman & Lampman, 2011). Historically, society has placed a great deal of value on the importance of sport in the development of young people, and thus sport is seen as an important part of most cultures that

continues to follow people into adulthood. In a recent study of 14 international markets, Global Sports Media (2013) found there were 990 million sports fans. Due to its immense popularity, sport has seen tremendous economic growth, and in the United States alone the sports market is estimated at \$440 to \$470 billion annually (“Introduction,” 2013).

In recent decades, the growth of sports media has helped to grow the industry and further expand the impact of sport on society. Fans can now access their favorite athletes and teams around the clock with 24-hour sports networks like ESPN and even connect on a personal level through social media. Sporting news is now available not only through newspapers, magazines, radio, and television but via websites, online streaming, and mobile devices. As a result of the increased growth in sports media and increased visibility of athletes, it is no wonder that companies and organizations from all industries would want to capitalize on this success. A few ways that this has happened are through licensed products, collectibles, sports video games, facility construction, venue naming rights, broadcast rights, and of course, sponsorships (“Introduction,” 2013). Global corporate spending on sponsorships was projected to increase to \$53.3 billion in 2013 (“Global Sports,” 2013). As the amount of money being spent by corporate sponsors continues to grow, so too does the microscope placed on athletes, teams, and organizations.

The ramifications of a scandal surrounding a high profile athlete can be varying and extensive. There is a “trickle-down” effect when an athlete’s reputation is damaged by a scandal. First, the athlete could lose valuable endorsement deals, costing him or her thousands if not millions of dollars. Sponsors endorse athletes on the premise that consumers will transfer an athlete’s image to the sponsoring brand, creating a positive association due to the athlete’s popularity and favorable brand image (Duncan, 2005). Mahony and Moorman (2000) suggested

that the image transfer process between athlete and sponsor is highly effective in the world of sport due to the heightened emotions involved. Carlston and Skowronski (1989) also found that consumers attach much less importance to positive information than they do to negative information, which is why many brands choose to discontinue the sponsorship of an athlete in the midst of a scandal. Both Nike and Anheuser-Busch cut ties with Lance Armstrong after evidence surfaced of his participation in doping from 1999 to 2005 during the time of his seven consecutive Tour de France titles (“Athletes,” 2012). In 2003, NBA superstar Kobe Bryant was charged with rape of a 19-year-old woman in Colorado. While the charges were later dismissed, McDonalds, Coca-Cola, and Nutella all dropped Bryant as sponsors, costing him over \$6 million.

In addition to financial losses through terminated endorsements, an athlete could potentially be disciplined by his or her sporting organization or team, resulting in suspension or even contract termination. In 2007, Michael Vick, quarterback for the Atlanta Falcons, was convicted of conducting a dog fighting operation and sentenced to a multi-year prison sentence resulting in his immediate termination from the team (“Animal Fighting,” 2012). Only one year before, Vick was the highest paid player in the NFL making over \$13 million per season. When Vick returned to the NFL in 2009 he signed a contract with the Philadelphia Eagles at a base annual salary of \$1.6 million.

The damage a scandal can inflict on an athlete does not always result in financial losses. In some cases, damage to an athlete’s reputation by a scandal can result in the stripping of titles, awards, and records. Ben Johnson, winner of the men’s 100-meter-sprint in the 1988 Olympics, was stripped of his gold medal after testing positive for steroids (“Athletes,” 2012).

In addition to causing personal reputation damage, losing endorsement deals, being

stripped of awards, and adversely affecting a sponsor's shareholders, a transgression by a professional athlete can adversely affect that athlete's team or organization in the form of lost ticket sales and event revenue. Lower television ratings due to the absence of a popular athlete can adversely affect future advertising revenue and broadcast options. This was the case with Tiger Woods when the truth about his rampant infidelity was discovered and made public.

Following the revelations of infidelity, Woods declared in one of his first public statements on December 11, 2009, that he would take a hiatus from tournament golf while he and his family dealt with the situation (Bacon & Busbee, 2010). Ticket and sponsorship sales at the Farmers Insurance Open at Torrey Pines, the first full-field tournament Woods would miss, were down 15% to 20% (McCarthy, 2010). In terms of advertising dollars, in 2009 networks were able to charge 30% more for ad space during coverage of tournaments in which Woods played versus those he did not. Woods even missed his own tournament, the Chevron World Challenge, an event he hosts each year in support of the Tiger Woods Foundation. The tournament was forced to refund \$20,000 in ticket sales and also offered a 20% discount on orders for the following year.

Despite his enormous success and widespread popularity, in the last four years Woods has experienced a fall from grace that at one time would have seemed unthinkable. Almost immediately following the news of his multiple affairs, social media sites, website discussion boards, and blogs were filled with negative opinions of Woods. There were over 4,000 messages posted to his website just minutes after his first official statement following the accident urging him to come clean on the details of the alleged scandal (Helling, 2010). His sponsors began to distance themselves, and in some cases, cut ties with the golfer. Shock, outrage and disappointment were evident among golf fans and non-golf fans alike. Just a few short weeks

following the accident and subsequent revelations, Gillette began to reduce Woods' exposure in commercials and Accenture, Tag Heuer, and AT&T dropped him as sponsors (Bacon & Busbee, 2010). A study by two economics professors at UC-Davis evaluated the stock of companies endorsed by Woods and saw a 2.3% fall in stock prices, costing shareholders an estimated \$12 billion (Knittel & Stango, 2012).

The perception of professional athletes as celebrity figures will continue to drive their popularity, further increasing their visibility and a greater need to protect their reputations. Unlike other celebrities, athletes are seen as more than glamorous figures (Memari, 2010). Memari stated that athletes "can impact the lives of others to such a degree that they can shape the values and behaviors of those that admire them" (p. 3). This is the reason that sponsors are willing to invest such large sums of money for endorsement deals and also the reason why it has become vital for an athlete to protect his or her reputation, especially in the midst of a crisis.

In a world where all news can become viral and reaches further than ever before, professional athletes are no longer able to keep their lives completely private, and when a crisis occurs, they are held accountable and expected to address and atone for their actions. Passions are high in the world of sport, perhaps more so than in any other public forum other than politics. This increased level of scrutiny has brought to light the importance of gaining greater understanding of public relations in sports, especially as it pertains to responding to a crisis and managing an athlete's reputation (Andrews & Jackson, 2001). In the case of Tiger Woods, Christine Brennan (2010) of USA Today explained:

America was duped by Tiger Woods. Men, women, children — he took everyone for a ride. Sports fans are a trusting lot, and adoration is part of the job description. Sports are an escape from reality. Who doesn't want to believe? Hence all the grandmothers who rearranged their afternoons on Sundays when the man wearing red was in the lead.

But the American sports fan and all those grandmothers have now found out that the family-man image Tiger created for himself was nothing but a well-choreographed hoax. How does that not rub off now on the way fans feel about other sports stars, especially when word starts trickling out about allegations of doping, womanizing, academic cheating and the like?

Because of Tiger Woods, sports fans are likely to never be so naïve again. The bursting of a myth is never a happy event, but a sadder, wiser sports fan is not a bad thing. Top pro athletes create their images in large part to sell you products. So now let the buyer beware, whether deciding on a jersey or a pair of golf shoes (p. 1).

Purpose of the Thesis

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the scandal surrounding Tiger Woods and discover to what extent the crisis response strategies employed by Woods and his team affected the image repair process. The researcher will use Benoit's (1995) image repair theory (IRT) to determine the effectiveness of Woods' response strategies in restoring his image.

In the midst of a scandal, an athlete and his or her team are afforded an opportunity to address the situation and to issue a response that will best serve to limit and/or repair the damage caused by that athlete's transgression. When an athlete is involved in a scandal and commits a transgression, it is vital for him or her to utilize appropriate and effective crisis communication management strategies. The damage that can occur due to an athlete's transgression can affect a wide range of entities both personally and financially, including the athlete, sponsors, the athlete's employing organization, broadcasters, advertisers, and sponsor stakeholders. By practicing effective crisis communication management, the athlete and his or her representatives may be able to mitigate the damage caused by a scandal, thereby helping to repair the athlete's image.

While it is true that the field of crisis communication research lacks an abundance of quantitative analysis (Coombs, 2007a), it is the researcher's belief that qualitative research is and

will continue to be a necessary and valuable form of analysis due in large part to the varied and numerous publics affected by crises involving athletes. Perhaps the most important reason qualitative studies are vital to the research of crises in sports is the emotional element involved. In proposing a set of “best practices” in crisis communication, Seeger (2006) wrote that it is possible to hypothesize these strategies based on case study analysis alone due to the large body of research in the field. It is the goal of the researcher to explore the case of the Tiger Woods sex scandal by studying the athlete’s response strategies using a case study methodology in conjunction with a content analysis. The researcher will expand upon this approach by further studying Wood’s response in terms of how his strategies affected public perception by combining the case study with a content analysis aimed at filling the gap of empirical research into the effectiveness of image repair strategies. By utilizing a content analysis approach, the researcher will analyze the public response to Woods’ official public apology following the news of his infidelity in order to determine the extent to which Woods was successful in repairing his image.

Significance of the Thesis

Benoit and Hanczor (1994) noted that image repair theory is particularly applicable to crisis situations involving athletes, explaining that “as sports have become an increasingly important part of the American social fabric, athletes are often called upon to defend themselves” (p. 428). The situation that Tiger Woods found himself facing late in 2009 provides an ideal scenario for IRT research. Benoit (1995) said that for IRT to be applicable to a crisis situation the image of the individual or organization must experience damage. Damage occurs when the accused is held responsible for the situation and the act in question is considered offensive. The situation surrounding Tiger Woods fits both criteria and provides a unique platform for studying

IRT because of his own global celebrity and wide range of influence both in and out of the sport arena.

A great deal of image repair research consists of qualitative analysis. Despite this largely one-sided approach, utilizing qualitative research to study these situations remains a highly regarded method. By combining a case study with content analysis, the researcher hopes to illustrate the need for both methods to fully understand and develop the image repair process. Blaney, Lippert, and Smith (2013) explained that content analysis research with image repair theory “provides descriptive insight into the effectiveness of specific IRT strategies” (p. 3). By using a content analysis methodology, the researcher will add to this body of research and provide additional insight into IRT as it pertains to a high profile athlete. Additionally, by also focusing on the public perception of the athlete’s response strategies, the researcher will help to provide further understanding of the effectiveness of IRT strategies. Blaney et al. (2013) call for more focus in this area when they say “Benoit’s image repair theory tends to be overly linear in that it focuses almost exclusively on the apologist; the theory should also include the response of the public to image repair messages” (p. 278). The researcher will attempt to provide this connection and further the breadth of knowledge in image repair research by bridging the gap between strategy selection and public perception.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Crisis Communication

In order to understand the issues surrounding the Tiger Woods sex scandal, it is first important to define what a crisis is in the context of crisis communication research. In an early study, Herman (1963) attempted to separate a crisis from other negative occurrences by identifying three characteristics. First, the crisis event must be a surprise. The entity experiencing the crisis must not have been expecting the crisis event to occur. Second, the crisis event must pose a threat. This could imply a financial threat to a company's stakeholders, a physical threat to the victims of an industrial accident, or a reputational threat that could tarnish the image of a company, organization, or individual. Last, the crisis event must require a short response time. Due to the impending threat, a crisis must be addressed quickly. While proceeding definitions have been refined and further developed, all include at least one component of Herman's characteristics.

Herman's definition is indicative of early crisis communication research and its focus on a crisis as an event that threatens to either physically or existentially disrupt a system (Pauchant & Mitroff, 1992). Fink (1986) described a crisis as a foreshadowing event that could increase in severity and threaten to disrupt operations or result in financial losses. Contemporary definitions now include perceived threats, such as image and reputation, which may be affected by a crisis. Timothy Coombs (2007), the principle researcher behind the development of situational crisis

communication theory (SCCT), defined a crisis as “the perception of an unpredictable event that threatens important expectancies of stakeholders and can seriously impact an organization’s performance and generate negative outcomes” (pp. 2-3). Put another way, a crisis is a significant threat to daily operations that can cause potentially negative consequences if not handled in an appropriate way.

