SPHERES OF INFLUENCE

Reconfiguring Identity in eHealth Communication
Targeting Minority and Urban Communities

Jennifer R. Warren, Ph.D
Center for Communication and Health Issues
Department of Communication
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

SPHERES OF INFLUENCE

- Globe
- Three-dimensional surface
- Field of knowledge or activity

Agenda

Rutgers, Dept of Communication

- Background
- Theoretical Model
- Preliminary Findings
- Communicated Identities in e-Health
- Application/Implications

Background

Rutgers, Dept of Communication

eHealth

Use of emerging interactive technologies (e.g., Internet, CD-ROMs, personal digital assistants, interactive television and voice response systems, computer kiosks, and mobile computing) to enable health improvement and health care services

The National Cancer Institute, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Online behavior change and disease management: a research dialogue. 2001 Aug 2. URL: http://www.hetinitiative.org/content/Behav_Chng_and_Disease_Mgt.pdf

---

Background

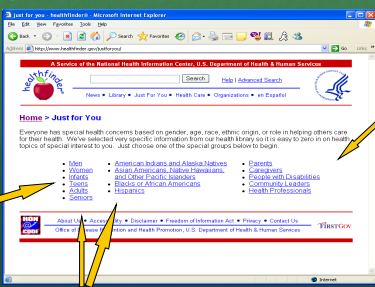Rutgers, Dept of Communication

Targeting

- Design and delivery of messages to fit the needs, expectations, and cultural norms of specific audiences defined by age, gender, race/ethnicity, or other readily identifiable social variables.

  Tailoring

  - Recognizes variation in developing interventions to diverse individuals (*Kreuter et al, 2003*)

Background

Rutgers, Dept of Communication

Difference is put in its proper place

Identity categorizes

What if you fall into both categories?

Background

Challenges:

- Uni-dimensional
- Fixed design in dynamic space
- Reductive to communities and individuals
- Exacerbate health disparities.

Kvasny, L & Warren, J. R. (2006). "The Representation and Performance of Menu-Driven Identities in Online Health Portals", In E. Trauth (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Information Technology and Gender, (pp. 745-751)*, Hershey: Idea Group Publishing.

Background

Identity Politics

Identity Dynamics

Identity Interpenetration

Comprehensive Model of Information Seeking; Napoli, 2001

Background

✓ Major health disparities

✓ 61% African Americans online

Limited attention to :

1. Identity in e-health information seeking
2. Perceptions of the internet for health
3. e-Involvement and health outcomes
4. Paucity of longitudinal and *in situ* studies

Fox, S., & Fallow, D. (2003, July, 16). *Internet health resources: Health searchers and email have become more commonplace, but there is room for improvement in searches and overall Internet access.*
Pew Research Center (2005). *The Pew Internet and American Life Project: Internet and American Life Survey Tabulated Results.*

Preliminary Findings

Preliminary Findings

- **Objectives:** Describe AA single mothers' perceptions of the:
  - internet as channel for accessing preadolescent substance use prevention information
  - usefulness of parent-based preadolescent substance use prevention information online

Funding: PSU- Africana Research Center, RGSO, Rock Ethics Institute

Warren, J. R. et al. (2008) Targeting single parents in preadolescent substance use prevention: Internet characteristics and information relevance. Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy.

Preliminary Findings

- **Methods**
  - individual interviews
  - usefulness study
  - qualitative data analysis

- **Participants**
  - 32 mothers of preadolescents
  - mean age 33 (range 23-53)
  - 47% $\leq$ HS
  - 63% used web in home
  - all public assistance

