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TESTING POWER AND RELATIONSHIP ASSUMPTIONS
IN SAFETY REQUESTS

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TESTING POWER AND RELATIONSHIP ASSUMPTIONS IN SAFETY REQUESTS

By

James Mulcrone

A DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

TESTING POWER AND RELATIONSHIP ASSUMPTIONS IN SAFETY REQUESTS

A substantial portion of persuasion research focuses on request formation, specifically the types and forms requests take in response to particular situations. This study examines the directness, politeness, and elaboration for manipulated conditions of low and high situational power and low and high relational intimacy, for initial requests and in response to rejection of the initial requests, with requests made of unbuckled persons to wear their automotive safety belt. Additionally, the link between mass media messages and interpersonal communication is explored by tests of slogans that may be used in mass media campaigns encouraging seat belt wearers to ask unbuckled others to wear the seat belt.

Results showed no hypothesized main effects for power and relationship on the politeness, directness, and elaboration of initial requests. However, additional analyses showed an interaction effect of power and relationship on directness that suggests subjects consider both power and relationship in framing these requests. Surprisingly, subjects in the low power and non-intimate relationship condition made the most direct requests. Gender differences also appeared in additional analyses.

In response to rejection, subjects' requests did not support the changes hypothesized. Situational power did not affect the directness of requests and had an effect opposite what was hypothesized on politeness. Requests after rejection were less polite, and more elaborate, than the initial request for those in the low power condition. Coders did identify qualitative differences in second requests from initial requests that showed some change. The altruistic type of request or a weak manipulation is offered as explanations for the lack

of significant findings.

Slogan evaluations generally favored a theme connected to Good Health for broad campaign use. A slogan reminding unbuckled persons about the state seat belt Law was preferred by passengers in requests to drivers. The Law substitutes for high power in this situation. The data suggest different slogans are applicable in certain conditions and that targeting messages to conditions will be effective. Self-report data support the overall approach; subjects report a willingness to ask others, say they want to be reminded, and think their requests generate a high sense of obligation to buckle up.

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**Dedicated, with love, to my wife, Susan M. Ball, and children,
James Ryan, Patrick Louis, and Lauren Marie.**

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Testing Power and Relationship Assumptions in Safety Requests

Much of human communication can be viewed as persuasive in nature as persons seek control in their environment to realize various physical, economic, and social rewards (Miller and Steinberg, 1975). Many of these persuasive communications are requests that are judged to be successful if the other person complies with the request. One way scholars have advanced the study of communication is to manipulate variables expected or known to affect communication behavior in predictable ways and then examine the dependent communication variables to determine if the predictions are fulfilled (Berger, 1985). Power and relationship are two of the most studied variables in communication research. Recently they have been used in a series of studies by Roloff and colleagues (Jordan and Roloff, 1990; Roloff and Janiszewski, 1989; Roloff, Janiszewski, McGrath, Burns and Monrai, 1988) examining communication outcomes in manipulated situations involving persuasive communication. These studies indicate that power and relationship differences are important in the formation of persuasive requests. The testing of various situational, relational, and categorical variables, can provide more data on how specific variables affect communication request formation in interpersonal compliance gaining. With a greater understanding of interpersonal compliance gaining requests may come direction for media campaigns to activate persuasive communication on issues that benefit society or individuals. Health and safety issues are important content areas for coordinating mass media and interpersonal communication strategies and worthy of additional research.

Understanding communication choices in interpersonal requests can help provide

direction to make mass media campaigns more effective in encouraging interpersonal communication that is congruent with health and safety conscious behaviors. Several studies have documented the success of mass media stimulated interpersonal communication in health studies (Maccoby, Farquhar, Wood, and Alexander, 1977; Maccoby and Solomon, 1981). Examples of current high profile health and safety issues include: smoking, drinking and driving, AIDS and IV drug use, safe sex and AIDS, other disease control, and automotive safety belt use. The focus of this research is on the manipulated variables of power, relationship, and rejection of the initial request and how they affect communication strategies in requests.

In this study, power and relationship are manipulated in the context of a safety request to buckle up the automotive safety belt. It is hypothesized that power and relationship differences will influence the directness, politeness, and elaboration of the persuasive message requests generated by the subjects. Tests of the change in request formation after being told of a refusal to comply with the initial request are also made. The study also will comparatively evaluate some mass media campaign slogans that are suggested by the literature as potentially effective in encouraging interpersonal communication regarding wearing seat belts.

This research has specific objectives. First, to test assumptions about persuasive requests due to power and relationship differences in the content area of automotive safety belt use and develop theoretical arguments about the persuasive strategies employed. This provides a theoretical link to the application of requests to wear the seat belt among the subject population. Second, to test expected changes in requests when there is no compliance with the initial request; this segment tests theoretical assumptions about

response to rejection. Third, to test different mass media slogans that might be effective in activating interpersonal communication aimed at increasing automotive safety belt use and provide some evaluation about their perceived effectiveness. The approach suggested here, using personal communication from users to nonusers to increase seat belt use, has not been widely tested.

The rationale for this study is based on the belief that a campaign with a focus on stimulating personal (or interpersonal) requests to "Buckle Up" can be a successful strategy for increasing automotive safety belt use. For a campaign to be successful it has to have a message that will activate and remind the target audience to ask others to buckle up. Media messages can be evaluated on various components: easy to remember, clear, informative, positive, likable, effective, and self or other directed, that may be linked to message effectiveness because of the attractiveness, recall, clarity or comprehension of the message (McGuire, 1989). McGuire (1989) reviews the theoretical foundations of public communication campaigns and presents a persuasive model that details input (independent variables) and output (dependent variables) important to the communication process. The research proposed here follows many of McGuire's (1989) campaign guidelines, including: a realistic problem that can be suitably addressed by the proposed research; a fair amount of existing research on the subject; testing out the most promising themes; constructing the communication, and evaluating the effectiveness (this is only done in the context of the study and not a campaign application evaluation). This research meets these criteria and expands on the existing data in some of the categories. The broad assumptions being tested are that a mass media campaign could, first, encourage communication from among peers about safety belt use as people remind each other to buckle up. Second, the media messages can

assist in the activation and formulation of the persuasive messages because they can focus on activating the peer influences. In this respect the research follows many of the guidelines of a formative evaluation research campaign outlined by Atkin and Freimuth (1989). This type of campaign approach may provide a cost-effective way to increase safety belt use through the combination of mass media and interpersonal communication messages.

It appears that the potential for changing seat belt behavior from nonuse to use, and making the change long lasting, is good with a strategy that includes interpersonal and mass media communication. The use of mass media messages to influence interpersonal communication can change perceptions about seat belt use in the target group. Miller (1986: 1987a: 1987b) has argued that we have very limited knowledge of the interconnectedness between macro societal levels of persuasion and the inter- and intrapersonal. It is expected that the ability to analyze and then individually construct a persuasive message will result not only in high compliance with the seat belt request, but in long term behavior change at a rate much greater than a mass media message would generate alone. Generating interpersonal communication addresses several problem areas with the seat belt issue: perceptions of use among peers, personal reinforcement for long-term change, and involving those who already "Buckle Up," that have not been included and therefore limited the success of previous automotive safety belt campaigns. The study can help clarify the potential of a campaign using both mass media and interpersonal communication and test media messages to activate persuasive communication in a one-to-one setting.

This approach may be particularly appropriate for "laissez-faire" or secondary enforcement areas, such as the State of Michigan, where methods for increasing safety belt use without primary enforcement of the law is a critical issue. If the overall campaign

strategy suggested here is successful for drivers and right front-seat passengers, it could be applied to rear-seat occupants whose seat belt use is not governed by the law. Belt use for rear-seat occupants is much lower at 35.6%, compared to 50.6% for front-seat occupants (Streff and Molnar, 1990). The benefits, both from a personal and monetary standpoint, from a campaign strategy that can improve automotive seat belt use are great. This study provides test data to determine if the mass media and interpersonal communication approach can be effective and some direction on how to proceed. Evaluation of the communication request is key to this research.

Request Form

As noted earlier, persons communicate to control their environment as they seek certain desirable outcomes over other, less desirable, outcomes (Miller and Steinberg, 1975). This means that all communication is strategic as communicators assess the concerns of textual coherence, interaction efficiency, and face presentation and protection present in a communication situation (O'Keefe and Delia, 1982) before framing a request. Some researchers (Gibbs, 1986; Francik and Clark, 1985) have proposed an "obstacle hypothesis" that suggests that individuals frame compliance gaining requests "to overcome the greatest potential obstacle they see to getting the information they want" (1985, p. 560). Several studies have focused on how persons perceive and attack the "obstacles to compliance" in very specific situations (Jordan and Roloff, 1990; Roloff and Janiszewski, 1989; Gibbs, 1986; Francik and Clark, 1985). These investigators found that the type of request and the level of intimacy in the relationship are two key variables. Each situation has obstacles,

anything that stands in the way of compliance with the request, that the communicator has to take into consideration in forming the request. Requestors have a wide variety of choices available when making a request of another. What then determines or limits the options of a requestor? The way a requestor formulates the request indicates how she or he has assessed the components of the interaction, both situational and relational, and what judgements are made about formulating a request that is consistent with the assessment of the situation. While compliance with the request is a primary concern, secondary issues, like time constraints, and situational and relational considerations, are often present. These affect request formation. Often there is a need to quickly determine whether or not you need to seek compliance in another way or from another person.