Crisis Management

The process of handling a crisis is known as crisis management and is “designed to prevent or lessen the damage a crisis can inflict on an organization and its stakeholders” (Coombs, 2007, p. 3). Crisis managers work to control the threats posed by a crisis by addressing each potential threat that may be associated with the crisis. According to Coombs, a crisis can post three potential threats. These threats include public safety, financial loss, and reputation loss. While not all crises threaten the safety of the public or result in financial loss, they all threaten an organization’s reputation (Dilenschneider, 2000). Of course, all three threats are interrelated. A threat to public safety could tarnish an organization’s reputation, which could in turn lower sales resulting in financial losses. It is the object of crisis management to “protect an organization and its stakeholders from threats and/or reduce the impact felt by threats” (Coombs, 2007, p. 3).

Crisis management can be divided into three phases; pre-crisis, crisis response and post-crisis (Coombs, 2007). While the phases of a crisis are generally agreed upon, the best way to approach each phase is widely debated. Stocker (1997) believed that crisis management should attempt to do three things. It should work to prevent a crisis when possible, reduce or eliminate the negative effects of a crisis, and provide a foundation for the future. In order to do this, an organization must first begin before a crisis arises by developing a crisis management plan

(Coombs, 2007; Stocker, 1997; Fearn-Banks, 2002; Fink, 1986). While scholars agree that a crisis management plan must be in place to effectively handle a crisis, there are differing schools of thought on the development and implementation of those plans. For this study, the researcher focuses on the implementation of the crisis management plan referred to as crisis response. Crisis response deals with the messages that are sent from the organizations to their various publics and is a function of public relations (Coombs, 2007). By looking at crisis response as a function of public relations, scholars have begun to study crisis communication from a symbolic approach (Coombs, 1998). The symbolic approach relies on two basic assumptions. The first is that a crisis presents a threat to the organization's image. The second is that crisis response is influenced by the characteristics of the crisis.

While crisis management grew out of a need to protect organizations, many of the same principles can be applied to crises involving individuals. One theory that has been widely accepted as a tool for studying individual crises is Benoit's (1995) image repair theory (IRT).

Image Repair

Benoit (1997a) defined image as "the perception of a person (or group or organization) held by the audience, shaped by the words and actions of that person, as well as the discourse and behavior of other relevant actors" (p. 251). At the core of IRT are two fundamental assumptions: communication is a goal-oriented activity, and one of its key goals is to maintain a favorable reputation (Benoit, 1997). The act of employing IRT strategies to protect an individual or organization's image is part of an overall form of crisis communication known as crisis management and is a key function of public relations (Coombs, 2007). Coombs explained that public relations is largely based on the idea of creating and maintaining a positive reputation for the individual or organization being represented. Therefore, during a crisis situation in which

reputation is threatened, it is the goal of communication to manage the crisis by working to restore or repair damage to the individual or organization's image (Benoit, 1997; Coombs, 2007). Benoit's (1995) image repair theory is the predominant theory with which researchers study image repair today, and it was born from two fields of thought: communication studies and social psychology. These fields of study can be further broken down into the areas of rhetorical criticism and persuasive discourse (Benoit, 1997). Early research into image repair can be traced to the *face-work* studies of Goffman (1967), Burke's (1969) studies on *purification and dramatism*, Scott and Lyman's (1968) and Schonbach's (1990) *analysis of accounts*, Rosenfield's (1968) *theory of apologetic discourse*, and Ware and Linkugel's (1973) research into *apologia*.

The following review of literature will explicate the foundations of image repair research by discussing early research in social psychology and move into the development of contemporary approaches to communication studies involving image repair.

Face-Work

Goffman's (1967) face-work research is based in the psychology of social interactions and the perceptions that these interactions create for the parties involved. The term face can be defined as the self-claimed positive social value that a person feels he or she is perceived by others as possessing based on previous social interactions. Goffman goes on to associate face with image and outlines its importance by discussing its delicate nature. Using a hypothetical person to give substance to his assertions, Goffman explained:

In any case, while his social face can be his most personal possession and the center of his security and pleasure, it is only on loan to him from society; it will be withdrawn unless he conducts himself in a way that is worthy of it (p. 10).

This deduction not only illustrates the importance we place on image but also demonstrates the need for image protection by revealing the weight we place on our perceptions of others and ourselves based on social interactions. Goffman (1967) was one of the first researchers to define image as something symbolic rather than an inherent trait. He views a person's image as something that is tied to a social interaction and that only reveals itself when the interaction is interpreted by those involved and perceptions are created. These perceptions, of course, are not always positive, and in these cases a person will find the need to "work" in order to save face or protect his or her image. The given definition of face-work as a conceptual term is "the actions taken by a person to make whatever he is doing consistent with face," generally referring to actions taken in response to "events whose effective symbolic implications threaten face" (p. 12), thus laying the foundation for research into image repair strategies in the face of crises.

Accounts

Scott and Lyman (1968) define an account as "a statement made by a social actor to explain unanticipated or untoward behavior...to bridge the gap between actions and expectations" (p. 46). Accounts can be divided into two types; *justifications* and *excuses*. Justifications are accounts in which "one accepts responsibility for the act in question, but denies the pejorative quality associated with it" (p. 47). In other words, the accused party does not acknowledge the offensive nature with which the act is perceived. The researchers use the example of a soldier in combat. The soldier may admit to having killed others but deny that he committed an immoral act in doing so in the context of war. Excuses, as defined by Scott and Lyman, are "accounts in which one admits that the act in question is bad, wrong, or inappropriate, but denies full responsibility" (p. 47). The same example of the soldier in combat

is used but with a different view. The soldier admits to killing others in battle but is excused from being immoral due to his actions being “under orders.”

Scott and Lyman (1968) further divided justifications and excuses into four categories: *accidents, defeasibility, biological drives, and scapegoating*. Accidents appeal to the circumstances governing the act in question, noting that certain aspects of the offensive act were out of the person’s control when the act was committed. Defeasibility appeals to the mental elements of knowledge and will associated with all actions. A person may use defeasibility to excuse himself from responsibility by claiming a lack of knowledge that may have otherwise resulted in a different action. Biological drives refer to the inherent traits that govern our bodies and can be used as an appeal to relieve responsibility for actions that would otherwise seem out of character. Finally, scapegoating is used to defer responsibility for an action onto another. A person may allege that his or her actions were in response to the behavior of another and therefore should relieve him or her of responsibility for the act in question.

Schonbach (1990) expands Scott and Lyman’s (1968) notion of accounts into four phases from the point of view of the entire process of interaction rather than from the singular perspective of an explanation of behavior. The first phase is the failure event in which there is “a violation of a normative expectation held by the opponent” (p. 11). The second phase is the reproach phase at which time the opponent will question the behavior in order to determine why the failure event occurred. This questioning leads to the third phase in which the accused offers an account (excuse or justification) as to why the failure event occurred. The final phase is the evaluation phase in which the opponent considers the account given by the accused and judges the behavior as either acceptable or unacceptable. With his analysis of accounts, Schonbach

paved the way for modern image repair strategies that view a crisis as a process of multiple interactions requiring more than a reactionary response.

Guilt, Purification, and Dramatism

Burke's (1969) theory of dramatism attempts to provide a systematic method for understanding human behavior with five key terms he calls the pentad. These terms view behavior as if a person is an actor in a play. The five key terms of Burke's dramatism are the *act*, *scene*, *agent*, *agency*, and *purpose*, or *motive*. The act asks what action took place. The scene puts the action into a context and asks in what situation the act occurred. The agent is concerned with who performed the act. The agency refers to the means by which the act was committed. The purpose (motive) asks why the act was committed and to what end. In introducing his theory of dramatism, Burke explained its purpose is:

to make clear the ways in which dialectical and metaphysical issues necessarily figure into the subject of motivation. Our speculations, as we interpret them, should show that the subject of motivation is a philosophic one, not ultimately to be solved in terms of empirical science (xxiii).

Burke (1970) further expands his theory of dramatism with his discourse on guilt and purification. Guilt, he explains, is a natural part of the drama of life when actions do not meet expectations. In order to expunge guilt, the actor must engage in acts of purification. An attack on reputation is seen as an accusation of failing to meet standards of expected behavior and incurs guilt upon the accused party, thereby motivating the accused to purify his or her guilt. Burke (1970) suggests two acts of purification: *mortification* and *victimage*. Mortification is an act of apology and acceptance of guilt. Victimage can be seen as a form of scapegoating. Both acts of purification must be commensurate with the guilt the accused feels in order for reputation to be restored.

Apologetic Discourse

Despite setting the stage for Ware and Linkugel's (1973) theory of apologia, Rosenfield's (1968) apologetic discourse has been met with criticism. Rosenfield's work on apologetic discourse deals mainly with political speeches and involves four characteristics. He describes the discourse as (1) short and intense clashes (2) with remarks that are not solely defensive in nature (3) that include an extensive amount of information (4) with recycled arguments that have been brought together to express one cohesive message. While Rosenfield's work provides a foundation for image repair discourse, it has been criticized by Benoit (1995) and others as focusing too heavily on the scene and lacking in a thorough analysis of any rhetorical strategies that may have risen from these interactions. Although Rosenfield's work lacked concrete rhetorical analysis, it did provide a framework for what apologetic discourse looks like and has allowed researchers to expound upon this base.

Apologia and the foundations of the theory of image restoration

Ware and Linkugel (1973) built on the notion of face-work by studying the concept of apologia and defined it as "public speech of self-defense" usually issued in response to an attack on one's character as during a crisis (p. 274). Kruse (1977) discussed apologia as a defensive response to public criticism. In some cases, the definition has also expanded to include a defense of one's policies as well as one's character (Ryan, 1982). In any case, apologia refers to any speech made in self-defense in response to some negative action that can be seen to pose a threat to the respondent's image. In one of the earliest studies of apologia, Rosenfield (1968) studied the speeches of President Harry Truman and vice presidential candidate Richard Nixon. Rosenfield found that not only were there multiple characteristics of apologia, but that messages are not limited to pure self-defense. It is in this way that Ware and Linkugel (1973) studied

apologia and advanced the discourse to include four separate response categories: *denial*, *bolstering*, *differentiation*, and *transcendence*.

The first factor commonly found in apologia rhetoric is that of denial (Ware & Linkugel, 1973). Denial is a reformatory strategy that attempts to separate the speaker from any association with the objectionable act so long as the use of such defensive speech does not distort reality or conflict with any beliefs the audience may have regarding the act in question. Moran (2012) performed a study analyzing sex scandals in politics, attempting to determine the frequency and effectiveness of image repair strategies utilized by political figures in the midst of a scandal. Denial was found to be the least used response strategy. Of the analyzed responses, only 6% utilized denial as a strategy. This is likely due to the potential negative consequences of being caught in a lie, especially given the resources available in today's news environment. However, the use of denial is still a viable option when it is used to deny intent or to deny a certain aspect of the crisis (Ware & Linkugel, 1973).

The second factor in apologia rhetoric is bolstering. Bolstering is a rhetorical strategy that works to reinforce a fact, sentiment, object, or relationship (Ware & Linkugel, 1973). Akin to denial, bolstering is also considered a reformatory strategy in that the objective is not to distort reality but to provide another perspective. When using this strategy, the speaker is attempting to identify with something the audience views more favorably. In other words, bolstering works to call attention to the positives in the midst of the negatives.

Whereas denial and bolstering are considered reformatory image repair strategies, the next strategy to be discussed, differentiation, is a transformative strategy (Ware & Linkugel, 1973). As a transformative strategy, differentiation works to separate the accused from the crisis by creating a new context through which to view the crisis. The accused attempts to create a new

reality for the audience that runs counter to the original, perceived reality. Differentiation is only effective if it is successful in making the audience develop a completely different interpretation of the crisis.

The final response strategy outlined by Ware and Linkugel (1973) is transcendence. Transcendence, like differentiation, is also a transformative strategy in that it attempts to put the crisis situation into a larger context and expand the audience's focus. Transcendence, while not denying responsibility, calls the audience's interpretation of the crisis into question by noting a larger picture and attempts to assign expanded meaning to the situation.

