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“They Things They Carried”: A Case Study of a Practitioner’s Approach Using Narrative Persuasion to Influence Public Criminology Behaviors

This presentation introduces a practitioner’s approach to designing *behavioral content creation*, demonstrating an integrated theoretical framework for influencing public criminology behaviors. This pioneering integration of narrative persuasion as a design method when creating content foundationally based on criminological behavioral analysis of victims and offender behaviors, proposes a framework for influencing and measuring public criminology in response to content. This practitioner’s presentation will feature a case study where the author while an FBI profiler demonstrated this approach and integrated theoretical framework to behavioral content creation, shifting the top landing pages to an FBI website and resulting in millions of views nationwide. This practitioner’s paper introduces dual practitioner’s models for creating behavioral content. The *consumer* approach is a conceptual model that dimensionally integrates affect and vulnerability, meaning content is behaviorally designed for broad or unknown audiences instrumentally to feature moments and storytelling where the victim appears to have depth. Marketing trends consistently highlight this kind of genuine content as most appealing to people. This approach was applied in this paper’s case study about a family of a missing teenage girl who many locally and across the country believed were responsible for her possible homicide. The author designed rich content framed with narrative persuasion to repair this family’s reputation, by featuring the characters in this story of a missing daughter to highlight their depth. This content as narrative persuasion is less scrutinized because it is relatable and entertaining. The *concentrated* approach is a conceptual model that dimensionally and relationally integrates emotions and vulnerabilities, meaning content is behaviorally designed for known audiences, such as the offender and people who have been in relationship with the offender such as family. The concentrated approach typically aligns investigation objectives with behavioral objectives, such as influencing someone close to the offender to cooperate with law enforcement or for the offender to believe that people close to

them have shared incriminating information with police. This practitioner's case study may be the first public example of influencing public criminology behaviors by creating behaviorally based content designed with this integrated framework.

Presentation outline

Introduction

Related Work – Criminal behavioral analysis foundationally derived from works in criminology and victimology, but expanded with a focus on affect and information processing

Related Work – Narrative persuasion and audience content sharing and attitudinal behaviors

Dual approach models – consumer approach and concentrated approach

Integrated theoretical framework of narrative persuasion and consumer and concentrated approach

Case study and demonstration of application of this integrated theoretical framework influencing public criminology behaviors