Since compliance with a request cannot take place without the listener making correct inferences about the meaning, shared meaning is important to achieving successful communication and probably most important in requests (Gibbs, 1985). The request must be in a form that is interpretable to the receiver and appropriate for the situation. The communication request itself shows how the individual has assessed the relational and situational concerns present in trying to achieve compliance with the request. Request forms have a direct or literal component and an indirect or implied component (Gibbs, 1985). Overall, information about the social setting, and broader knowledge of the roles of the individuals and their relationship, can determine if a request type is conventional, or not conventional, for that situation (Gibbs, 1985). Conventional, or appropriate, requests meet the needs of making, understanding, and remembering requests in a particular situation (Gibbs, 1985). Conventional requests focus on a shared knowledge of the interactants in the particular social situation that goes beyond just a linguistic interpretation to a shared meaning

(Gibbs, 1985). This makes the request more easily understood.

Because requestors are aware of obstacles, research has indicated they often frame compliance gaining requests in an indirect or conditional manner (Ervin-Tripp, 1976; Kemper and Thissen, 1981; Francik and Clark, 1985). These indirect requests, implications of what is wanted as opposed to a direct statement, have been found to be conventional and easily interpretable in numerous situations and have often allowed the recipient of the request to save face (Gibbs, 1986) in the situation. The indirect requests are indicative of the perception of the obstacle and consideration of face, relational history, and power (Gibbs, 1986). Researchers have begun to test hypotheses in order to clarify the conditional differences in requests. The measurement of the directness of the request is an important indication of the recognition of situational considerations.

One effective method of communication in requests is the use of indirect requests. Indirect requests, which utilize inferences to obtain the desired response, can substitute for direct requests which are generally more conventional. Direct requests focus on the specific behavior expected of the other (Rake the leaves! Please loan me \$5.) and not on any introduction or softening of the request (I think you need you to rake the leaves. Do you think you can loan me \$5?) Gibbs (1979, 1981a, 1981b, 1982, 1983, and 1985) has researched the conventional nature of indirect requests and concludes that whether the request is conventional or not depends on the social context. He also found that, in general, indirect requests are conventional and vary little in "convention of form" across various situations but do vary in "convention of means" in response to situational (relational, request type) differences. For example, in many routine circumstances such as service requests, the request is easily planned (mentally automatic) and easily comprehended by the listener; these

routine situations allow the receiver of the request to understand the meaning of many different forms of indirect requests without taking the time to analyze the literal meaning of each request (Gibbs, 1985). To summarize, in most common situations it takes less time for the speaker to formulate the indirect request and less time for the listener to recognize, process, and respond to an indirect request (Gibbs, 1985). As the situation necessitating a request becomes more unusual or complex, more time and effort would be expected in the processing and formulation of both the request and the understanding of the request. The uses of direct or indirect literal, grammatical, or surface forms of requests are important because they affect the understanding and remembering of the requests (Gibbs, 1985). Understanding and remembering the request are important to the direction that the interaction will take. Indirect requests are good examples of a communication approach by the requestor because the request is being framed in an indirect way due to particular situational perceptions.

Roloff and Janiszewski (1989) hypothesized that the perceptions of the situation and the obstacles to compliance are determined by the type of help being requested and the nature of the relationship between the communicators. Thus, Roloff and colleagues (Jordan and Roloff, 1990; Roloff and Janiszewski, 1989; Roloff, Janiszewski, McGrath, Burns and Monrai, 1988) have examined persuasive requests in help seeking situations. The type of help being requested has been categorized as borrowing a resource or asking a favor. The nature of the relationship with the requestor was varied between an intimate friend, a friend, or an acquaintance. In brief, borrowing generally involves some concrete resource which is physically transferred for use by the requestor for a specific amount of time and under specific conditions, such as maintaining the resource in its present condition or replacing it

if it is consumed (Roloff and Janiszewski, 1989). In contrast, favors are generally services which are performed by the listener and involve some expenditure of time and energy (Roloff and Janiszewski, 1989). Favors can take a wide variety of forms for various requests that do not involve concrete resources, such as asking for a ride or typing a paper; these favors were used in a previous study (Roloff and Janiszewski, 1989).

Favors vary in the degree of benefit to the listener. Some compliance gaining research (Hunter and Boster, 1979; Williams and Boster, 1981; Boster and Stiff, 1984) has concluded that the benefit to the listener is an important variable. And, that requestors will make more of an effort at gaining compliance and will perceive more compliance messages as acceptable when the benefit to the listener is high. Requests for compliance involving health and safety issues, such as "Please don't smoke." and "Please wear your seat belt.", are more closely related to the favor (no concrete resources involved) category than to the borrowing category. However, these particular safety requests have not been researched as a separate category of favors and examining the requests used in this particular situation. These and other health and safety issues may also be categorized as high in benefit to the listener and therefore likely to generate many strategies and substantial effort by the requestor to attain compliance. Safety requests may be a unique type of request, with a high altruistic component, not yet clearly identified in the existing research but worthy of specific study.

Other research (Maccoby and Solomon, 1981) has indicated that the media can positively stimulate communication regarding healthy behavior. If, applying the current categories of requests, safety and health requests may be expected to resemble favors, they are more likely to be indirect and indicative of the greatest obstacle to compliance given the perception of specific relational, situational, and face considerations.

One type of approach which utilizes an indirect request is a "conditional request." The request is conditional on the elimination or the absence of the greatest obstacle as perceived by the requestor (Clark, 1979). Francik and Clark (1985) state that requestors evaluate the preconditions necessary for obtaining the information they desire from others and then focus their attention on the conditional aspect of the request and not on the request itself (**if, or because, p, do q**). An example of this form of request is, "Did you read in the paper what time the game is tonight?" which means "Did you read about the game, and if you did, what time does it start?". Here, the important preconditions belong to the categories of ability (is the receiver of the request able to give the information) and willingness (is the receiver of the request willing to give the information) to respond to the request (Francik and Clark, 1985). The requestor evaluates the current situation making decisions based on information such as the relationship with the receiver, the receiver's habits, and general knowledge about where and how people acquire information (Francik and Clark, 1985). Such "conditional requests" allow for a high degree of politeness and flexibility in framing requests and can assist the person in searching for the requested information in his or her memory (Francik and Clark, 1985). These examples indicate how a requestor evaluates the situation and decides a communication approach that is appropriate. These request considerations are important in categorizing requests on a scale of directness. Situational power and relational intimacy are major concerns in planning and evaluating request formation, and as power and intimacy are varied, request communication is expected to change in a predictable manner.

Intimacy and Requests

The level of intimacy with another is both a result of previous communication and a predictor of differences in future communication. Miller and Steinberg (1975) defined interpersonal and noninterpersonal relationships on the basis of qualitative and quantitative differences in information. Personal information obtained from another person helps plan future communication and affects the expectations of outcomes from this communication (Miller and Steinberg, 1975). Knapp (1984) describes intimacy as the bond between two individuals that involves a self-fulfilling attachment and a self-surrendering caring. In examining compliance gaining situations, intimate knowledge helps direct persuasive strategies based on the increased level of personal information available. Conceptually, these individuals have greater knowledge and relational history with each other than with a friend or acquaintance. This relational history makes maintenance of the relationship a high priority and this, in turn, affects the formulation of compliance gaining requests. One way that messages differ between intimate individuals and non-intimate others is in the elaboration of the request itself; intimate individuals require less elaboration than non-intimate individuals. Research reveals that not only do we, as communicators, have greater knowledge about intimate individuals, which assists in the formation of compliance requests, but we also have greater expectations that these relationally close individuals will comply with the request. Studies have found that individuals are more likely to seek assistance from a friend than a stranger and that these individuals expect the friend to be more likely to comply with the request (Shapiro, 1980). Other researchers concluded that friends are more obligated than strangers to comply with requests (Bar-Tal, Bar-Zohar, Greenberg, and

Hermon, 1977). Relational history and knowledge affect the choice of who and how one seeks assistance from another, as well as the expectation of compliance. It also suggests different problems (obstacles) in the evaluation of the situation for initial requests and if compliance with the request is rejected. Thus relational considerations result in more individual planning in the formation of the request itself and also increase use of conditional requests which are "face-saving" for the listener. This leads to the increased use of indirect requests which help maintain the relationship. So, one of the effects of relational intimacy is to expect requests that are more sensitive to the other person. That generally means more polite and indirect requests because of the importance of the relationship. Relational intimacy is an important consideration in the formulation of compliance gaining requests and the evaluation of the response. Situational power is another variable expected to vary the communication strategy in formulating a request.

Power and Requests

Power has been an important concept in social science research and continues as a key variable in communication studies. Shaw (1981) defines power as "control of reinforcers" (p.294); where one person has the ability to affect behavior in another. In his review of persuasion, Bostrom (1983) discusses power as an influencing agent in communication and equates it with credibility in the communicator. Power is a central construct in persuasion relating to the sources of influence. In an assessment of the social bases of power that has guided much of the ensuing research, French and Raven (1959) identified 5 kinds of social power used as ways to control or influence another person: attraction power, reward power, coercive power, legitimate power, and expert power. In

social relationships that move through various contexts, it is possible that at some point any of the five bases of social power may dominate. There may also be situational considerations where multiple types of power are present based on relational and situational considerations. Noting the reciprocity of power and relationships, Berger (1985, p. 440) stated, "Persons can actualize power through their communicative conduct, and communicative conduct can serve for making inferences about a given individual's ability to exercise power." Upon examining the request, inferences can be made about perceived obstacles to compliance and how power may have affected the compliance gaining strategy.