Image Repair Theory

Incorporating early image management research based in social psychology with more recent rhetorical studies in communication research, Benoit (1995) developed his theory of image restoration. Benoit (2006) later noted that the word "restoration" should be changed to "repair." He indicated that the change in description stemmed from the idea that image restoration assumes the image can be restored to its original state. He elaborated that assuming an image can be restored also assumes that image was considered "good" prior to the negative incident. Born from his studies in political communication, Benoit (1997) concluded that the crisis situation must have two components. The first is that the individual or organization experiencing the crisis must be held responsible for the action causing the crisis. The second stipulation maintains that the action must be considered offensive. When these two components are met, the individual or organization's image is considered to be in danger and appropriate image repair strategies should be employed.

Drawing from prior research in image repair, specifically Ware and Linkugel's (1973) theory of apologia, Benoit (1995) proposed five strategies for responding to an attack on image

with three of the strategies having variations. Benoit's typology closely resembles that of Ware and Linkugel but with additional variations that provide a more comprehensive list of response strategies.

The first strategy in Benoit's (1995) typology is *denial*. The accused party may choose to deny involvement in the act in question. This strategy has two variations. Simple denial refers to a statement made by the accused that flatly denies involvement in the offensive act. The second variation may find the accused shifting the blame and arguing that another person should be held responsible.

A second strategy is to *evade responsibility*. Benoit (1995) provides four variations for this response strategy. A person may claim his or her actions were in response to the actions of another and therefore their own behavior was justified. This variation is known as *scapegoating*. The person may also use *defeasibility* by claiming a lack of control over vital parts of the situation. Perhaps the person was misinformed or did not have enough information to act differently. A person may also claim that his or her actions were performed by *accident*, thereby reducing responsibility and lessening the damage done to his or her image. Finally, the accused may argue that his or her actions were done with *good intentions* and that any offensiveness perceived by the actions of the accused was unintentional.

The third strategy that can be employed by an accused party is one that aims to *reduce the offensiveness* of the act in question (Benoit, 1995). Benoit dissected this strategy into six variations. First, the person may choose to make statements aimed at *bolstering* his or her image by referencing positive acts performed in the past. Similar to bolstering, a person may attempt to minimize the offensiveness of the act in question by attempting to show the audience that the act is not as egregious as it seems. Differentiation strategies can be utilized to show the audience

how the act is less offensive than other similar actions. *Transcendence* attempts to put the act into a more favorable light. For example, Benoit (1997) described a hypothetical company arguing that the benefits of animal experimentation for humans far outweighs the harm done to the animals. A fifth variation could see the person *attacking the accuser*. This strategy can be seen often in messages between political opponents. *Compensation* is the final variation of reducing offensiveness and can help to limit the damage done to a person's reputation if the strategy is acceptable to the offended party (Benoit, 1995).

A fourth strategy illustrated in Benoit's (1995) theory of image restoration is *corrective action*. Corrective action is a strategy that refers to any act that works to restore the state of affairs that existed prior to the offensive act taking place. This strategy can also be illustrated by a person demonstrating he or she is taking steps to insure the offensive act does not recur.

The fifth and final response strategy is that of *mortification*. Mortification is a simple apology and is used when the accused is responsible for the action, confesses, and expresses remorse (Benoit, 1995).

In recent years, Benoit's (1995) framework has been applied across a multitude of industries, focusing on both organizations and individuals. A few prominent examples include an analysis of the crisis surrounding the Exxon Valdez oil spill, Union Carbide's Bhopal gas leak, and a series of vindictive advertisements produced by Coca Cola and Pepsi in Nation's Restaurant News (Benoit, 1997). Additional studies include Benoit and Brinson's (1994, 1996) examination of AT&T's response to the long distance service interruption in New York City in 1991 and Dow Corning's response to accusations of faulty silicone breast implants in the same year. These studies have done a great deal to advance the theory of image repair discourse and

have provided much insight into the effectiveness of strategies in responding to attacks on one's image.

As the study of image repair has evolved and developed into modern theories such as IRT, so too has the public response and scrutiny upon image. As Goffman (1967) discussed, one's image is simply on loan from society. This insight is perhaps even more apropos today with the advent of the internet and the emergence of social media. As Tiger Woods discovered, even the most tightly controlled image can become unmanageable in an instant in the face of a crisis. This study will show how Woods responded to the sex scandal using Benoit's image repair typology, the general effectiveness of his response strategies, how athletic performance affects image in sports, and shed light on the idea of image management and control in modern society. The following chapter will discuss research questions, hypotheses, and methods for performing this study.

Image Repair in Sports

In the case of high profile athletes such as Tiger Woods, creating and maintaining a favorable image is of the utmost importance. Given the mass popularity of sport, the 24/7 news cycle, and the numerous and varied platforms for accessing athletes and their sport, the need for a profound understanding of image repair is paramount. Many researchers have utilized Benoit's (1995) image repair theory in studying crises involving sports because of its ability to be applied to both organizations and individuals. Benoit's theory is built on a foundation of social psychology, a field of study devoted to understanding human behavior and the perceptions created through social interaction. It is also built on studies in communication theory. By combining these schools of thought, Benoit worked to create a unifying theory of image restoration that identifies the common, primary strategies employed during the image restoration

process (Blaney et al., 2013). Benoit would later suggest replacing the word “restoration” with “repair” to remove the assumption that an image can be restored to its original state and that the image was considered “good” in the first place (Benoit, 2006).

Public figures and athletes not only represent themselves, but in many cases they are representing organizations, corporations, communities, teams, and fans. The modern athlete is more than his or her physical abilities. He or she is also a brand, and as such, must respond to attacks on image with calculated, unified strategies. IRT provides the most comprehensive framework with which to study these crisis situations.

In an early study, Kruse (1981) concluded that image repair in sports was unnecessary if the athlete in question was a winner. She argued that “acts that would indicate bad character” are seen as “neither evil nor wicked” if the accused are successful in their sport (p. 278). While the success of an athlete has been shown to contribute in a positive way to image and to mitigate certain offensive acts (Kruse, 1981; Jerome, 2008), it should be seen as a potential piece of the response strategy and does not minimize the importance of strategic sports image repair.

Meyer (2008) addressed the importance of image repair in sports and stressed the globalization of sports, fan activism, and increased media coverage of sports crises. Even Kruse (1981) illustrated the importance society places on sport when she said that “sport exists for the fans as a kind of secular religion” (p. 283). In recent years, researchers have increasingly begun to investigate image repair strategies by athletes (Benoit & Hanczor, 1994; Bernstein, 2012; Blaney et. al, 2013; Brazeal, 2008; Brown, Dickhaus, & Long, 2012; Crouse, 2009; Johnson, 2011; Kennedy, 2010; Meng & Pan, 2013). These studies have contributed a great deal to the understanding of modern sports image repair and the strategies athletes use to respond to a crisis.

One of the first in-depth studies analyzing image repair strategies was performed by Benoit and Hanczor (1994) in response to the scandal surrounding Tonya Harding. Shortly before the 1994 Winter Olympics, rival figure skater Nancy Kerrigan was attacked while practicing. Harding was implicated as a conspirator and accused of trying to eliminate Kerrigan from the competition. Benoit and Hanczor focused their analysis on an interview given by Harding on the television show *Eye-to-Eye*. The study found that the primary image repair strategies used by Harding were bolstering, denial, and attacking the accuser. In order to bolster her image, Harding expressed sympathy for Kerrigan and described her difficult childhood and the hard work she put in to become a professional figure skater. She discussed her desire to create a better life for her children and even promised to donate money to the Special Olympics. Harding repeatedly denied any involvement in the attack and vehemently denied breaking any Olympic code of conduct. Kerrigan's attacker, Harding's ex-husband Jeff Gillooly, was the one who said Harding was involved in the plot. Harding accused Gillooly of lying about her involvement and said that he had even threatened her with violence. The study found Harding's strategies to be appropriate given the situation but found that the way in which she utilized them was ineffective. Her delivery of the strategies in the interview was inconsistent with her public image and therefore seemed insincere.

More recently, National Football League (NFL) star Terrell Owens found himself trying to repair his image after the Philadelphia Eagles refused to renew his contract in 2005 after only one season (Brazeal, 2008). Owens "became sullen with the press, belligerent with the coaching staff, and publicly critical of his team and quarterback" (p. 145). Already perceived as a self-centered player, this incident created a perfect storm of negative press and required a sincere and immediate response from Owens if he wanted to have any chance at repairing his image. Owens

and his agent held a press conference to address the situation. In studying the strategies used by Owens and his agent, Brazeal found that while Owens' use of mortification and bolstering strategies seemed to be appropriate, he denied wrongdoing and refused to take responsibility for the situation, ultimately resulting in his dismissal from the team. This study demonstrates the importance of understanding the culture of sport and what is expected of a professional athlete.

Of all the potential scandals that can damage a professional athlete's image, those involving illicit behavior evoke some of the strongest reactions. In 2003, National Basketball Association (NBA) superstar Kobe Bryant was accused of raping a 19-year-old hotel employee in Colorado (Grace, 2003). Bryant, a married man, admitted to having sex with the woman but denied the accusation of rape (Keyes, 2004). The charges would later be dropped because the woman refused to testify and a civil lawsuit was then filed and a settlement was reached between the two parties. In this scenario, Bryant's use of denial did not distort the reality that a sexual encounter occurred. Instead, the use of denial worked to inform the audience of Bryant's intent at the time. In addition to denial, Bryant used mortification by apologizing for committing adultery and also apologizing directly to the accuser and her family for the harm he caused (Kennedy, 2010).

NFL quarterback Ben Roethlisberger was accused of sexual assault in 2008 and again in 2010 (Hayes, 2010). Both cases were later settled out of court with no charges filed. After the second incident in 2010, Roethlisberger was handed a reduced suspension of four games and ordered to attend NFL-mandated behavior counseling (Robinson, 2010). Roethlisberger made public statements that demonstrated the use of mortification, corrective action, and reducing offensiveness through bolstering (Meng & Pan, 2013). Both Bryant and Roethlisberger faced similar situations and both chose to respond with the primary strategy of mortification. While

this strategy has been found to be the most effective in repairing Bryant's image (Kennedy, 2010), the statements issued by Roethlisberger have come under a great deal of scrutiny and were grudgingly accepted (McCallum, 2010). There are a few reasons that might indicate the relative success of Bryant's repair strategies to those of Roethlisberger. Bryant issued an immediate statement denying the allegations of rape and apologized to his wife and to the accuser in addition to his teammates, the Lakers, his fans, and to the citizens of Eagle, Colorado, where the incident occurred (Meng & Pan, 2013). Roethlisberger's statement came after the NFL decided on his punishment and has been criticized for being "the ultimate expression of athletic entitlement run amok" (McCallum, 2010, p. 1). While Roethlisberger did express his disappointment in his behavior (mortification) and vow to change his ways (corrective action), he did not mention his accusers, and his determination to maintain his criminal innocence may have contributed to the muted effect his image repair efforts have had.

In recent years, Major League Baseball (MLB) has been dealing with accusations of rampant steroid use among its players. Spurred by these accusations, and in an attempt to repair the MLB's image, Commissioner Bud Selig hired former Senate majority leader George Mitchell to lead an investigation into the use of steroids among MLB baseball players (Curry, 2006). Released in 2007, the Mitchell Report implicated 89 players, including multiple-Cy Young-winner Roger Clemens (Wilson & Schmidt, 2007). Despite testimony from his long-time trainer, Brian McNamee, Clemens' primary defense strategy was denial. Clemens denied having ever used steroids or any other performance enhancing drugs on the basis that he changed very little physically during the time period cited in the report. Indeed, Clemens' body did not exhibit any unnatural changes during that time, and according to Blarney et al. (2013), this strategy was appropriate in that the audience's reality was not distorted. However, in multiple subsequent

statements, including an interview on 60 Minutes and a Congressional hearing, Clemens also utilized the strategies of attacking his accusers and bolstering to support his primary denial strategy. Despite his efforts to support his position, opinions of his innocence became distorted after contradictory testimony and further damaged his image as a result. On February 7, 2008, a USA Today/Gallup Poll revealed that 57% of respondents believed Clemens was lying. Researchers indicated that Clemens' overuse of the denial strategy hurt his efforts to repair his image and suggested that denial strategies remain succinct to be most effective.