11/3/09
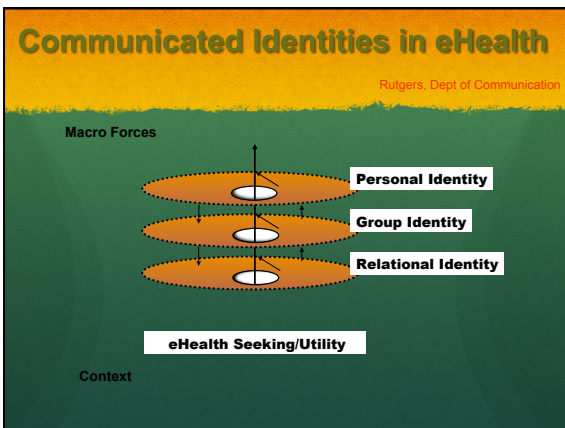
Preliminary Findings
Rutgers, Dept of Communication

- Results:
  - socioeconomic and single parent identities interrelated
  - striking resilience and innate determinism (self efficacy)
  - direct experience/observation of substance use created parental concerns
  - internet: additional resource, broad info, convenient, comfortable
  - utility/disutility
  - info requirements

Preliminary Findings
Rutgers, Dept of Communication

Community

Relational

Parent/child communication

Health factors

Channel/information factors

Communicated Identities in eHealth
Rutgers, Dept of Communication

Macro Forces

Personal Identity

Group Identity

Relational Identity

eHealth Seeking/Utility

Context

Preliminary Findings
Rutgers, Dept of Communication

Objective:

Examine perceptions of the internet for smoking cessation among urban AA smokers to develop a web-based quit smoking intervention.

Theory/Methods:

- Community-based
- stages of change, health beliefs, (cultural) sensitivity
- 6 focus groups (health behavior, perceptions, practices, etc)
- 3 focus groups (usefulness)
- team qualitative data analysis

Funding: Prevent Cancer Foundation
Warren, J., et al. "Targeting interactive heath communication: Urban African American smokers' perceptions and preferences of web-based smoking cessation content." SRNT 15th Annual Meeting, February, 2009, Dublin, Ireland

Preliminary Findings
Rutgers, Dept of Communication

Participants:

56 African American participants (4-12/group)

- 18 females; 38 males
- mean ed -- HS
- mean age -- 44
- mean cpd -- 20

Preliminary Findings
Rutgers, Dept of Communication

- Results (Usefulness):

- little knowledge of web-based interventions
- online access useful
- explicit quit smoking preferred (vs. a lifestyle)
- video, testimonies, bold colors, dynamic graphics preferred
- information tailored to age, AAs, community
- diverse information across layers (e.g., financial, housing, and education resources, social support, spirituality).
- involve family

3

Application

- Interactivity
- Identity
- Visual effects
- Message/information type
- Location

No Smoking' Hood

Implications

•Identify key leverage points in health behavior change

•Potentially reflects a reality that is not measure driven but 'life living'

•Ideally stretches a technological space in ways that capitalizes off its uniqueness

•May enhances involvement, salience, persuasive cache of web-based health information and interventions among groups

•Strong foundation for public health communication

Collaborators

UMN
Kola Okuyemi, MD, MPH, Medical School
Michele Allen, MD, MS, Medical School
Larry An, MD, Medical School
Simon Rosser, Ph.D, School of Public Health
Ashley Gray, GRA
Brandi White, GRA

PSU
Michael Hecht, Ph.D,
Communication Arts and Sciences
Lynette Kvasny,
Ph.D, Information Sciences and Technology

UI, Urbana-Champaign
Ron Jackson, Ph.D,
Media Studies

Umich
Vic Strecher, Ph.D,
Center for Health Communication Research

Jackson State University
Mark Henderson, Ph.D,
Speech and Theater Studies

University of Southern Mississippi
Eura Jung, Ph.D, Communication Studies

Contact Information

Jennifer R. Warren, Ph.D

Assistant Professor

Center for Communication and Health Issues

Department of Communication

School of Communication and Information

4 Huntington Str. Room 216

New Brunswick, NJ 08901

732-932-7500 x8147

609-577-0904 cell

jrwarren@rutgers.edu