Power, then, is important in the framing of requests to other individuals. Kemper and Thissen (1981) use examples of superiors and subordinates in detailing the situational uses of direct and indirect requests. This research provides examples of the use of different request forms due to power differences. High power, when an individual controls reinforcers, can lead to directness and ordering with little elaboration in a request; these direct requests may also be perceived as impolite and self-directed (Kemper and Thissen, 1981). In the case of the driver of an automobile, he or she might be more self directed in requests due to power differences. Direct requests are appropriate when comprehension cannot be assumed but, as in a high power case, compliance can be assumed (Kemper and Thissen, 1981). Those in positions of power ("high power") can use direct forms to ensure compliance and comprehension. Conversely, when the level of social or situational power is low ("low power"), the requests tend to be high in elaboration, socially appropriate (polite), and indirect (Kemper and Thissen, 1981). These indirect requests give the listener more options when forming his or her response (Kemper and Thissen, 1981). Indirect requests are seen as more polite and less face-threatening (Brown and Levinson, 1987) and beneficial to

maintaining a focus on the relationship. In summary, low power situations create high obstacles and generally limit the requestor to indirect forms, deferring to the higher status of the other; while high power situations allow for choice on the part of the requestor in the use of direct or indirect requests based on a different perception of the obstacles (Kemper and Thissen, 1981).

Research on different types of facework, closely related to politeness, indicates power is not likely to be used to assure compliance between friends (Lim and Bowers, 1991), since friends are much more concerned with relational maintenance and liking by the other. Acquaintance relationships do not share the same high level of maintenance and liking concerns. Given these conditions, a requestor must select a communication form for the situation on the dimensions of politeness and directness (conventions of conversation) that are appropriate for the particular situation (Kemper and Thissen, 1981).

Elaboration is monitored as a separate variable. It may be expected to have a positive correlation with indirect requests because by their nature indirect requests may be longer. However, elaboration should provide more than just the difference between a simple indirect request (Don't you think that you ...) and a direct request (You should ...). Subjects are expected to offer some explanation and perhaps conversation differences as part of a request. Any increased explanation, conversation, or associated rationale will increase the elaboration in the request. Elaboration is expected to differ due to specific situational considerations of power and relationship and not just as specifically related to the directness of the request. Elaboration provides another dependent variable to track request variations on the issue of automotive safety belt use.

The request can be evaluated and categorized on the dimensions of directness,

politeness, and elaboration previously discussed. In a scaling study of "request forms" on the dimensions of directness and politeness, Kemper and Thissen (1981) provide comparative ratings, using a multidimensional scaling approach, of different request forms across these two dimensions. The study revealed that the most direct and least polite request was a simple action imperative sentence (Rake the leaves.); while the use of "Please" before the imperative was rated the most polite and "I think...", "Do you think...", and "Don't you think..." (The leaves need to be raked.), three forms incorporating a need assertion, were rated the least direct (Kemper and Thissen, 1981). Other polite request forms included: "Should you...", "Did you...", "Do you think you...", and "You should..." followed by the imperative (Kemper and Thissen, 1981). Other direct forms included: "You should...", "Why don't you...", "I think you...", "Don't you think you should...", and "Please..." followed by the imperative (Kemper and Thissen, 1981). The rank ordering of request forms on the basis of politeness and directness provides a coding scheme for analyzing these dimensions in the framing of requests. The Kemper and Thissen (1981) coding scheme, applied in this study, is detailed in Appendix C. The issue of requests to wear automotive safety belts when riding with another person provides a safety issue which is applicable to testing compliance gaining strategies by examining directness and politeness conventions in different intimacy and power situations.

Automotive Safety Belt Use

Automotive safety belt use is a key health and safety issue addressed both personally and publicly in today's society. Automobile accidents are the leading cause of fatalities for

all age groups from 1 to 34 years old (Baker, O'Neill, and Karpf, 1984). Auto accident are a large cause of lost work time costing billions of dollars in insurance costs, medical care, and lost productivity (American Demographics, 1987). Research estimates (Evans, 1987) indicate that these costs can be lowered significantly by the simple act of using the automotive safety belt correctly. Automotive crash data have shown that the use of the automotive safety belt is the single most effective method for lowering fatalities and reducing the seriousness of crash injuries. In response to these facts, 33 states, the District of Columbia, and several Western nations have legislated some form of mandatory automotive safety belt use. While these laws have clearly been successful in increasing use and lowering fatalities and serious injuries, maximum benefits from safety belt use are not being realized due to noncompliance with the laws governing usage (Evans, 1987). The search for a cost effective method or campaign to increase automotive safety belt use continues.

The automotive safety belt issue continues to be controversial due to differences in laws (primary versus secondary type of enforcement) and the advancement of other safety devices, such as passive restraint seat belt systems and air bags. Not all passive or automatic safety belt systems provide the same amount of protection (Keebler and Pinto, 1991). The automatic system used by General Motors has come under criticism and continues to undergo further study by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) (Keebler and Pinto, 1991) and development by GM. Problems with the GM system include: separate shoulder and lap belts (the shoulder belt is motorized and the lap belt is manual), anchoring of the belts on the door, and the ability to disconnect the belts (Keebler and Pinto, 1991). The last problem directly negates the original purpose of passive restraint systems. A study that examined safety belt use among automatic systems found lower use for this system

(74.3%) than for other motorized systems (79.2%) (Streff and Molnar, 1990) in the front seat of the vehicle.

The air bag is mandatory on the driver's side of automobiles, and increasingly more common on the right front seat passenger's side in many models. While air bags are a safety advancement, the potential exists for individuals to get a false sense of security from air bags and neglect the use of safety belts. Safety belts are designed to be used regardless of whether or not an automobile is equipped with air bags, since air bags are only effective in head-on collisions. As the presence of airbags increases in all types of vehicles, it may become even more difficult to get people to "Buckle Up", especially if individuals do not have a strong pattern of safety belt use or view the airbag as a substitute safety device replacing the safety belt. One study (Williams, Wells, and Lund, 1990) found no difference in the use of manual safety belts in cars equipped with the safety belts and safety belts and air bags. Belt use in vehicles with automatic systems was examined separately in another study (Streff and Molnar, 1990), showing an increase in use for drivers and right front seat passengers (over 70% use) over the state average (about 50%). However, it will be years before a majority of vehicles have these advanced safety features since they are currently available only on newer vehicles; and the seat belt is still the most important safety device.

The passive restraint systems attempt to increase safety belt use, while air bags are an additional safety device designed to be used in conjunction with seat belts. Both advancements confound the safety belt issue because they do not necessarily always contribute to the correct or increased use of safety belts. Therefore, the inability to maximize safety benefits, regardless of new advancements in safety devices, is mainly due to a lack of seat belt use, making the issue of buckling up still relevant for a persuasive campaign study.

A campaign involving interpersonal (personal) communication and supportive media messages, targeted at a particular group, aimed at peer encouragement for others to "Buckle Up," provides a viable way to approach this safety issue.

Previous Research

In examining the historical development of existing research on the automotive safety belt issue, it is useful to separate the findings into two categories: 1) research which came before the mandatory laws requiring belt use and 2) the findings published since mandatory laws have been in effect. The early studies, those done prior to the implementation of mandatory laws, generally categorized persons as users or nonusers (Fhaner and Hane, 1973); this being the most important distinction. Since the implementation of mandatory laws it has become more useful to distinguish use across different groups and to examine use under different conditions, such as differences in positions in the car, size of the vehicle, weather and road conditions, time of day and the laws governing seat belt use. These changes in categorization are partially the result of mandatory safety belt laws. The State of Michigan enacted a mandatory seat belt use law in July of 1985 and continues to monitor seat belt use (Streff and Molnar, 1990). Research studies conducted in Michigan since the mandatory law was enacted consistently show the lowest percentage of use is in the young adult (ages 16-29 years) age group (Streff and Molnar, 1990).

Both pre- and post-implementation research has focused on some situational and personal predictors of use. Documented situations which result in increased use are: inclement weather, highway versus surface road driving (Wells, Williams, and Lund, 1990), higher speed driving, driving longer distances (Fhaner and Hane, 1973), and driving compact

cars and/or newer cars (Lund, 1986). Safety belt use by drivers is also found to be positively correlated with age (Wagenaar, Molnar, and Businski, 1988), i.e. older drivers are more likely to use the safety belt. These findings indicate the need to target the young adult age group for a seat belt campaign. The situational characteristics detail conditions that predict use. This information can contribute to outlining a situational manipulation for a study that is realistic and consistent with existing data. A persuasive situation focused on "Buckling Up" in a situation where belt use is low (i.e. Friday night, city driving, young adult age group) would not only be realistic but generate further insight into persuasive strategies for buckling up in a situation when belt use is low. The situation is structured to be realistic so that the explanation in the instructions that the other person is not buckled up is not inconsistent with the circumstances being described. This also makes the request to buckle up a logical request. In conjunction with situational factors which determine use, reported reasons for use and nonuse have been examined and reported. The major reasons given for nonuse are: forgetfulness, laziness, inconvenience, discomfort, fear of entrapment or wanting to be thrown free in an accident (Fhauer and Hane, 1973; 1974). In addition to these factors, many drivers recognize the low accident risk per trip statistic (Slovic, Fishhoff, and Lichtenstein, 1978) and therefore "putting on the seat-belt means recognizing the risk of an accident" (Fhauer and Hane, 1973 p.34), thus lowering use. Loo (1985) also found significant correlations between seat belt use and four fear of death and dying subscales that indicated that seat belt use was related to greater fear of death and dying in one's self and others. The sample for this study was a young adult (18-24 years old) undergraduate group. It appears that, consciously or subconsciously, one can avoid the recognition of this risk by not using the seat belt. More recent data indicate that persons wish to exercise free choice

about the safety belt use and the accident risk. Donohue (1988) concluded that free choice and effectiveness are important issues for usage in the state of Michigan and are actually a deterrent to moving toward primary enforcement. Other data (Jonah and Dawson, 1982) indicate that in regions where safety belt use is mandated by law, the attitude toward the law becomes an important predictor of use. In a study in Canada with a similar student sample (18-24 year old undergraduates), Loo (1985) found support for mandatory seat belt laws before they were very wide spread. Females (78%) were more supportive of the laws than were males (66%). Where the mandatory laws have been passed a pattern in usage has been observed. Shortly after passage of the law there is an initial time of high compliance then usage tapers off (Robertson, 1978; Phaner and Hane, 1979; Wagenaar et al., 1988; Streff and Molnar, 1990) indicating the need for campaigns that continue to encourage use.