Similarly, in December of 2003, Barry Bonds, MLB's home-run king, was questioned by a federal grand jury about his association with BALCO (Bay Area Lab Co-operative) and his use of undetectable steroids (Fainaru-Wada & Williams, 2004). His statements were later released to the public by the San Francisco Chronicle. In his public response, Bonds denied using steroids and used a bolstering strategy to call attention to his long standing reputation as a great teammate and player in addition to stating his support of the MLB drug testing policy (Blarney et al., 2013; Kennedy, 2010). He also attacked his accusers by calling into question the credibility of reporters who published sealed grand jury testimony. In one instance, Bonds' use of bolstering failed in repairing his image because his statements ran counterintuitive to his reputation as a great teammate. On the other hand, Bonds' support of the MLB drug testing policy helps to support his position of innocence as well as bolstering his image by demonstrating his passion for the game and concern for its integrity. Researchers considered Bonds' image repair successful in so far as he was able to avoid becoming the "scapegoat" of the MLB Steroid Era but found that his use of denial in the face of overwhelming evidence only served to reinforce his unfavorable image (Blarney et al., 2013). Kennedy (2010) also suggested the lack of remorse (mortification) shown by Bonds in the wake of the scandal hurt his image repair efforts.

Tiger Woods

Research surrounding the Tiger Woods sex scandal is limited, but a few rhetorical studies have been performed (Benoit, 2013; Bernstein, 2012; Johnson, 2011; Husselbee & Stein, 2012). Benoit (2013) employed his image repair theory to three statements made by Tiger Woods following revelations of infidelity in 2009. In his analysis, Benoit found that Woods utilized strategies of mortification, transcendence, and corrective action through two statements released on his website and a televised statement. Woods explicitly apologized for his actions in each of the three statements. His use of transcendence was illustrated by his request for privacy for his family, and he promised corrective action by stating his intentions to seek professional counseling and to reestablish his religious faith. Benoit noted that mortification and corrective action were effective and appropriate strategies. An attempt to ask for forgiveness in his speech would have provided additional support for his statements.

While Benoit (2013) used three statements made by Woods, Bernstein (2012) used eight separate statements issued between November 29, 2009, (the night of the crash) and August 23, 2010, (announcement of divorce) in his analysis. Of the eight statements analyzed, six included a mortification strategy. Other strategies included reducing offensiveness (bolstering, attacking the accuser, and transcendence) and corrective action. The additional statements demonstrated Woods' initial defense of his wife after allegations of assault arose prior to Wood's response to the claims of infidelity. Negative associations with Woods were prominent on social media until the early spring of 2010 when online conversations began to return to Woods and golf. Bernstein suggested the time between statements (over two months) contributed to the negative conversations and that his televised statement on February 19, 2010, prompted the decline and return to a focus on golf.

In another case study, Johnson (2011) also names mortification, reducing offensiveness, and corrective action as the primary strategies employed by Woods with mortification being the most prominent. While these strategies were considered appropriate, a more timely response could have helped to stem further negative feelings toward Woods. Johnson also suggested that Woods' prior positive image and strong relationships with his sponsors helped his response strategies gain more success.

In each of the aforementioned studies, initial analysis relies on determining the image repair strategies being used by Woods in each statement being studied. Therefore, these studies have informed the following research question:

RQ1: What image repair strategies were used by Woods in his televised public apology?

Husselbee and Stein (2012) studied the scandal from the perspective of journalistic antapologia, or reaction to apology. The study utilized a combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis in reviewing the treatment of Woods in newspaper articles pre and post apology. Findings concluded that newspaper coverage focused on alleged character flaws before and after Woods issued his televised apology. The researchers determined that Woods' use of image repair strategies was ineffective due to the generally unfavorable coverage he received in newspaper articles. Findings indicated that there was a feeling Woods did not take adequate responsibility for his actions, and his motives for issuing the apology were insincere. Husselbee and Stein went a step further in attempting to determine the effects of Woods' image repair strategies by studying reaction via newspaper articles rather than by general observation and analysis of Woods' statements. In a similar study to that of Husselbee and Stein, Meng and Pan (2013) studied the sex scandals surrounding Kobe Bryant, Ben Roethlisberger, and Tiger Woods. The researchers utilized a case study method to determine which image repair strategies were

employed by each athlete. Woods was found to have used both mortification and corrective action in his apology as well as bolstering strategies. In addition to determining which strategies Woods used, the researchers studied articles from three major newspapers during the time of the scandal. Articles in the The New York Times, The Washington Post, and USA Today were used to study the way in which the media reacted to the scandal and to determine if the reaction could provide insight into the potential effectiveness of Woods' image repair strategies. One important insight that the researchers found was that Woods' success on the golf course was mentioned 27 times while Bryant's success on the basketball court was mentioned 10 times and Roethlisberger's only three. The researchers suggest that the large number of mentions involving Woods' success could be a result of him playing an individual sport versus Bryant and Roethlisberger playing team sports. Despite the reason, Meng and Pan discuss the possibility of these mentions either reducing the offensiveness of Woods' actions or demonstrating the heightened expectations placed on him resulting in a harsher evaluation of his behavior off the course. Additional consideration could be given to audience reaction to the initial televised apology via online comments made by members of the general public rather than journalists. In light of research that is missing from the literature the researcher proposed the following research question:

RQ2: What were the themes that emerged from online user comments?

The evidence from the preceding studies informs the following hypothesis:

H1: Woods' choice of image repair strategies will result in more negative conversations than positive conversations.

The next chapter will discuss the method by which the researcher answered the research questions and tested the hypothesis.

CHAPTER 3

METHOD

The Need for More Research in Image Repair

Most of the studies looking at the Tiger Woods sex scandal employ a rhetorical case study approach and analyze statements made by Woods in an attempt to illustrate the most commonly used image repair strategies and provide a critique. While Bernstein (2013) suggested a correlation between Woods' televised statement and positive online conversations, there is a need for additional research to better understand the effectiveness of these repair strategies. It is evident from the cases presented herein that researchers largely agree on the types of image repair strategies employed by the athletes discussed. However, it is also evident that the results of each crisis are varied and suggestions for appropriate strategies can differ. The majority of research using IRT is rhetorical in nature and focused on analyzing the source of the communication (Brown et al., 2012). Coombs (2010) has emphasized the need for empirical research focused on the audience and the perceptions created by the response strategies of the accused party. Coombs refers to this as "audience effects crisis communication research" (p. 721). Benoit (2000) has also called for more empirical research further testing his theory of image repair. By reiterating that "image restoration theory is a form of persuasive discourse," Benoit (1997a) suggested that "effectiveness can be derived from our understanding of persuasion generally" (p. 7). When an athlete uses image repair strategies, he or she is attempting to persuade the audience to form positive impressions that will hopefully lessen or restore the

damage done to his or her image by the offensive act. Therefore, in order to understand the effectiveness of image repair strategies it is necessary to not only study the source but also the audience and what perceptions are formed based on the strategies that are used.

While empirical research is limited, especially in the realm of sport, there have been a few important studies that have contributed to advancing image repair discourse. Brown et al. (2012) conducted a study that blended survey and experimental methods in an attempt to determine the effectiveness of LeBron James' image repair strategies following the controversy surrounding his announcement that he would be leaving Cleveland for Miami on an ESPN special titled "The Decision." The study found that James used mortification, bolstering and shifting the blame strategies following the negative backlash that resulted from the perceived egotism of his announcement via the hour-long ESPN special. Experimental results found that only the mortification strategy worked to repair James' image while the bolstering and shifting the blame strategies were found to be a detriment. While more empirical research would contribute positively to the overall body of work within image repair discourse, the importance of theoretical analysis within this field will continue to provide invaluable insight into the effects of image repair strategies on the audience.

One method that bridges the gap between empirical and theoretical research is content analysis. Huang (2006) maintained the importance of content analysis as a viable method for research when determining the types of response strategies used in image repair as well as the effects these strategies have on the audience. The ability to use both qualitative and quantitative approaches allows the researcher to use content analyses to retrieve empirical data without ignoring the context from which that data was drawn (Mayring, 2000).

Len Rios (2010) used a content analysis of news articles and other documents to study

the image repair process surrounding the Duke University lacrosse scandal. The content analysis was used to determine the most frequently used image repair strategies and to determine the tone of media coverage throughout the image repair process. Findings showed that the university began by using denial and mortification strategies in response to the accusations that three members of the lacrosse team raped a woman at a house party. During the subsequent trial, testimony by the prosecution became suspect and credibility issues drove the university to employ attacking the accuser, corrective action, and bolstering strategies. Media coverage was found to become the most positive after credibility issues arose and attacking the accuser strategies were employed.

In an effort to advance research in the area of sports image repair, specifically individual athlete image repair, the researcher used a combination of quantitative and qualitative content analysis methods to determine the effectiveness of Tiger Woods' image repair strategies following revelations of his infidelity in 2009. A qualitative content analysis was used to determine the specific IRT strategies employed by Woods in his televised public apology on February 19, 2010. A thematic approach was used to code the transcript of Woods' apology. Benoit's five response strategies (denial, evading responsibility, reducing offensiveness, corrective action, and mortification) were used as predetermined codes from the apology. The transcript was coded and divided into units representing each theme. The researcher studied each statement individually and coded each statement using Benoit's response strategies. For example, statements expressing remorse or referencing the effects of his actions were coded under mortification. Statements detailing Woods' rehabilitation or his plans for rebuilding his marriage were coded as corrective action. Statements that made reference to his charity or other ventures separate from the scandal and its immediate effects were coded as reducing

offensiveness. This type of qualitative content analysis provides an ideal platform for analyzing the transcript of Woods' apology as it allows the researcher to "explore the meanings underlying physical messages" (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009, p. 1). While more quantitative analysis is important in image repair research, analyzing textual elements such as the transcript of Woods' apology requires a more inductive approach that allows researchers to study the material's meanings, themes, and patterns (Zhang & Wildemuth, 2009). A purely quantitative approach to analyzing Wood's apology would do little in identifying his use of IRT response strategies as this type of approach does not take into account the syntactical or semantic information found in the textual elements of the transcript (Weber, 1990). The full transcript of Woods' apology can be found in Appendix A and the coding sheet can be found in Appendix B. The chosen method informs the following research question:

RQ1: What strategies were used by Woods in his televised public apology?

A quantitative content analysis was used to study the public reaction to Woods' apology along with a second thematic analysis to determine the emergent codes from user comments. A quantitative approach was chosen for its deductive nature and its ability to address the questions of IRT's effectiveness with quantifiable data. This approach allows researchers to generate data that can be compared and tested, eliminating much of the subjectiveness that can accompany qualitative analysis (Boettger & Palmer, 2010). Additionally, quantitative content analysis allows researchers to "investigate a communicative situation that no longer exists or cannot be accessed" and enables "a broader investigation of texts over an extended period of time" (p. 1). For this study, comments posted on the social media website YouTube following the video of Woods' apology were studied and coded. Comments on YouTube were only studied if posted between February 19, 2010 and the beginning of 2012. On March 25, 2012, Woods won his first

PGA Tour event following the crisis. In order to better ensure that comments were not influenced by post-crisis athletic performance, the researcher chose 2012 as the cutoff date for posted comments. Each comment was coded as one unit, as opposed to separate statements, in order to better understand the commenter's overall sentiment and ensure nothing was taken out of context. This method also prevented exceptionally long comments with multiple statements from skewing results with numerous iterations of the same sentiment. Additionally, the researcher accounted for comments in reply to previously posted comments and duplicate users making more than one comment. These considerations resulted in a total of 2,940 comments.

The researcher developed a coding sheet to study the comments made by internet users who viewed Tiger Woods' public apology which can be found in Appendix C. The video posted via CNN to YouTube on February 19, 2010 is 14 minutes and one second long. The video was acquired via the indicated website along with time-stamped comments ensuring accuracy in the timeliness of coded responses. The researcher coded each comment for positive, negative, and neutral words or phrases to determine the effectiveness of Woods' image repair strategies. Derogatory words and phrases in reference to Woods or his apology were coded negatively. Comments referencing goodwill, praise, encouragement, or prayer were coded as positive. Comments made in reference to the unimportance of the story or any sentiment expressing indifference to Woods, his actions, or his apology were coded as neutral. Frequency tests were run to determine the distribution of positive, negative, and neutral comments. A chi-square test was run to determine if there was a significant difference between positive and negative comments. This method attempts to test the following hypothesis:

H1: Woods' choice of image repair strategies will result in more negative comments than positive comments.