Geller (1989) addresses the issue of use through existing organizations using a safety triad application or ABC model. Geller (1989) posits that an activator (A) is needed to elicit behavior (B) and a consequence (C) is also effective. Here the personal and environmental conditions determine the behavior (or lack of behavior) which may be safe or unsafe. Therefore, Geller's research has focused on "activators" such as reminders (Thyer, Geller, Williams, and Pursell, 1987; Weinstein, Grubb, and Vautier, 1986), and incentives (Geller, 1983; Geller, Johnson, and Pelton, 1982; Ellman and Killebrew, 1978). Generally, these campaigns have raised usage during the campaign, but usage tapers off when the "activators" are removed. The limited success, short term change in behavior at relatively high costs in personnel and incentives, suggests that a better match of strategies and target audience needs to be explored.

In another study (Lund, Stuster, and Fleming, 1989) a special law enforcement and

publicity campaign was developed for Modesto, California to test techniques of primary enforcement in a secondary enforcement state. Primary enforcement is where police can pullover and ticket for not using a seat belt while driving; while in a secondary enforcement state, police can ticket for noncompliance with the law but the car must be pulled over for a violation other than the seat belt not being in use. In this study (Lund, Stuster, and Fleming, 1989), a similar sized city in a separate media market was used as a control group. With the special law enforcement and publicity campaign, belt use increased in the test area among all subgroups but comparisons showed increases were lower for pickup trucks and vans than cars and station wagons, on Friday nights than weekdays, among men compared to women, among passengers compared to drivers, and among younger compared to older occupants (Lund, Stuster, and Fleming, 1989). These findings support much of the previous data and further indicate conditions of high versus low belt use and situational conditions that can be used in structuring a realistic scenario regarding belt use. This study (Lund, Stuster, and Fleming, 1989) also indicates how perceptions of primary enforcement and a supportive mass media campaign can increase seat belt use. More recent work on safety belt use and effectiveness has focused on identifying personality traits, such as sensation seeking, that result in at-risk behaviors like drinking and driving (Gregersen and Berg, 1994; Pfefferbaum and Wood, 1994; Vingilis and Stoduto, 1994). Other work has tested education campaigns targeted at the at-risk behaviors (Garvin and Alcorn, 1990; Kooler and Bruvold, 1992). Some safety belt campaign work has focused on information dissemination (Barokas, 1995) and multiple strategy campaigns (Streff and Molnar, 1991) to address the at-risk groups and personality traits related to risky behaviors. See Donohue, Hildalgo, and Gathman (1995) for a review of the literature. This paper proposes generating peer communication about

buckling up, that may change perceptions of use, as the strategy for increasing use. The target area in this study is a secondary enforcement state where there is opposition to primary enforcement.

In review, it seems to this researcher that 100% compliance with automotive safety belt use, even in mandatory and primary enforcement settings, is unrealistic. There appears to be a segment of the driving population that will not use automotive safety belts under any circumstances. A realistic target in the secondary enforcement states in the United States appears to be at the 70% to 80% compliance rate currently obtained in heavily enforced mandatory jurisdiction areas. New Zealand, Australia, and Ontario, Canada (Jonah and Grant, 1985) come near or exceed these rates. Overall, compliance patterns show a wide variance from around 80% (Jonah, Dawson, and Smith, 1982), in heavily enforced areas, to 50% (Streff and Molnar, 1990) in a secondary enforcement state, Michigan. Much of the variance in use for different areas appears to be due to the level of enforcement, secondary vs. primary. The secondary enforcement is generally a "laissez-faire", or "hands off", approach by the state. A reluctance to change to primary enforcement eliminates the heavy enforcement strategy that has been successful in raising belt use in New Zealand, Australia, and Canada. As previously noted, use varies by age also. The compliance pattern observed in Michigan provides further justification for exploring other persuasive approaches that may be useful in encouraging persons to "Buckle Up" especially in secondary enforcement states. Studying the persuasive strategies that can be used in a combination, interpersonal and mass media campaign, approach extends this area of research.

Given the previous discussion of the obstacles to seat belt use and the effect of power and intimacy on the elaboration, politeness, and directness of requests, the following

research hypotheses are offered as tests for a study of compliance gaining messages about safety belt use. The initial requests should reflect the subject's evaluation of the conditions for obtaining compliance. Intimacy and situational power manipulations in the instructions to the subjects should make the persuasive approaches predictable. In general, more intimate persons should be more efficient in their communication requests because of increased knowledge of the other (Miller and Steinberg, 1975) resulting in less elaborate requests. Also, those low in power will employ strategies that are less direct, more explanatory or elaborate, and more polite to supplant a lack of control of reinforcers enjoyed by those high in situational power. Subjects are randomly assigned to one of four conditions (intimacy by situational power, each high or low). Subjects are not aware of the specifics, or the number of other conditions in the study. The following hypotheses are proposed for initial requests to "Buckle Up."

H₁ Requestors in the low intimacy condition will use more elaborate requests than persons in the high intimacy condition.

H₂ Requestors high in situational power will use more direct requests while those low in situational power will use more indirect requests.

H₃ Requestors high in situational power will be less elaborate in their requests than those low in situational power.

H₄ Requestors high in situational power will be less polite in their requests than those low in situational power.

After the initial request, subjects are told the other did not comply.

Response to Rejection

In addition to examining persuasive strategies, Roloff et al. (1988) examined responses to rejection for a compliance gaining request for borrowing a resource. The rejection of a request by an intimate other was found to be very disconfirming of the high expectations for compliance generally associated with relational intimacy (Roloff et al., 1988). Research also showed that rejection by an intimate resulted in greater feelings of resentment for the requestor than if the rejection was by a non-intimate (Bar-Tal, Bar-Zohar, Greenberg, and Hermon, 1977). Roloff et al. (1988) found no differences in response elaboration due to intimacy but there was a main effect for frequency of counter persuasion. Differences were found for politeness in the initial request and the response to rejection, such that initial requests were perceived as more polite than the responses, for friends (intimates) but not for acquaintances (Roloff et al., 1988). These findings are limited to borrowing a resource and do not include a situational focus on power differences because that was not manipulated in the study. One obvious method for a person with high situational power to address an initial rejection is to exert his or her power. While the use of power is perceived as less polite, it may be the preferred response to operationalize whatever feelings of rejection are generated by an intimate or acquaintance rejection of a request. Given the

greater feelings of resentment for intimates reported by Bar-Tol et al. (1977), it might be expected that those intimates in positions of power may exert their power in the follow up request due to the increased resentment generated by the initial non-compliance. If power is the control of reinforcers, then those with that control can be expected to more strongly exert that influence after having the initial request rejected.

Non-compliance with an initial request may be a common response when the requestor asks someone else to "Buckle Up". Therefore it is valuable to determine how the requestor uses directness, politeness, and elaboration after the initial request and how these perceptions are operationalized into a subsequent request. The previously cited data allows for generating testable hypotheses regarding second requests. The following hypotheses are offered for a test of situational power differences in second requests, after rejection, compared to initial requests.

H_5 After rejection, requestors in positions of power will use a more direct request compared to the initial request.

Conversely, those low in situational power might be expected to change or adjust the request for compliance differently in a second request. In responding to rejection or non-compliance with the initial request, without the option of high situational power, low power individuals may further accent low power strategies along the dimensions of politeness and elaboration.

H₆ After rejection, requestors low in situational power will use more polite requests compared to the initial request for compliance.

In addition, intimacy has been shown to effect differences in elaboration, such that non- intimates generally require more explanation in the requests. These effects are expected to be accentuated in second requests as those low in power add explanations in an attempt to gain compliance with the second request.

H₇ After rejection, requestors in the low intimacy condition will use more elaborate requests than requestors in the high intimacy condition.

Tests of these seven hypotheses for requests to use an automotive safety belt under the detailed relational and power conditions will provide clear data on how the communication variables of directness, politeness, and elaboration differ under the test conditions. The assumptions are that power and relationship, manipulated in this study, are key independent variables in the formation of persuasive communication on this important safety issue. In order to fully develop and structure a communication campaign designed to increase seat belt use among the target group, additional data on proposed campaign approaches through slogans and media vehicles are gathered. This will allow for conclusions about how to apply this information to a media campaign aimed at encouraging users of seat belts to remind non-users to "Buckle Up".

Communication Campaigns

Communication researchers have studied and evaluated many types of public campaigns and offer some guidelines on the organization and components of a successful campaign. Mendelsohn (1973) began laying the framework for successful campaigns by developing the "limited effects" model of media effects and delineating the conditions necessary for media influence. Historically, the "limited effects" model followed the "null effect" (no effects of media) and "hypodermic needle" (all powerful media) theories of media influence and effectiveness. The "limited effects" approach provides a much more realistic perspective of what media can and cannot do to influence individuals. Since these early approaches, communication scholars have broadened and delineated the application of successful mass media campaigns to include information models (Atkin, 1981), political models (Chaffee, 1981), and prevention campaigns (Maccoby and Solomon, 1981; McNamara, Kurth, and Hansen, 1981). In a review of communication campaigns, Rogers and Storey (1987) describe the importance of campaigns in bridging individual and societal level objectives. The individual and mass media components observed and researched allow for a multi-level approach to the study of communication behavior (Rogers and Storey, 1987). These multiple-levels are activated by numerous channels of communication, both through the mass media and interpersonally (Rogers and Storey, 1987). Other work indicates the need to have interpersonal support messages for mass media campaigns aimed at changing individual behavior (Rolloff, 1980). These findings by communication researchers indicate key campaign components and support the mass media and interpersonal communication idea for addressing the issue of activating safety belt usage more effectively.

In planning a persuasive campaign one should consider a person's self-awareness regarding the subject. Roloff (1980) argues that persons self-awareness is extremely low for many daily, ritualistic activities and certainly much lower than many researchers give subjects credit for. A habitual activity, like a driving routine and seat belt use, takes little cognitive activity until the habit is changed. Theoretically then, automotive safety belt use can be categorized as requiring little cognitive activity, falling into the "mindless" (Langer, 1978) or "scripted" (Schank and Abelson, 1977) realm. Langer (1978) offers suggestions on how to approach changing these habitual or "mindless" activities. These strategies are applicable for increasing compliance with the automotive safety belt law: 1) have a campaign that increases the amount of interpersonal communication about the safety belt issue, 2) increase objective self-awareness about the safety belt issue, and 3) relate automotive safety belt use to another, more highly cognitive, issue. Similarly, Roloff (1980) suggests increased interpersonal communication, objective self-awareness, and situational differences in self-awareness as campaign methods for increasing the cognitive awareness and thus potentially increasing success at changing behavior. Mass media messages can increase awareness of the automotive safety belt issue both as it pertains to personal use and asking others. These suggestions about campaigns can be operationalized in slogans about seat belt use and asking others to buckle up.

A research plan under the advertising paradigm should provide valuable data on the potential of a campaign to be successful at increasing automotive safety belt use in a legislated, but not heavily enforced, environment. The strategy tested here includes both mass media and interpersonal components, which should result in a change in behavior that is not temporary but actually becomes integrated into the personal habits of the individual

(Flay and Cook, 1981). The evaluation of this research should clarify the potential of a combined mass media and interpersonal communication campaign approach.

The current automotive safety law in Michigan has, in some ways, components of both mass media and interpersonal communication. Mass media information flow because enactment of the law and its stipulations requires dissemination of information. Interpersonal information flow because the law involves others in the vehicle (children) for which the driver is legally responsible. This makes interpersonal communication about law abiding behavior likely. The law requiring that children under the age of 4 be appropriately restrained no matter where they sit in the vehicle was enacted in 1982 and children 0-3 years old are the highest user group at 78.4% (Streff and Molnar, 1990). Because of the inability of the child to buckle him or herself up at this age, the act of "Buckling Up" often requires parent/child communication, verbally or non-verbally, which in turn reinforces compliance with the law. Personal observation indicates that young children who have developed a pattern of seat belt use can remind parents to "Buckle Up". Mass media campaign messages, or a change in existing public service messages, that stimulate law compliant communication among persons in a vehicle may be a logical strategy to encourage safety belt use. Assessing the obstacles a person perceives as existing in requesting that another person wear a safety belt can provide guidelines for creative approaches. The research approach in this work addresses the problems associated with changing behaviors regarding automobile seat belt use by incorporating mass media and interpersonal communication components.

Communication researchers have been interested in the impact of mass media and interpersonal communication on social change. A review of the literature on automotive safety belts and public communication campaigns and persuasion suggests improvements in

safety belt campaigns as a viable strategy to increased belt use. This research will gather pertinent data on the attitudes and behaviors regarding automotive safety belts by college students, a subset of the lowest using group in the state, and will evaluate the persuasive requests of others in the vehicle buckle up. A second part will test campaign slogans utilizing different strategies aimed at increasing interpersonal communication about wearing seat belts to nonusers. Generating an increase in interpersonal communication about wearing seat belts is seen as a viable campaign strategy for promoting seat belt use among a young adult sample. The data from the survey responses will also indicate the media choices the sample group rates as best for delivering messages encouraging seat belt use to the target audience. Conclusions from the study will include media and message choices that should provide the most appealing campaign strategy to reach the target group with messages that promote requests for non-users to buckle up.

Application Data

The synthesis of mass media and interpersonal communication strategies offered by this paper tests theoretical and practical applications. Research questions on theme evaluations and methods of delivering the information to the target audience extends this study by exploring ways to successfully implement a campaign. These data provide an indication of how to successfully apply the suggestions in the study and also some indication of how successful this application may be. Four slogans that may be used to prompt the suggested communication about buckling up the automotive safety belt have been developed for this research. Multiple slogans were chosen because the study is not testing a specific

slogan as a theoretical variable. Additionally, the literature on seat belts suggests slogan applications that might be useful at initiating the behavior change desired.

One purpose of the study is to compare the four slogans chosen to see if there is a preference by the target audience that suggests differences in effectiveness for the slogan. Two of the slogans use the phrasing “Remind Others to Buckle Up” as the encouragement to request use of the safety belt. The other two slogan use the phrase, “Make Sure Everyone is Buckled Up” as the wording to encourage discussion about belt use. Each slogan then has a different motivational link or practical theme. One message is a reminder of the safety belt law: Make Sure Everyone is Buckled Up - It's the Law. Free choice has previously been identified as an important issue in Michigan (Donohue, 1988) so the reminders about the law are not expected to be evaluated favorably; however it is a viable theme for testing given the results of the study in California (Lund, Stuster, and Fleming, 1989) and the high general knowledge about the law. The existing data about moving the law to one of primary enforcement suggests the Law slogan message will be viewed negatively in evaluations and comparison to other messages. The other messages take different approaches to behavior change suggested in the literature review (other directed, habitual nature, and link seat belt use to other healthy behaviors).

The second slogan focuses on an altruistic concern for others: Show You Care - Remind Others to Buckle Up. Previous research on requests from friends or acquaintances have focused on borrowing a resource or asking a favor (Rolloff and Janiszewski, 1989); this type of altruistic concern for others is in direct contrast to this previous work. Some compliance gaining research (Hunter and Boster, 1979; Williams and Boster, 1981; Boster and Stiff, 1984) has concluded that requestors will make more of an effort at gaining

compliance, and will perceive more compliance messages as acceptable, when the benefit to the listener is high. These findings make a message focused on caring for the other a viable slogan to test. This slogan is expected to be neutral compared to the Law slogan.

The third slogan addresses the habitual nature of belt use and encourages raising awareness to change the habit: Share a Good Habit - Remind Others to Buckle Up. The message strategy is raise cognitive awareness of the habitual nature of safety belt use to enact the behavioral change of reminding others or buckling up if you are not using the safety belt. This addresses some of the suggestions made about changing behaviors in routine, or mindless, activities (Langer, 1978; Roloff, 1980). This slogan is expected to be evaluated positively. Survey data shows most people view the use of seat belts favorably and the term “Good Habit” should have positive connotations.

Finally, the fourth slogan is aimed at promoting safety belt use as a healthy behavior: Protect Good Health - Make Sure Everyone is Buckled Up. This may have the benefit of moving the automotive safety belt issue away from just a safety issue and into the broader spectrum of general health. The potential is to take advantage of the overall focus on personal health many Americans have and that is prominent in other media messages (i.e. athletic shoes, clothes, and equipment, as well as dieting and eating right). This slogan is also expected to be evaluated positively due to the reference of the broader issue of good health. The literature on persuasion and safety belt use suggests that concern for others, good habits, and healthy behaviors may all be good themes for promoting safety belt use. Data for evaluation and comparison purposes can provide direction on which of these slogans may be the most effective under certain conditions (i.e. driver, passenger, friend, or acquaintance). Evaluations of the themes and responses regarding effective media delivery

of the messages provide data on how to construct a successful campaign following the guidelines suggested in this paper.

Each of the four campaign slogans will be evaluated on a seven point semantic differential scale with seven bi-polar adjectives as the anchors. The anchor pairs include: Easy to remember - Not easy to remember, Dislike - Like, Clear - Unclear, Negative - Positive, Self-directed - Other-directed, Informative - Uninformative, and Effective - Ineffective. A factor analysis will test if the evaluations factor into two components of advertising messages: a motivational component (other directed, like, positive, and effective) and a clarity component (easy to remember, informational, and clear). These factors will be used to evaluate the slogans because they are indicators of the slogan's potential effectiveness (i.e. clear, positive, informational, effective, easy to remember, ...) as a message that can lead to behavior change. Testable hypotheses about the slogans are offered.