In order to maintain a more objective approach, the researcher coded comments regarding Woods' apology and comments regarding the acts committed by Woods as the same in terms of the positive or negative sentiment expressed. While not all positive or negative comments referenced the apology, both types of comments are an expression of the user and a reflection of that person's feelings toward Woods. To capture the context of these comments and better understand public reaction, the researcher used a thematic analysis. After coding comments either positive or negative, the researcher performed three additional readings to discover emerging themes. During the first reading the researcher created a list of specific and descriptive themes. The second reading provided a way to divide and catalogue the initial themes into groups. The final reading provided a consolidated list of overarching themes that allowed the researcher to separate those comments that reacted to the apology and those that reacted to the scandal. Using this information, the researcher was able to draw conclusions about the nature of positive and negative comments as it relates to image repair strategies. This method attempts to answer the following research question:

RQ2: What were the themes that emerged from online user comments?

Qualman (2013) calls social media "a fundamental shift in how we communicate" (p. 1). Social media are used today to develop meaningful engagement, encourage participation, and create value for those who use it. By choosing to study Woods' image repair strategies via YouTube, the researcher attempts to provide a greater understanding of the image repair process in today's world of communication.

By following the initial qualitative content analysis with a secondary thematic analysis as well as a quantitative approach, the researcher was able to discern not only the strategies utilized by Woods to repair his image but also the implications and reactions those strategies elicited. In

an early study, Berelson (1952) describes content analysis as an ideal way for researchers to identify trends in communication, describe attitudes or behaviors as responses to communication, and determine the emotional states of individuals or groups. This study hopes to enhance future research by adding quantifiable data to the body of research in IRT and to studies involving professional athletes specifically. The addition of thematic analysis provides greater insight into the effectiveness of image repair strategies by helping explain “social reality in a subjective but scientific manner” (Zhang and Wildemuth, 2009, p. 1). This study adds to the body of research on image repair by focusing on modern day modes of communication and avoiding an overused case study approach. While the studies involving the Tiger Woods sex scandal all identify image repair strategies (Benoit, 2013; Bernstein, 2012; Johnson, 2011; Husselbee & Stein, 2012) only one mentions social media (Bernstein, 2012) and one other attempts to study reaction to these strategies (Husselbee & Stein, 2012). Each study employs a case study approach, analyzing interviews, transcripts, articles and press releases to project the success or failure of Woods’ image repair strategies. This study provides a platform for future study by employing a more objective approach for identifying IRT response strategies and how these strategies affect public perception. The data produced from these content analyses will allow for a more direct correlation between strategy choice and public perception while also providing unique insight into the way our modern world communicates.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

A content analysis was conducted on the transcript of Tiger Woods' apology to answer the following research question:

RQ1: What strategies were used by Woods in his televised public apology?

Each statement (N = 120) was coded for Benoit's (1995) IRT response strategies. Of the 120 statements, 66 presented evident crisis response strategies (55%) while the remaining 54 did not contain any evident use of IRT strategies (45%). A frequency test was run to determine which IRT strategies were employed by Woods. Results of the frequency test can be found in Appendix D. Of the five strategies proposed by Benoit (1995), mortification was the most oft used strategy at 25.8%. Corrective action was used in 17.5% of statements. Reducing offensiveness was the least used strategy at 11.7%. There was no evidence of statements of denial or evading responsibility. Figure 1 shows the distribution of response strategies used by Woods in his apology.

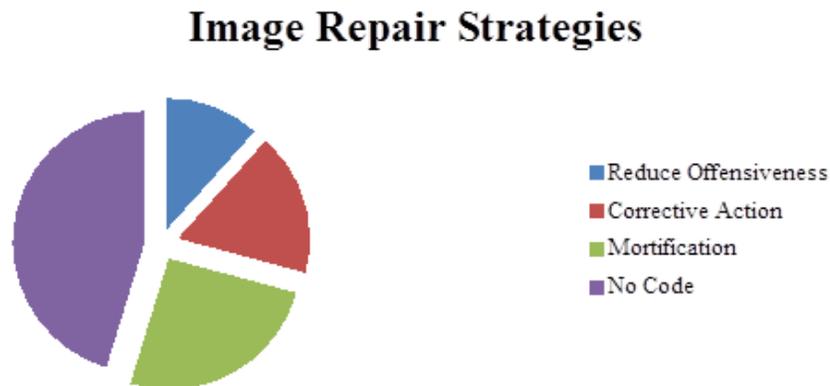


Figure 1. Distribution of image repair strategies used by Woods in his apology

These findings reflect much of the research presented in previous studies. In a 2013 study, Benoit found Woods used these strategies in two statements posted to his website in addition to his televised apology. Bernstein (2012) analyzed eight statements issued by Woods from the beginning of the scandal until the announcement of his divorce. Johnson (2011) also studied various statements made by Woods throughout the course of the scandal. Both Bernstein and Johnson also found that Woods used mortification, reducing offensiveness and corrective action as his primary response strategies.

As evidenced by the results of the content analysis, Woods used mortification, corrective action and reducing offensiveness in his apology in response to the sex scandal. Woods used mortification strategies by admitting responsibility and apologizing. He said “I want to say to each of you, simply, and directly, I am deeply sorry for my irresponsible and selfish behavior I engaged in” (“Tiger Woods’ Apology,” 2010, p. 1). Corrective action strategies are evidenced by his promise to seek therapy and continue to work toward becoming a better man. In reference to his wife, Elin, he said, “As she pointed out to me, my real apology to her will not come in the form of words...It will come from my behavior over time” (“Tiger Woods’ Apology,” 2010, p. 1). In an attempt to reduce offensiveness through bolstering, Woods speaks about his foundation and the important work being done to help children gain an education. After apologizing to his foundation’s employees and board of directors, Woods said, “Thirteen years ago, my dad and I envisioned helping young people achieve their dreams through education... This work remains unchanged and will continue to grow” (“Tiger Woods’ Apology,” 2010, p. 1). The full transcript can be found in Appendix A and associated coding sheet can be found in Appendix B.

A second content analysis was conducted of YouTube comments made in response to the televised apology issued by Woods. The following hypothesis was tested:

H1: Woods' choice of image repair strategies will result in more negative conversations than positive conversations.

Comments posted between February 19, 2010, (date of apology) and 2012 (year of first PGA Tour win after the scandal) were coded (N = 2,940). Comments were coded as positive, negative or neutral. A frequency test was run to determine the distribution and variance of perceptions following Woods' apology. Results of the frequency test can be found in Appendix E. Of the 2,940 comments, 946 were coded as positive (32.2%); 922 were coded as negative (31.4%); and 1071 were coded as neutral (36.4%). Figure 2 shows the distribution of sentiments of YouTube comments.

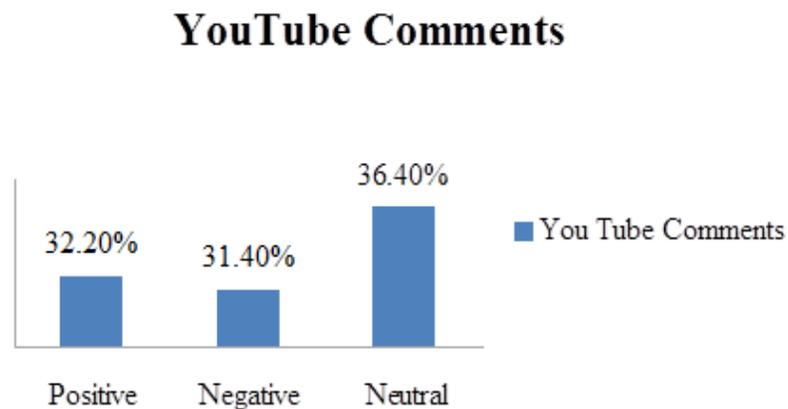


Figure 2. Distribution of YouTube comments by type of reaction

While this study is one of the first to directly measure audience reaction to crisis response via social media, the results differ from similar studies in that more comments demonstrated a positive reaction to Woods' apology than negative. Bernstein (2012) discussed the social media reaction in his study and found initial reaction to be largely negative immediately following the news of the scandal (prior to Woods' televised apology). Husselbee and Stein (2012) studied the effects of Woods' apology by analyzing media coverage in newspapers. The researchers found that there was considerable negative coverage of Woods following his televised statement and

those articles indicated there was a feeling that Woods did not take adequate responsibility and seemed insincere in his statement.

As indicated by the results of the frequency test of coded comments, there were more positive comments than negative, while the majority of comments remained neutral. Of the 2,940 coded comments, 922 were negative (31.4%). The researcher found that many negative comments indicated that the speech felt robotic and rehearsed and therefore insincere. Additional comments that noted a feeling of insincerity indicated his lack of a tie contributing to this sentiment. A great many comments expressed a belief that his statements were made to save his sponsorships and that he was “only sorry because he got caught.” Ironically, a notable number of comments condemned Woods for making the apology and saw the act as acquiescing to media pressure and antiquated societal requirements. Other negative comments went in a different direction entirely, condemning his actions based on his presumed oversight of the probability of contracting diseases from so many sexual partners and bringing these diseases home to his wife. The majority of these commenters noted that they were not golf fans but simply people with thoughts on extramarital issues. Table 1 provides examples of a few of the negative comments that were coded and can be found in full on the following page.

Table 1

Negative YouTube Comments

“His apology would’ve been more sincere had he worn a tie. That open button is killing his credibility.”

“I’ve waited until Woods did something like this to actually come down on a side in the issue of his affairs. Until now, understand, I did not care and remained a casual fan. But now, I’m against him. In this edited apology I heard no contrition, no soul, no heart. It’s like he still doesn’t care what he did and is just getting the public off his back, getting his required apology out of the way. I got the sense of just the kind of person he is in this speech: a slimy prick.”

“Yes, what an eloquently, scripted, well paused pile of trash. He was busted. If his little house of cards didn't fall, he'd still be out there thinking he was king of the hill, breaking his marriage vows without so much as a thought. His poor wife has made the painful decision to live with a man who's cheated on her and for that I can't fathom why... kids or no kids.. I would have sued his butt and ran to Sweden. This is beyond asking for a second chance. He clearly doesn't deserve it.”

“Doesn't come across as heartfelt and genuine. It would help if he didn't keep referring to his notes.”

“I don't want an explanation, I just want him to get his still horning ass off the national networks. But that prick took millions of \$ in "image" fees from companies I had a financial stake in like GM. That money could have been used to meet expenses.”

“This apology speech was totally emotionless. It was easy to tell it was written by some PR person. "Sorry"? Bullcrap, he's just sorry he got caught.”

“I can care less if he cheated on his wife with multiple women. That's between him and his wife. But don't come on national television & try to fill us full of shit. This poor me and I'm seeking therapy crap makes me want to puke. Just be a man & say you screwed up. Don't read a generic apology speech from a manuscript. It's not credible”

Of the 2,940 coded comments, 946 were positive (32.2%). While there was a less than 1% difference between the number of negative comments and positive comments, the divergence from previous studies provides new ground for discussion. In direct contrast to many negative comments, a good number of positive statements indicated that Woods said all the right things

and seemed sincere. Many commenters noted his acknowledgment that his real apology will come in his actions moving forward (corrective action). Other positive comments implored others not to be judgmental, expressed forgiveness, and mentioned the courage it takes to make such a statement. Additional commenters recognized his prowess in the game of golf and that they would continue to root for him despite his transgressions. Taking a different route, other comments applauded Woods for being himself and doing what anyone would do in his position. These commenters decried the moral code of society and said Woods should not have to apologize for doing what any man would do in his position. Table 2 presents examples of positive comments.

Table 2

Positive YouTube Comments

“give the guy a break, everyone makes mistakes, give him a chance to learn form this mistake and give him a chance to live up to his statement.”

“tiger is still the shit. he's an amazing golfer and this has nothing to do with that.”

“The people that are mad arent mad becuz he cheated their mad becuz their losers and nobody wants them. Stop judging your not perfect your just mad becuz nobody wants to f**k you.

“Tiger woods is a great guy. Sure, he made a mistake but taking it all into account, admitting it, and wanting to protect his family really shows that he is on the way to recovery”

“Tiger's exactly right. He doesn't owe any of us an apology. He's doing the right thing focusing on his family. I do miss Tiger playing golf...without him, it's unwatchable for me.”

“Tiger shouldn't apologize because he didn't do anything wrong.”

“I actually admire him now more than ever knowing that he hooked up with all those chicks. Though some were not that good looking a couple were hot. Plus he had he wife Elin on the side, who is also hot.”

“He means it, will he continue is the question as improving takes constant work. I like the fact he tried to take the heat from his wife. And he basically took responsibility.”

While previous studies involving the Tiger Woods sex scandal have focused on multiple statements issued by Woods along with media reaction, this study focused directly on the February 19, 2010, apology and the reaction on the social media website YouTube. The overwhelming majority of comments were positive or neutral, indicating a relatively successful use of image repair strategies by Woods and his team. However, comments were coded as strictly positive or negative, without consideration of the subject. The thematic analysis was performed to differentiate between reactions to Woods' apology and reactions to the acts of infidelity.

Prior research indicates the use of mortification and corrective action to be the most popular forms of image repair among athletes involved in sex scandals (Meng & Pan, 2013). The results of the content analysis of Woods' apology transcript support this conclusion. Benoit (2013), Bernstein (2012), Johnson (2011) and Husselbee and Stein (2012) all discuss Woods' use of these strategies in his various statements following the scandal. Each study suggested Woods' choice of image repair strategies was appropriate and yet each suggested a negative reaction. These conclusions were a result of studying newspaper or tabloid coverage, but they were also a result of careful analysis of the many statements made by Woods' up to and including his televised apology. This study analyzed Wood's official public apology only and produced results indicating more positive than negative reactions.

In addition to a frequency test, a chi-square test was run to determine if the number of positive and negative comments was significant. All positive comments were marked with a "1" and all negative comments were marked with a "0." The results indicated these variables was not significant, $X^2(1, N = 1,868) = .308, p = .579$. Results of the chi-square test can be found in Appendix F. Additional thematic analysis was performed to further study the positive and

negative comments and answer the following research question:

RQ2: What were the themes that emerged from online user comments?

A thematic analysis was used to determine common themes among user comments. Two overarching themes emerged: *reaction to act* and *reaction to speech*. Within these two themes there were 12 discernible sub-themes or categories. A few categories contain comments in reference to both the act and the speech, while others reference only one or the other. A mixture of positive and negative sentiments was found in most but not all categories. Table 3 shows the resulting themes and the distribution across all categories.

Table 3

Emergent Themes from YouTube Comments

Theme	Reaction to Speech	Reaction to Act	Positive	Negative
Delivery of Speech	X		X	X
Elements of Speech	X		X	
Credibility	X		X	X
Privacy	X		X	
Addiction		X	X	X
Criminality		X	X	
Sexism		X	X	X
Machismo		X	X	
Celebrity	X	X	X	X
Family	X	X	X	X
Human Nature	X	X	X	
Marriage	X	X	X	X

As themes emerged, it became evident that there were two kinds of positive or negative reactions expressed by YouTube users. The first was a reaction to the speech itself; its content, Woods' appearance, and his delivery. The second was a reaction to the acts committed by Woods that initiated the scandal. By categorizing these comments and placing them within these two themes

of reaction the researcher was able to illustrate the motivations behind audience perception of Woods.

Among the categories that emerged, four represent comments that reacted solely to Woods' apology: *Delivery of Speech, Elements of Speech, Credibility, and Privacy*. Comments referencing Woods' delivery of his apology appeared throughout. These comments included both positive and negative sentiments. Delivery was defined as any reference to Woods' mannerisms or oration. Table 4 provides examples of comments that reacted to Woods' apology by referencing his delivery.

Table 4

Thematic Examples – Delivery of Speech

Positive

“It was a good statement. Anyone who said he was awkward, imagine if that were you...I respect and like Tiger Woods now more than ever.”

Negative

“I hate the sniff in the end it's sooo fake.. haha probably the paper said (now sniff)
This is crap!”

Other comments reacting to Woods' apology fell into the category elements of speech. Positive and negative sentiments were expressed referring to the various elements of Woods' apology. This category was defined as any reference to the content of his speech and topics covered. As a whole, comments referencing the content of his speech were positive with commenters referring to his use of corrective action, remorse, and his acknowledgment of the effects of his actions. Table 5 provides examples of comments that reacted to Woods' apology by referencing the elements of his speech.

Table 5

Thematic Examples - Elements of Speech

Positive

“I believe he was sincere: he acknowledged his behavior, apologized specifically to those he hurt and expressed his game plan to change his ways. That's all he can do at this point. I wish him the best.”

“I commend his speech...even if it looked like he was just reading 'written words' as at least the words he said admitting to the world his faults, he knows the rules apply to him as well as the rest of us. Good luck to the Woods' family to regain trust and happiness.”

Woods’ general credibility emerged as another category. Comments that fell into this category expressed a general sentiment, whether positive or negative, that demonstrated the commenter’s level of belief or disbelief in the sincerity of Woods’ apology. Woods’ clothing and questions over whether or not he wrote the speech were among the many comments in this category. Table 6 provides examples of comments that reacted to Woods’ apology by referencing his overall credibility.

Table 6

Thematic Examples - Credibility

Positive

“duh it was a prepared speech. And it should have been. Doesnt mean the words he wrote down weren't from the heart. He didnt wanna leave anything out and make sure he apologized to everybody he could.”

Negative

“His apology would've been more sincere had he worn a tie. That open button is killing his credibility.”

“Like most everyone who has ever been in his shoes. He's not sorry he cheated. He's sorry he got caught.”

Privacy emerged as another category for comments reacting to Woods' apology. Comments that fell into this category referenced issues of privacy law and questioned society's requirement that he make a public apology. Comments in this category were largely positive. Table 7 provides examples of comments that reacted to Woods' apology by referencing issues of privacy.

Table 7

Thematic Examples - Privacy

Positive

"I think that Tiger needs to solve this in private with his wife, there is no need to really make an apology to the public. GO TIGER!"

"Everybody cheats these days, why does tiger Woods need to apologize to people he doesn't even know for a personal matter? What gives us the right to poke into someone else's life judge them, and tell them how to live?..."

Four additional categories emerged that represent comments made solely in reference to the act. These comments expressed sentiments that were derived from a reaction to the incidents of infidelity in which Woods was engaged. These categories include *Addiction, Criminality, Sexism, and Machismo*.

Comments that referenced addiction were both positive and negative. Comments that discussed sex addiction or addiction in general were put into this category. Positive comments demonstrated an acknowledgement of addiction as a real issue that can be addressed and one that requires recovery steps. Many associated sex addiction with alcoholism or drug addiction. Negative comments for this category were predominantly nonchalant and dismissive. Table 8 provides examples of comments that reacted to Woods' actions by referencing issues of addiction.

Table 8

Thematic Examples - Addiction

Positive

“We applaud alcoholics and drug addicts in recovery. Why can't a sex addict be in recovery?”

“This is the first step in any recovery program -- to make amends with those you've hurt after partially going through treatment, and then to continue with treatment ... as Tiger has done here. I believe in forgiveness, but ultimately he has to answer to his family and himself, which he's doing.”

Negative

“lol sex addicted.... thats f*****g lame.”

Another category that emerged among comments reacting to Woods’ actions is that of criminality. These comments were largely positive, comparing Woods’ situation to other incidents involving illegal activities and questioning the elevated sense of importance surrounding the reaction to Woods’ actions. Table 9 provides examples of comments that reacted to Woods’ actions by referencing issues of criminality.

Table 9

Thematic Examples - Criminality

Positive

“He didn't committed any crime! The only person he needs to apologize is his wife and nobody else. If she will accept that that will be her problem not ours. I believe you over come. You are the man.”

“For christ sake he didnt break the law. Cheating is not a crime... We still love ya Tiger!”

Sexism was defined as any reference to Woods’ behavior as it related to the treatment of women or as any reference to the women with whom Woods had affairs and their role in the scandal and its aftermath. Comments in this category expressed both positive and negative

sentiments. Table 10 provides examples of comments that reacted to Woods' actions by referencing issues of sexism.

Table 10

Thematic Examples - Sexism

Positive

“One thing I just don't get. Tiger was always portrait as the bad guy. What about the women? They knew he was married, they even got money from him, and they got away like they were angels. WHAT'S UP WITH THAT? Women that do things that are not right are just being used and men are always the ones to blame. Something is not right.”

Negative

“Like I give a s**t - another womanizer seeking public purification.”

The one category that emerged that represents purely positive reactions to Woods' acts of infidelity was that of machismo. Comments in this category praised Woods' for his prowess as a man and his ability to be with so many women and the lifestyle in which he lived. Table 11 provides examples of comments that reacted to Woods' actions by referencing his machismo.

Table 11

Thematic Examples - Machismo

Positive

“Why is he apologizing again? He's a pimp mang come on! Oh yea, he has kids.... wifey shouldn't be goin' on Tiger's phone!”

“You rock tiger keep doing hot chicks!”

Of the 12 categories that emerged from the list of YouTube comments, four were found to contain a significant number of comments that reacted to the speech as well as the act. These

categories include *Celebrity, Family, Human Nature, and Marriage*. These categories contained comments that expressed both positive and negative sentiments toward Woods. However, many comments expressed a positive or negative sentiment as a reaction to the speech but not the act and vice versa.

Comments in the celebrity category make reference to issues surrounding Woods' fame such as money, role model status, and feelings of entitlement. Reactions to Woods' speech were largely positive in this category with largely negative reactions to the acts of infidelity. Reactions to the speech praise Woods for understanding his status as a role model and coming forward to issue an apology. Comments discussing Woods' actions focus on his perceived sense of entitlement. Table 12 provides examples of comments found in the celebrity category.

Table 12

Thematic Examples - Celebrity

Reaction to Speech

Positive

“You know I wish more celebrities would realize what kind of effect their actions have on others and apologize for the stupid things they do. When you're in the public spotlight, weather you want to or not, you DO set an example. If you don't want to be a role model, don't seek fame. It's part of the package. Kudos to Tiger for owning up to his mistakes. I respect him now more as a man than as a celebrity.”

Reaction to Act

Negative

“He needs to apologize to the world. He offers himself up as a role model, someone to look up to. It is appalling to me that he would do this to his family.”

Family emerged as a prominent category, encompassing mixed reactions to Woods' speech and predominantly negative reactions to his acts of infidelity. Reactions to his apology

reference his promises to become a better man and father while reactions to the acts of infidelity point out his betrayal as well as the dangerous nature of the acts he engaged in. Table 13 provides examples of comments found in the family category.

Table 13

Thematic Examples - Family

Reaction to Speech

Positive

“Good for you Tiger....Even if fake..at least you are making A effort to be a better man and father...more than MOST can say they are. Good luck to you :)”

Negative

“Wait a minute - did he just say the Paparazzi followed his 2-year-old daughter to school? Do 2-year-olds GO to school? If he wanted to protect his wife and family, he should never have done what he did. There is no turning back for them now.”

Reaction to Act

Negative

“He's harming his children! Learn,grow and succeed??? Yes a player is a player but.. his kids suffer for it AND...by the way,Tiger could have given his wife an STD and that's hurting someone. He,s even hurting himself by unprotected sex!! He's a stupid player”

“Anyone that can betray their family that much is a sack of crap in my eyes. he obviously has a problem w/ cheating and i don't think he can just stop.”

Human nature emerged as a unique category, as comments referencing both Woods' actions and his speech were predominantly positive. Reactions to his apology discussed his courage and humility for addressing the public, indicating it made him seem like a normal person. Reactions to his acts of infidelity note that this is a common occurrence and that people are entitled to make mistakes. Table 14 provides examples of comments found in the human

nature category.

Table 14

Thematic Examples – Human Nature

Reaction to Speech

Positive

“I just want to say that was really cool of him to publicly apologize. It saddens me that more people aren't forgiving. No one is perfect, everyone has messed up at least once in their life. This was a really touching video. God Bless you Tiger. I forgive you.”