Consistent with the information that indicates the law is well known and is viewed by most people as a good law, the slogan reminding subjects about the law should be the highest rated on the clarity component (easy to remember, informational, clear). Because it is well known and the other themes are not, the law message should stand out for its clarity when compared to the other messages. However, the law approach should be perceived much differently as a motivator and should be rated low on the motivational components, based on Donohue's (1988) findings about free choice. Using the law as an advertising appeal to request others to buckle up is not expected to be highly motivational, especially when compared with other strategies. The state of Michigan, and other jurisdictions, have purposely remained secondary enforcement domains due to the free choice issue and any

expected backlash from movement to primary enforcement. For all these reasons, the law approach to reminders about buckling up should be perceived differently on the factors of motivation and clarity. This leads to the following hypotheses.

H₈ The campaign slogan reminding subjects about the law will be the rated the highest on the clarity components.

H₉ The campaign slogan reminding subjects about the law will be the rated the lowest on motivational components.

No testable hypotheses are offered about the other slogans. Research evaluation of these slogans is exploratory; however, they offer viable, realistic approaches for campaign slogans. Tests of the data will provide information on how the other slogans are received compared to the Law slogan. Statistical comparisons of all four slogans on the two factor criteria will determine which may be the most effective for use in a broad campaign approach, where the data indicate specific situations favor a particular thematic approach, these will be explained. The data will provide an indication of the strategy needed for increasing use of automotive safety belts among the target age group.

Background Data

Each individual participating in the study will complete a questionnaire that provides personal background information regarding the automotive safety belt issue under

investigation in this study. These data serve two purposes. One is to validate that the sample is representative of the college age target group with regard to their attitudes and behaviors about automotive safety belt use. Having said this, the group should be licensed drivers who are aware of the law but not in favor of stricter enforcement (secondary vs. primary enforcement), and aware that seat belts are effective safety devices. A second purpose for the background information is to indicate there is currently little communication about the seat belt issue within the target group, but there may be a willingness to communicate about buckling up (i.e. to determine if there is much potential for the proposed approach). Wagenaar and Webster (1986) report that young children have high rates of seat belt use because of the mandatory child restraint legislation and exert an upward influence on overall use rates with other groups except for the young adult target group in this study. While no rationale is provided for this influence, it might be inferred that the child serves as example to the adult. Many young children who can talk can also be expected to remind adults in the vehicle to buckle up, if they observe adults who are not buckled. This example points to the potential of an approach that involves communication from others in the vehicle and the expectation that it can work with peer influence.

It is expected that subjects will report that a minimal amount of the communication about other wearing seat belts is currently taking place. Low levels of communication suggest that this is perhaps an untapped method to promote belt use, with a supportive advertising campaign. While the situational characteristics and power variables manipulated in this study differ greatly from communication and relationships of parents with children, where some form of awareness or verbal or non-verbal communication has helped increase seat belt use (Wagenaar and Webster, 1986), the data gathered here should confirm the

potential of this approach.

The self report data allows for categorizing subjects into groups. Analysis will be conducted by segmenting the groups into those who indicate a high willingness to ask others to buckle-up and those who do not. These existing attitudes might be expected to influence subjects self reports in the study on affective components such as how they feel about the sense of obligation and likelihood of compliance generated by their request.

The sense of obligation can be viewed in two different ways. One is the self report of the sense of obligation the requestor thinks is generated by the request. The second is the sense of obligation to comply with the request from the perspective of the person who is asked. Previous research (Roloff et al., 1988) indicates obligations increase with levels of intimacy. This relationship is so strong that, in some instances, intimates expect the other to anticipate needs before requests are made. For these reasons, requestors will often seek out particular others when making requests based on the level of intimacy. This sense of obligation has been examined in requests for resources and may be applicable in subsequent research on safety issues. However, in this study it is important to get some baseline data on the sense of obligation, with self report measures, to determine how requestors view this component of the request. Similarly, baseline measures of the likelihood of compliance provide an estimate of the requestors perception of the response to his/her request. These ratings are expected to vary based on existing attitudes about likelihood of asking. Those who report a higher likelihood of asking may feel that their message is stronger in generating the feelings of obligation and likelihood of compliance.

H_{10} Subjects who report they are more likely to ask someone to buckle up, will rate their requests generate a greater sense of obligation and a higher likelihood of compliance in the other .

These hypotheses reflect a thorough test of the automotive safety belt problem as outlined and defined. Primarily, the study will test and evaluate persuasive requests to put on the safety belt based on predictions about power and relationship differences and predictions based on rejection of the initial request. Also, the data will test campaign slogan applications and define the conditions under which these might be the most successful. This includes existing attitudes and behaviors as well as the best slogan and media delivery methods. As previously noted, almost any success from the approach suggested here at increasing seat belt use with drivers and front-seat passengers, without changing the existing secondary enforcement law, should also be applicable to rear-seat passengers. The benefits to individuals and society in increased automobile travel safety are potentially great.

Method

Design

This study is a 2 X 2 independent groups design. Two levels of the variable intimacy (friend or acquaintance/high or low) were crossed with two levels of the variable situational power (driver or passenger/high or low). An initial request was acquired from the subjects and they were told the other had not complied and they were to ask one more time. This allows for tests of initial and follow up request differences (time one and time two measures). Coders were trained to rate the dependent variables politeness and directness of the requests to buckle up on scales ranging from one to five (high to low). The elaboration of each request was also coded by counting the number of words in each request. Subject ratings of the sense of obligation and likelihood of compliance by the other are tested using self reports of feelings of influence and likelihood of asking another to buckle up as covariates. Finally, the slogan or campaign messages are compared on responses to the items that form the clarity and motivational factors used to evaluate message effectiveness and applicability to the persuasive approach outlined in this research. This segment tests a reminder about the law and three other approaches suggested in the literature. These messages were scored on seven individual items that are hypothesized to form the clarity and motivational factors.

Manipulations

The variables intimacy and situational power were manipulated in the instructions. The high intimacy condition used the word friend in the following example. The low intimacy condition used the work acquaintance. The following details the manipulation for situational power, where driver is the high power condition and passenger the low power condition. The text for the passenger (low power) situation is as follows:

Imagine that you are enrolled in a Humanities course that counts toward your general studies requirement. One way to pick-up extra credit for the course is to view, and write a short critique, of a foreign film shown at a theater across town. The instructor encourages viewing and discussing the film with a classmate as a way to enhance understanding and generate ideas. With this in mind, you make arrangements with a same sex **acquaintance/friend** from class to see the film.

The day of the film arrives and your **acquaintance/friend** arrives to pick you up. You get in the front seat and buckle your seat belt. Your **acquaintance/friend** says “Let’s go!” but he/she does not have on a seat belt. At this time you are going to request that he/she “Buckle Up!”. In the space below, write **the exact words** you would say to request that your **acquaintance/friend** put on the seat belt.

The manipulation for the driver condition had the same first paragraph and the following second paragraph.

The day of the film arrives and you drive over to pick-up your **acquaintance/friend**.

You are buckled in and your classmate gets in and says “Let’s go!” but does not put on his/her seat belt. At this time you are going to request that he/she “Buckle Up!”. In the space below, write **the exact words** you would say to request that your **acquaintance/friend** put on the seat belt.

After subjects wrote down their initial request to buckle up, they were asked to evaluate the sense of obligation and likelihood of compliance generated by their request. Following these evaluations, the manipulation for rejection of the initial request was inserted. The rejection message was purposely left without a particular reason so that the subjects would focus on the obstacle of persuading the other to buckle up, and how they perceived it as different than the initial request. Instructions to the subject were as follows:

For whatever reason your **acquaintance/friend** did not put on his/her seat belt when you asked. You are willing to try again to persuade him/her to “Buckle Up!”. In the space below, write **the exact words** you would say now to request that your **acquaintance/friend** put on the seat belt.

No manipulation check was built into the study. The bold face emphasis on the key words, and their repetition, is expected to be enough to ensure an adequate manipulation.

Subjects were not aware of the number or the specifics of the other conditions in the study.

Subjects

Subjects were 350 students from an introductory communication course at a large Midwestern university. They were all of legal driving age in the state and participated in the study willingly. Participants received extra credit for participation, at the discretion of the individual instructor, and were randomly assigned to treatments. None of these subjects had participated in a pre-test of situational descriptions explained in the next section. Neither had these subjects been previously exposed to the research materials.

Procedure

The instructor allocated 15 minutes at the end of class for the experiment. A research assistant was introduced and instructed the participants. A brief introduction to the research was provided by the research assistant before the materials were delivered. Each participant signed a departmental research consent form and then was handed a packet containing the study materials. The research consent forms were provided to the instructor for assigning participation credit. Each packet of materials contained: a questionnaire of demographic and background information on attitudes toward automotive seat belt use, one of the four scenario descriptions (e.g. driver with acquaintance) with the appropriate response forms, and all four campaign slogans and their evaluation forms sorted randomly. Subjects were randomly assigned to conditions. Anonymity of response was maintained. Subjects were

allocated 15 minutes to complete the research packet. Upon completion of the research packet, subjects were excused.