“It takes real courage to do what he did- ON NATIONAL TELEVISION. Tiger deserves forgiveness after this. We've all messed up, been irresponsible, and hurt people in life... and we ALL have room for improvement. Lets move on!”

Reaction to Act

Positive

“I actually like tiger woods MORE after the whole scandle. everybody f****n makes mistakes, and hes a real person. I can't believe people still arent over it. The only person this scandle effected was tiger, his wife and his children.
i still love tiger, and i hope he gets back on top of his game :)”

“People you have to remember that he is a human being and we humans make mistakes, so don't come here saying, "he's a lair, or why should we feel sorry for him" I bet if you were in this situation you would ask for forgiveness too. He lost more than he's fans, he lost the trust that the whole world had on him. You people gotta understand that, and if he was not sorry he would just keep quiet and keep living life. My word to you Tiger is, Keep your head up and try to fix your life as you can.”

Marriage separated itself from the family category based on comments that clearly discussed the relationship between Woods and his wife. Reactions to his apology were mixed but leaned toward the positive side by referencing his statements about doing everything he can to fix his marriage. Reactions to his acts of infidelity were negative, calling attention to his disregard for his marriage vows. Table 15 provides examples of comments found in the marriage category.

Table 15

Thematic Examples - Marriage

Reaction to Speech

Positive

“Do you know how many people have done this and gone on to have happy lives???!!!! at this moment as tiger stated in his statement!!!! they are trying to fix there marriage. if they do.... they could end up having a happy life. people in general are just too stupid to give people a 2nd chance anymore. if he cleans things up then everything will bw fine and you will all hopefully shut up.”

Negative

“Yes, what an eloquently, scripted, well paused pile of trash. He was busted. If his little house of cards didn't fall, he'd still be out there thinking he was king of the hill, breaking his marriage vows without so much as a thought.”

Reaction to Act

Negative

“If someone doesn't believe in marriage then guess what...DON'T GET MARRIED! Seems logical to me. Nobody gives Derek Jeter shit for his sex life because guess what.....he ISN'T married. Tiger obviously believes in marriage(or at least his image) and one's actions should align with their beliefs.”

“There is no excuse for cheating on your spouse, hes just another sad excuse for a man. He should be front and center of his wife and tell her he's sorry. On LIVE tv. He disgusts me.”

A discussion of these results follows.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The results of this study found the use of mortification and corrective action to be appropriate and effective response strategies while the use of reducing offensiveness had no discernable effect. The results showed more positive comments than negative comments with a good number of the positive comments focusing on the sincerity of his apology and his acknowledgement of the necessary steps he must take to learn and grow from his mistakes. The use of reducing offensiveness through his discussion of his foundation, defense of his wife's actions on the night of the crash, and his request for privacy for his wife and children produced no meaningful discussions. The wide ranging reactions to Woods' apology, whether positive or negative, seem to corroborate the widely held belief that people feel more open to express alternative opinions via social media. In some instances, a positive reaction praised Woods and his ability to get away with infidelity with so many women for so long. In others, a negative reaction found fault in his seeming dislike for women of non-Caucasian ethnicity. These reactions are unique to online forums and require further research to determine their significance in the overall image repair process as it relates to an athlete's redemption in society at large. However, it must be noted that the chi-square test found no significance in the difference between positive and negative comments. Subsequently, a thematic analysis of the YouTube comments was conducted in an attempt to gain clarity in this area.

All observations and conclusions presented in previous studies, in online polls, and in market research indicated a less than favorable response to Woods' statements of apology. In

fact, Woods’ Q-score, a measure of consumer appeal toward celebrities, brands and other commercial products or entities, dropped almost 33% after the scandal from a 44 in 2008 to a 30 in 2010. Woods’ negative Q-score, a measure of those who indicated they don’t like him, rose from 15 to 39 in the same time period. To put this in perspective, Woods’ score of 44 was second only to Michael Jordan among athletes (Lefton, 2010). Because questionnaires are sent out yearly and not at multiple intervals throughout the year, it’s impossible to say whether or not Woods’ apology had any effect on his Q-score. Marketing Evaluations, the company responsible for publishing Q-scores, surveys only sports fans when determining their athlete rankings. Questionnaires are nationally representative of the population, surveying 2,000 teens (age 12-17) and adults (age 18-64), but are broken down into specific demographic targets (“Database,” 2015).

YouTube provides its own demographic profile reports with information regarding age and gender. See Figure 3 for YouTube’s demographic profile.

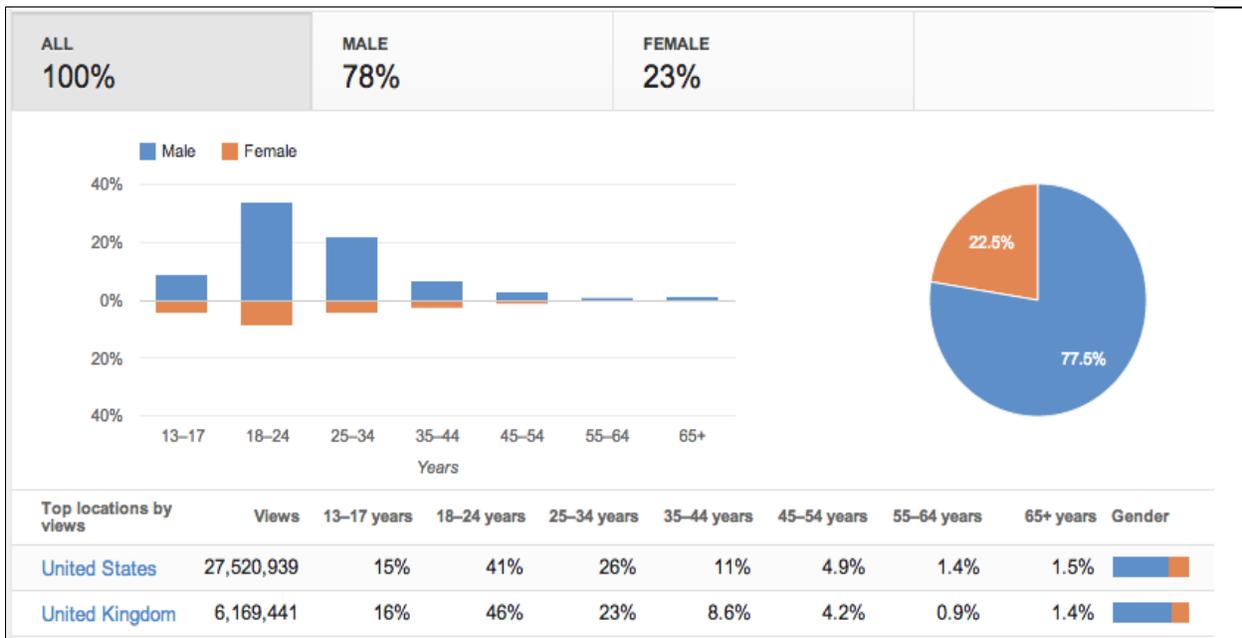


Figure 3. YouTube’s demographic profile (“Demographics Report,” 2015)

As evidenced by the graph in Figure 5.1, the majority of YouTube users are male, age 18 to 24, while the second largest user pool is also comprised of males and range in age from 25 to 34. That comprises nearly 70% of all YouTube users. Overall, males make up nearly 80% of all users while females make up just over 20% (“Demographics Report,” 2015). This discrepancy in age and gender could be one reason for the more positive sentiments toward Woods in this situation.

In a 2015 study, Brown, Billings, Mastro and Brown-Devlin looked at the role of race and gender in how an audience reacts to IRT crisis response strategies. The study focused on a national sample of 287 participants and found the use of mortification to be the most effective, but more importantly that black athletes were rated more positively than white athletes after transgressions. Despite Woods’ mixed race heritage, he is predominantly seen as a black athlete. A Pew Research Center study found that 76% of African-Americans are YouTube users (Anderson, 2015). Additionally, in a separate study, the Pew Research Center found that social media users were more likely to share their views if they thought the audience was in agreement (Dwyer, Hampton, Lu, Purcell, Rainie and Shin, 2014). Based on the results of this study these numbers indicate a possible connection between race and gender and positive social media reactions to Woods. Whether or not the positive reactions recorded in this study reflect a reaction to Woods’ use of image repair strategies or are a combination of factors remains to be seen. But thematic analysis has allowed for some clarity on the issue.

Thematic analysis results provided greater insight into the motivations behind each type of reaction, allowing the researcher to separate comments into those reacting to Woods’ apology and those reacting to his acts of infidelity. “Machismo” and “criminality” were the only two categories that contained comments reacting positively in response to Woods’ acts of infidelity.

Positive reactions referring to Woods' prowess with women are likely the result of the forum in which the comments were posted. However, the category of criminality provided an interesting result in that each comment skewed positive on the grounds that infidelity is not a crime and Woods should be shown forgiveness or at least be shown less animosity. Other positive comments reacting to Woods' actions dealt with "addiction." Many positive comments were accepting of his actions as those of an addict and pointed out that he had taken steps in recovery and was now making amends. Others asked for a stay of judgment while he attempted to rehabilitate himself, comparing sex addiction to drug or alcohol addiction.

Woods' "celebrity" status provided another interesting cross section of comments. The negative comments were all in response to the act and referenced entitlement, wealth, and a general sense of superiority and invincibility. However, the positive comments applauded Woods' apology and his acceptance of his role model status. Many celebrities are hesitant to accept that they can be seen as role models and dismiss this fact in order to downplay the effects of their actions. Woods chose to embrace this and apologize for his failure to uphold the duties associated with that title. In these instances, mortification was an appropriate and effective strategy. Woods' acknowledgement of feeling above societal rules and understanding of the falsehood of that feeling allowed many commenters to forgive his transgressions or at least express understanding.

One category that spanned both themes and contained purely positive comments in response to the speech and the act was "human nature." The comments that fell under the "act" theme were self-evident and expressed forgiveness and goodwill on the grounds that people make mistakes and should be allowed second chances. Comments that fell under the "speech" theme expressed feeling a human connection to Woods as he made his apology. Many of these

comments discussed regular people having to do the same thing and how hard it would be. Woods' use of mortification and corrective action produced positive results in this regard. His acknowledgement of his failures as a husband and his understanding of what he needed to do to repair those failures seemed to resonate with these respondents.

While the "delivery" of his speech and his overall "credibility" were up for debate, eliciting a fairly even number of positive and negative comments, the "elements" of his speech were widely praised. This provides another indication that Woods' choice of IRT strategies was appropriate and generally effective.

Prior research as well as many media reports following Woods' apology referenced the timing of his speech. Woods was involved in the car accident on November 27, 2009, and delivered his apology on February 19, 2010, nearly three months later. As a general rule, responding to a crisis requires that timeliness be a high priority. In this case, it seems Woods and his team chose to wait. Based on the results of this study there are a few reasons why this may have been an effective strategy. First, Woods' actions were not illegal and did not require an immediate response due to any pending legal action or charges. Positive reactions in the category of criminality indicate that waiting to issue an apology was not detrimental to his image. Second, as positive comments indicate and the 12-step process dictates, making amends only comes after other steps of treatment have been completed ("Twelve Steps," 2015). The timing in this case would be appropriate for Woods' stint in the rehabilitation facility in Mississippi. Additionally, in his apology, Woods expressed his desire to be with his family and protect them from the results of his actions. By waiting to issue his apology, Woods was able to seem genuine in his desire to protect his family and deal with the consequences of his actions with them first. Positive comments that fell into the categories of *family* and *privacy* in response to his speech

indicate acceptance of his decision to wait to issue an apology.

While the decision to wait three months to issue an apology was met with some criticism, by doing so, Woods was able to respond with a clearer understanding of what his actions had done. By waiting, denial was never a strategy he would choose. Initial anger had died down and people were ready to hear his side of the story, allowing for a more receptive audience. It is the researcher's contention that timing can be used as a response strategy. Timing can help determine which IRT strategies are appropriate. Additionally, the viral nature of news in today's society predicates that stories will come and go with speed, allowing for a short amount of time before sentiments change and the desire for certain information either dissipates or changes. Using timing as a strategy can allow for athletes and other high profile figures to gauge their audience, choose response strategies, and gain more control over the repair process.

The results of this study fall contrary to the majority of prior research in the case of Tiger Woods. However, it should be noted that prior research did not study audience reaction and focused primarily on Woods' statements and media coverage. Despite previous conclusions, this study produced results indicating more positive reactions to Woods' apology. It is the researcher's contention that image repair research has focused too strongly on strategy analysis and mass media coverage to determine the effectiveness of image repair. Results of this study indicate a strong shift in how today's society reports, disseminates and reacts to news. The effectiveness of athlete and celebrity image repair is becoming largely a result of how the online community responds, not necessarily how a statistically representative sample of the population reacts. As these results indicate, there are many other factors at play than simple image repair strategies. While strategy will remain a vital part of image repair, issues such as timing can help to better inform and prepare an athlete to deliver appropriate messages to their audience.

Additionally, forgiveness is more easily given when there is a sense of sympathy, and sympathy for a famous athlete or celebrity is likely not easy to come by. Today, 48% of U.S. adults who use Facebook, YouTube and Twitter get their news from these sites (Anderson & Caumont, 2014). Utilizing social media prior to the crisis management stage to build humanizing connections could go a long way in determining the effectiveness of image repair strategies in the midst of a scandal. Woods has always valued his privacy, but results of this study indicate a strong positive reaction in the category of *human nature*. Many of these positive comments were a result of his speech, demonstrating for the first time that he is just like everyone else.

Suggestions for Future Research

Other considerations for the results of this study include social media research in general and how this form of mass communication has become the barometer by which we measure reaction to news in today's society. In a study conducted by the online research group, eMarketer, it was predicted that "by 2014, the ranking of regions by social network users will reflect regional shares of the global population" ("Social Networking," 2013, p.1). This study corroborates the one conducted by Brown et al. (2015), but more research could be done to take into account the race and gender of all social media users in general when studying reaction to IRT response strategies. Today's forms of mass communication are largely online and not necessarily indicative of a general population when studied from the perspective of one site's users. More than one social media site or online forum should be taken into account along with demographic information to better understand the effect IRT response strategies have across all platforms. Experimental methods reflecting a sample of social media demographics could be employed. While these samples would not represent the general population, they would represent

the general population of a particular social media platform, providing insight into how these growing forms of communication are likely to respond to image repair strategies. Consideration should be given to an athlete's or celebrity's level of engagement via social media and whether or not this prior relationship has any effect on the speed or level of recovery following a crisis. Additional research should be conducted into the effects of timing on the image repair process and on strategy selection.

Limitations of this Study

The coding was done by one researcher and therefore represents one opinion on the sentiment expressed in each YouTube comment. Also, only YouTube was used to code online comments in reaction to Woods' apology. YouTube is the second leading social media site behind Facebook, with Twitter, with Google Plus and LinkedIn following close behind (Pew Research Center, 2014a). Additional consideration could be given to other online forums such as blogs and article comment sections. There is a lack of information during the three months between Woods' car accident and his apology, giving little insight into prior public sentiment toward Woods before the apology.

Final Thoughts

This study provides crucial commentary on the implications of IRT research and how the effectiveness of image repair strategies in today's society should be judged. Using a thematic analysis when studying reactions on social media can provide greater clarity and better insight into the motivations behind audience reaction. In this way, researchers can pinpoint the emotional core of each response, allowing for a greater understanding of the effects of crisis management strategies and tactics. The implications of timing when studying the image repair process were shown to be many. Previous literature on crisis response says to respond quickly.

However, the results of this study have shed new light on whether that is always the best practice. Looking at timing as a strategy that can be manipulated and used to aid the repair process could open new avenues of research into image repair.

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APPENDIX A

Tiger Woods' Apology Transcript

Good morning. And thank you for joining me. Many of you in the room are my friends. Many of you in this room know me. Many of you have cheered for me, or worked with me, or supported me, and now, every one of you has good reason to be critical of me.

I want to say to each of you, simply, and directly, I am deeply sorry for my irresponsible and selfish behavior I engaged in.

I know people want to find out how I could be so selfish and so foolish. People want to know how I could have done these things to my wife, Elin, and to my children. And while I have always tried to be a private person, there are some things I want to say.

Elin and I have started the process of discussing the damage caused by my behavior. As she pointed out to me, my real apology to her will not come in the form of words. It will come from my behavior over time. We have a lot to discuss. However, what we say to each other will remain between the two of us.

I am also aware of the pain my behavior has caused to those of you in this room. I have let you down. I have let down my fans. For many of you, especially my friends, my behavior has been a personal disappointment. To those of you who work for me, I have let you down, personally and professionally. My behavior has caused considerable worry to my business partners.

To everyone involved in my foundation, including my staff, board of directors, sponsors, and most importantly, the young students we reach, our work is more important than ever. Thirteen years ago, my dad and I envisioned helping young people achieve their dreams through education. This work remains unchanged and will continue to grow. From the Learning Center students in Southern California, to the Earl Woods Scholars in Washington, D.C., millions of kids have changed their lives, and I am dedicated to making sure that continues.

But, still, I know I have severely disappointed all of you. I have made you question who I am and how I have done the things I did. I am embarrassed that I have put you in this position. For all that I have done, I am so sorry. I have a lot to atone for.

But there is one issue I really want to discuss. Some people have speculated that Elin somehow hurt or attacked me on Thanksgiving night. It angers me that people would fabricate a story like that. She never hit me that night or any other night. There has never been an episode of domestic violence in our marriage. Ever.

Elin has shown enormous grace and poise throughout this ordeal. Elin deserves praise, not blame. The issue involved here was my repeated irresponsible behavior. I was unfaithful. I had affairs. I cheated. What I did is not acceptable. And I am the only person to blame. I stopped living by the core values that I was taught to believe in.

I knew my actions were wrong. But I convinced myself that normal rules didn't apply. I never thought about who I was hurting. Instead, I thought only about myself. I ran straight through the boundaries that a married couple should live by. I thought I could get away with whatever I wanted to. I felt that I had worked hard my entire life and deserved to enjoy all the temptations

around me. I felt I was entitled. Thanks to money and fame, I didn't have far -- didn't have to go far to find them.

I was wrong. I was foolish. I don't get to play by different rules. The same boundaries that apply to everyone apply to me. I brought this shame on myself. I hurt my wife, my kids, my mother, my wife's family, my friends, my foundation, and kids all around the world who admired me. I've had a lot of time to think about what I have done. My failures have made me look at myself in a way I never wanted to before. It is now up to me to make amends. And that starts by never repeating the mistakes I have made. It is up to me to start living a life of integrity.

I once heard -- and I believe it is true -- it's not what you achieve in life that matters, it is what you overcome. Achievements on the golf course are only part of setting an example. Character and decency are what really count. Parents used to point to me as a role model for their kids. I owe all of those families a special apology. I want to say to them that I am truly sorry.

It is hard to admit that I need help. But I do. For 45 days, from the end of December to early February, I was in inpatient therapy, receiving guidance for the issues I'm facing. I have a long way to go. But I've taken my first steps in the right direction.

As I proceed, I understand people have questions. I understand the press wants me to -- to ask me for the details of the times I was unfaithful. I understand people want to know whether Elin and I will remain together. Please know that as far as I'm concerned, every one of these questions and answers is a matter between Elin and me. These are issues between a husband and a wife.

Some people have made up things that never happened. They said I used performance-enhancing drugs. This is completely and utterly false.

Some have written things about my family. Despite the damage I have done, I still believe it is right to shield my family from the public spotlight. They did not do these things. I did. I have always tried to maintain a private space for my wife and children. They have been kept separate from my sponsors, my commercial endorsements, when my children were born, we only released photographs so they ... so that the paparazzi could not chase them.

However, my behavior doesn't make it right for the media to follow my 2½-year-old daughter to school and report the school's location. They staked out my wife and pursued my mom.

Whatever my wrongdoings, for the sake of my family, please leave my wife and kids alone.

I recognize I have brought this on myself. And I know above all I am the one who needs to change. I owe it to my family to become a better person. I owe it to those closest to me to become a better man. That is where my focus will be. I have a lot of work to do. And I intend to dedicate myself to doing it.

Part of following this path for me is Buddhism, which my mother taught me at a young age.

People probably don't realize it, but I was raised a Buddhist, and I actively practiced my faith from childhood until I drifted away from it in recent years. Buddhism teaches that a craving for things outside ourselves causes an unhappy and pointless search for security. It teaches me to stop following every impulse and to learn restraint. Obviously, I lost track of what I was taught.

As I move forward, I will continue to receive help because I have learned that is how people really do change. Starting tomorrow, I will leave for more treatment and more therapy.

I would like to thank my friends at Accenture and the players in the field this week for understanding why I am making this -- these remarks today. In therapy, I have learned that looking at -- the importance of looking at my spiritual life and keeping in balance with my professional life. I need to regain my balance and be centered so I can save the things that are most important to me: my marriage and my children.

That also means relying on others for help. I have learned to seek support from my peers in

therapy, and I hope someday to return that support to others who are seeking help. I do plan to return to golf one day. I just don't know when that day will be. I don't rule out that it will be this year. When I do return, I need to make my behavior more respectful of the game. In recent weeks, I have received many thousands of e-mails, letters and phone calls from people expressing good wishes. To everyone who has reached out to me and my family, thank you. Your encouragement means the world to Elin and me. I want to thank the PGA Tour, Commissioner [Tim] Finchem and the players for their patience and understanding while I work on my private life. I look forward to seeing my fellow players on the course. Finally, there are many people in this room and there are many people at home who believed in me. Today, I want to ask for your help. I ask you to find room in your hearts to one day believe in me again. Thank you.

APPENDIX B

Coding Sheet for Tiger Woods' Apology Transcript

Statement #	Code	Statement
1	N	Good morning, and thank you for joining me.
2	N	Many of you in the room are my friends.
3	N	Many of you in this room know me.
4	E	Many of you have cheered for me, or worked with me, or supported me, and now, every one of you has good reason to be critical of me.
5	E	I want to say to each of you, simply, and directly, I am deeply sorry for my irresponsible and selfish behavior I engaged in.
6	N	I know people want to find out how I could be so selfish and so foolish.
7	N	People want to know how I could have done these things to my wife, Elin, and to my children.
8	N	And while I have always tried to be a private person, there are some things I want to say.
9	D	Elin and I have started the process of discussing the damage caused by my behavior.
10	D	As she pointed out to me, my real apology to her will not come in the form of words.
11	D	It will come from my behavior over time.

Coding Key

- A Denial
- B Evade Responsibility
- C Reduce Offensiveness
- D Corrective Action
- E Mortification
- N No Code

APPENDIX C

Coding Sheet for YouTube Comments

Comment #	Positive	Negative	Neutral
1	1	0	0
2	0	0	1
3	0	1	0
4	1	0	0
5	0	1	0
6	0	0	1
7	0	1	0
8	0	0	1
9	0	0	1
10	0	0	1

APPENDIX D

Frequency Table for IRT Strategies in Woods' Apology Transcript

		Code			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	C	14	11.7	11.7	11.7
	D	21	17.5	17.5	29.2
	E	31	25.8	25.8	55.0
	N	54	45.0	45.0	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Coding Key

- A Denial
- B Evade Responsibility
- C Reduce Offensiveness
- D Corrective Action
- E Mortification
- N No Code

APPENDIX E

Frequency Table for YouTube Comments

Positive

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 0	1994	67.8	67.8	67.8
1	946	32.2	32.2	100.0
Tota l	2940	100.0	100.0	

Negative

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 0	2018	68.6	68.6	68.6
1	922	31.4	31.4	100.0
Tota l	2940	100.0	100.0	

Neutral

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 0	1869	63.6	63.6	63.6
1	1071	36.4	36.4	100.0
Tota l	2940	100.0	100.0	

APPENDIX F

Chi-Square Test for Positive and Negative YouTube Comments

Frequencies

Comment			
	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
0	922	934.0	-12.0
1	946	934.0	12.0
Total	1868		

Note: “0” represents positive comments and “1” represents negative comments.

Test Statistics

	Comment
Chi-Square	.308 ^a
df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.579

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 934.0.