Instrumentation

The questionnaire package contained three sections. Section order was maintained for each version of the package; however, random ordering of materials occurred within a section, if necessary. Section one contained questions regarding background information and attitudes and behaviors toward automotive seat belt use. (See Appendix B for the questionnaire.) These answers serve two purposes in the analysis: 1) to verify that the sample is representative of the larger population on some demographic and attitudinal variables, and 2) to measure current attitudes toward seat belts and the likelihood of asking others to buckle them, to utilize as covariates in the analysis. The second section of the questionnaire packet contained the scenario (i.e. driver or passenger by friend or acquaintance) and the compliance gaining request form for writing in the persuasive request in the situation. The scenario description was pre-tested on a class of introductory communication students ($n=21$). Rated on 7 point semantic differential scales (from clear =1 to unclear = 7), the description of the situation was rated as clear ($M = 2.5$, $SD = 1.2$), and (realistic =1 to unrealistic = 7) realistic ($M = 2.9$, $SD = 1.7$). The pre-test participants also indicated an interest (interested = 1 to uninterested = 7; $M = 3.0$, $SD = 1.7$) and a high likelihood (likely =1 to unlikely =7; $M = 2.8$, $SD = 2.0$) of participating in the extra credit situation described. For the study, each participant received one of the four situations manipulated in this section (driver or passenger by friend or acquaintance). The situations

were randomly distributed among participants. After the scenario description and the subject writing in an initial request, the questionnaire indicated the receiver of the message had not complied with the request and subjects were instructed to write a second request. This completes the second section of the questionnaire.

The third section of the questionnaire package contained two parts. Part one contained the four separate pages with campaign slogans at the top of each page in oversized type, randomly rotated, with 7-point semantic differential scales for rating. The verbal anchors for the scales were easy to remember/not easy to remember, like/dislike, clear/unclear, informative/uninformative, negative/positive, other-directed/self-directed, and effective/ineffective for slogan evaluation. The polarity of some adjective pairs were reversed. This focuses the subject's attention to each pair and helps avoid the problem of systematic response to all items. Part two of this section consisted of a single page asking the participants to comparatively rate different media for delivering messages about seat belt use to a target audience of their peers. This section provides data about campaign slogans and approaches that may help generate interpersonal communication about seat belt use.

Coding Procedures

Seat belt use requests were examined and coded using a five-category scheme for politeness and directness based on the findings of Kemper and Thiessen (1981) described earlier. Two coders were trained to identify the level of politeness and directness in each request. In addition, an elaboration variable was calculated by counting the number of words in each request.

Coders were trained to rate politeness on a 1-5 scale from the most polite request of "Please + imperative" to the least polite request of the Imperative only. Coders were trained to recognize other introductory words and phrases, and their variations, as indicators of politeness (see Appendix C for examples and category differentiation) so they could adequately classify the request on the politeness scale.

Coders were also trained to rate directness on a scale of 1-5 from the most direct, an Imperative only, to the least direct, "I think + need assertion". In general, requests including an imperative are more direct than those including need assertions. Coders were trained to recognize other introductory words and phrases, and their variations, as indicators of directness (see Appendix C for examples and category differentiation) so they could adequately classify the request on the directness scale..

It was expected that some subjects would provide rationale or examples to persuade others to "Buckle Up" and these would show up in more elaborate requests. Occasionally these examples were provided without restating the original request to wear the seat belt. Coders recognized a portion (11%) of the responses in the second request were so indirect as to not mention the request to buckle up again. After reviewing the data, a sixth category was added for directness in the second request only. The sixth category, other request, was added to indicate the subject had continued the request with a supporting story or example without restating the need to "Buckle Up". All previously coded data were reviewed and, if necessary, recoded after this additional category was added. The request took the form of comments as an extension of the previous request. Some were stories about personal experiences with seat belts saving the requestor or someone they know, these were very serious. However, some stories or examples were very humorous in their persuasive appeal.

Overall, this category is viewed and coded as the least direct because the subject did not specifically restate the request to buckle up.

Elaboration was simply coded as the number of words in each subject's request. This measure is appropriate for the situation based on the hypotheses generated by the situational considerations and the common nature of the seat belt issue. Counting words allows for expanded variance, precise measurement and the ability to detect changes in requests suggested by the differences in the situation or the relationship. Larger units of measure (phrases, clauses, ...) would not provide the necessary precision for this study. Since the requests could be very short (Buckle Up!) or very elaborate, if subjects provided supporting stories or examples, counting words was deemed the best way to measure elaboration.

Applying these coding schemes, coders reached a global agreement rate, calculated by Cohen's Kappa, of .69 for politeness and directness; based on a sample of 220 statements out of the universe of 700. More precisely, reliability tests for politeness were Cohen's Kappa = .62 for the initial request and Cohen's Kappa = .76, for the request after the refusal. Reliability tests for directness were Cohen's Kappa = .66, for the initial request and Cohen's Kappa = .73, for the request after the refusal. Elaboration reliability scores were higher at Cohen's Kappa = .86 for all elaboration. For the initial request the reliability is Cohen's Kappa = .89 and Cohen's Kappa = .84 for the request after the refusal. Some discrepancies in elaboration existed due to the use of the term seat belt. Coders were instructed to count the term as one or two words depending on how the subject wrote the term. Even with these instructions the coders did not totally agree because of difficulty reading the handwriting or determining if the words were connected. Overall, these reliability levels are viewed as satisfactory for this study.

Results

Sample Description

A total of 350 subjects participated in the research. Characteristics of the sample population are provided in Table A-1 (Appendix A). The age range of participants is from 17 to 26, with 93% from 18 to 21 years old. The gender distribution is 53% female and 47% male. Other important demographic characteristics show: 97% are licensed drivers, 90% are licensed in the state of Michigan, and 99% of the drivers have licenses from within the United States. Other information about the subjects was obtained in the initial section of the questionnaire. A majority of subjects "very much" or "somewhat" favor the safety belt law (87%). In addition, 64% think the law should be enforced more strictly than it is; while 29% said it should be enforced as it is now. On another item, 92% answered "strongly agree" or "agree" to the item "seat belts significantly reduce the severity of injuries in accidents." These responses parallel earlier findings that show general support for seat belt laws and nearly universal recognition of the benefits of use, even if overall use is less than 100%.

Several other items assessed the reasons for wearing seat belts among the subject group. Responses of "very important" or "important" were given for: feeling safer (86%), worry about an accident (81%), used to buckling up (70%), and the law requires use (58%). Only 31% showed that "others expect me" to buckle up as an important reason. These data are consistent with the law not being named as a highly significant factor and the low recognition of use by others with this age group. These responses support the rationale of

this study to examine peer pressure as a strategy for increasing seat belt use. This researcher believes in the potential of peer pressure as a viable and under utilized strategy to increase use with the target audience. All indications are that the target group is more likely to respond to peer pressure than to a reminder message about the law.

Subjects provided an indication of what they think about the issue of asking others by answers to questions about whether other drivers and passengers want to be reminded to buckle up. Asking about other drivers wanting to be reminded, 41% said "most" or "some" unbuckled drivers want to be reminded. Similarly, 45% reported "most" or "some" unbuckled passengers want to be reminded. About themselves, 64% answered "always" and "usually" to the item about wanting someone to remind you if you are unbuckled. This response may be a little inflated due to the nature of the previous items (questions about seat belts and the law) and the subjects providing the "socially acceptable response"; however, they are higher than the 31% that said they wear seat belts because "others expect me" to buckle up. This gap (33%) between the "want" to be reminded and what others currently expect suggests the potential of this approach because it shows that peer expectation or peer example is an underutilized reason for buckling up. The desire to be reminded is not being met by current practices of others for reminding unbuckled peers to wear a seat belt. There is also a gap (10% or more) between the perception that other drivers (41%) and passengers (45%) want to be reminded and current response of the importance of wearing a seat belt because others expect me to (31%). While the response scales are not directly comparable, there appears to be a response gap between the current behavior of asking others to buckle up and the perception that others want to be reminded.

The study is directed to be generalizable to the 16 to 29-year-old population that uses

seat belts less than any other group in Michigan. The sample provides some generalizability since it represents, age wise, a large portion of the low using target group. The education level of this sample limits generalizability because it is a group more educated than the general population and education is positively correlated with seat belt use (Blomquist, 1979; Leigh, 1990). However, the study is successful at gathering data about automotive seat belt use and potential campaigns from a large sample of young adult, licensed drivers, in the state of Michigan. On the key issue of the current behavior of asking others to buckle up, the study sample may not differ greatly from the target population of young adults; both are probably low in asking others. Therefore conclusions about persuasive approaches, the willingness to ask peers to use seat belts, and some of the results of campaign slogan evaluations should be generalizable to the target group of young adults.

Independent Variables

Situational power (driver or passenger) and relationship (friend or acquaintance) are manipulated in the instructions and randomly distributed among subjects. Hypothesis ten posits differences in likelihood of compliance based on reported attitudes about asking others to buckle up. Several items in the initial section of the questionnaire addressed these attitudes. A total of 53% of the subjects indicated they "always" or "often" ask unbuckled passengers to buckle up when driving. This variable will be split into dichotomous ask or do not ask. On asking unbuckled drivers, 35% reported they "always" or "often" ask. Again this variable splits the sample into those who ask and those who do not ask.

Responses to these items on driver and passenger behaviors support the expected

differences in communication based on the situational manipulations in the study. Subjects in this study reported that passengers are much less likely to ask drivers to wear their seat belts than drivers are to ask passengers (18% difference). These reported differences in requesting safety belt use by passengers to drivers compared to drivers to passengers may largely reflect power differences based on the situation in the vehicle. Follow up items asked about the perceived influence of drivers over passengers' safety and passengers over drivers' safety. Clear differences exist as 80% of subjects report drivers have "a lot" or "some" influence over passenger safety, compared with passengers 30% report of influence over driver safety. While this difference may include other thoughts regarding safety than just the seat belt, it points out a difference in driver and passenger power that suggests different situations exist and therefore different obstacles to persuasion are present. These responses support the driver/passenger manipulation and the expected differences in directness, politeness, and elaboration of requests to persuasion and the change between the initial and second requests.

Slogan Evaluation Scales

Seven semantic differential items were used to evaluate the suggested seat belt campaign slogans. The verbal anchors of the paired items were: easy to remember/not easy to remember, like/dislike, clear/unclear, informative/uninformative, negative/positive, other directed/self directed, and effective/ineffective. The researcher posited that the items will factor into two components of advertising messages: a motivational component and an clarity component.

A confirmatory factor analysis verifies a two-factor solution; however, the items did not load on the factors as was hypothesized, based on the factor criteria established. The criteria for the factor loadings were that items needed to load greater than .60 on a single factor and less than .50 on other factors. The first factor consisted of five items: easy to remember, like, clear, informative, and effective, with an Alpha reliability of .80 (see Appendix A, Table A-2B). This factor is interpreted as a message potency scale for this research because it contains three clarity factor items (easy to remember, informative, and clear) as well as two other items (effective and like) that were hypothesized to load on the motivational factor. The factor is labeled Potency because it contains advertising and motivational items that suggest a potent message (informative, clear, as well as liked, easy to remember, and effective). The mixture of these items point to a useful campaign message that will be influential with the target audience. The other two items, self or other directed and positive, did not load within the criteria established or with each other. The item positive was dropped from the initial analysis; while the self or other-directed item is analyzed as a single item because of its importance to the study. It is treated as a measure of other- directedness (higher scores = other directed). These two factors explain 60% of the variance.

Media Choices

To provide a complete campaign overview and recommendation, subjects were asked about which media should be used to promote reminding others to “Buckle Up.” Subjects gave primary and secondary media choices. They were asked to think about the best way to

reach people like themselves with a message about encouraging others to wear their seat belts. Television was the overwhelming primary choice (56%), followed by radio (14%), billboards (13%), and in car stickers (11%). Radio was the most popular secondary choice (32%), followed by billboards (23%), television (14%), bumper stickers (11%), and in car stickers (10%). This information provides suggestions on the right media, from the target audience, to deliver this message about automotive seat belt use. Depending on the conditions of a campaign (financial, available media channels, etc.), the appropriate media can be chosen from the options suggested by this study sample as the best media to disseminate messages about seat belt use to the target group. The appropriate media choice and a targeted and tested message offer the best combination for a successful campaign.

Findings

Hypothesis one predicts requestors in the acquaintance condition will use more elaborate requests than those in the friend condition. These differences in the elaboration of the request are based on expected differences due to the manipulation of the relationship (intimacy). Tests of the means for elaboration of the initial request in the friend ($M=13.01$, $SD=8.72$) and acquaintance ($M=13.90$, $SD=8.28$) conditions did not differ significantly as posited and provide no support for the research hypotheses regarding elaboration differences due to relationship. These results indicate no main effect for relationship; acquaintances did not elaborate more than friends in their persuasive requests.

Hypotheses two, three, and four predict subjects in the higher power (driver) condition will be more direct, but less polite and less elaborate, in their requests than subjects

in the low power (passenger) condition. Tests of the data show no difference in the ratings of directness, politeness, or in elaboration of the request in the high versus low power condition. The results for directness and politeness are detailed in Tables 1 and 2. Elaboration by drivers ($M=12.92$, $SD=7.89$) was lower, but not significantly lower than passengers ($M=14.03$, $SD=9.23$) ($F=2.45$, $df=342$, $p=.12$).

TABLE 1
Means and Standard Deviations for Directness
by Power and Relationship

	Friend n = 187	Acquaintance n = 157	
Driver n = 189	1.59 (.70)	1.73 (.75)	1.66 (.71)
Passenger n = 155	1.84 (1.00)	1.48 (.73)	1.70 (.92)
	1.72 (.84)	1.64 (.74)	

NOTE: No significant main effects. An interaction effect was significant at the $p < .05$ level. Standard deviations are in parentheses.
(coding from most direct =1 to least direct =5)

Though no interaction effect for power and relationship on directness is hypothesized, an ANOVA tested for the interaction. The ANOVA yielded a significant interaction ($F= 8.15$, $df=1$, $p < .01$) for power and relationship. The data indicate subjects in the passenger and acquaintance condition were the most direct overall. The friend and

driver condition was the next most direct. The passenger and friend condition generated the least direct requests. The pattern is that passengers were more direct with acquaintances than with friends. The opposite effect is found for drivers who were more direct with friends than with acquaintances.

TABLE 2
Means and Standard Deviations for Politeness
by Power and Relationship

	Friend n = 187	Acquaintance n = 157	
Driver n = 189	2.83 (1.84)	2.58 (1.83)	2.70 (1.84)
Passenger n = 155	2.84 (1.61)	3.10 (1.78)	2.94 (1.68)
	2.83 (1.72)	2.78 (1.74)	

NOTE: No significant differences at the $p < .05$ level. Standard deviations are in parentheses (coding from most polite =1 to least polite =5).

Though no interaction effect for power and relationship on politeness is hypothesized, an ANOVA tested for the interaction. The ANOVA showed no significant interaction for power and relationship on the politeness of requests to buckle up.

Additional analyses probed for support of the assumptions among subgroups of the sample. Male and female subject data were separated into groups and ANOVA tests were

run for the dependent variables of politeness, directness, and elaboration in the initial requests. No significant findings emerged from male subjects for any of the dependent variables. However, female subjects showed a pattern of means similar to the overall findings but slightly more pronounced. The sample contains slightly more female (53%) than male (47%) subjects. The study was constructed to focus on the manipulations of power and relationship and not any particular gender differences. The instructions were carefully written to focus on a same sex friend in the situation because of the expected complications in power and relationship mixed gender pairs would involve. However, these data show that the some gender differences in persuasive strategies. The differences may also be due to a weak low power manipulation in this study. That would explain why the findings for directness are opposite what was hypothesized in Hypothesis Two. Similarly, the findings for politeness are opposite what was hypothesized in Hypothesis Three. It also possible that the findings are due to chance since they where not in the hypothesized direction. No differences emerged for elaboration of the requests.

The fifth hypothesis predicts a more direct request, than the initial request, will be used by drivers after they are told the passenger is not buckled up following their initial request. A paired sample t-test shows no significant difference in the directness from the initial ($M=1.66$, $SD=.71$) to the follow up ($M=1.78$, $SD=1.48$) request ($t=-.100$, $df=184$, $p>.10$), indicating there was no change in the directness of the request due to the failure to comply initially.

Hypothesis six predicts more polite requests will be used by passengers (low power) after they are told the driver is not buckled up following their initial request. A paired sample t-test shows an effect opposite what is hypothesized occurred. Differences in

politeness from the initial request to the second request, for those in the passenger condition, moved from more to less polite. Results of the test for 147 pairs were $M=2.91$, $SD=1.68$ in the initial request and $M=3.91$, $SD=1.69$ ($t=-5.96$, $df=146$, $p<.000$) for the second request. Additional paired t-tests show second requests were more elaborate ($M=15.87$, $SD=9.08$) compared with the initial requests ($M=14.24$, $SD=9.27$; $t=-1.75$, $df=146$, $p<.05$), and that the requests moved from more direct initially ($M=1.70$, $SD=.91$) to less direct ($M=2.00$, $SD=1.7$) for the second request ($t=-1.98$, $df=146$, $p<.03$). These data show the strategy by passengers in the second request to be more elaborate but less polite and less direct in their request to get the driver to buckle up. Parts of this approach, increased elaboration and more indirect requests, to persuasion are consistent with other findings for a low power strategy (Kemper and Thissen, 1981).

The differences found in this study for politeness and directness support measurement as separate items. Additional evidence for the separate measurement of politeness and directness is shown in the correlation data. The correlation between politeness and directness in the initial request is $r = -.52$, $p = .00$, a strong negative correlation. In the second requests, no significant correlation exists between politeness and directness ($r = -.08$, $p > .10$). This supports continued measurement of politeness and directness as separate items.

Hypothesis seven predicts that acquaintances (low intimacy) will use more elaboration in second requests compared to friends (high intimacy). A paired t-test found no difference in the elaboration of second requests between subjects in the friend ($M=15.30$, $SD=8.98$) versus acquaintance ($M=15.02$, $SD=8.82$) condition ($df=338$, $p>.05$). An additional t-test was run where the most indirect cases (new directness category six) were removed; still no difference exists in elaboration between the first and second requests for

the relational intimacy condition. Though coders recognized a qualitative difference in 11% of the cases, no statistically significant difference emerged from the analyses whether these cases were included or not.

Additional analyses for the male and female groups provides insight to the lack of overall findings and show some differences based on gender of the subject. The overall finding that passengers (low power condition) were less polite in second requests, compared to the initial request, was true for both male and female subjects. This was opposite what was predicted (Hypothesis six). Other findings examining differences due to the power manipulation showed that females used more polite requests ($M=2.30$, $SD=1.77$) when higher in power (driver) than they did in the low power ($M=2.99$, $SD=1.70$), passenger, condition ($t=2.69$, $df=184$, $p<.01$). Overall no differences were found for elaboration and directness, when power was manipulated; but upon additional analyses, female subjects were more elaborate and less direct in second requests compared to the initial requests. Male subjects showed no differences in elaboration and directness from the first to second request in the analysis of high versus low power. Similar results were found in tests of differences due to the relationship manipulation. Female subjects were more elaborate and less polite in second requests compared to the first. Male subjects showed no differences and the overall findings were not significant. After the initial request, female subjects provided more elaboration in the second request. This is consistent with predictions about low intimacy and low power increasing elaboration.

Hypotheses eight and nine predict differences in the evaluations of campaign slogans on clarity and motivational components constructed from the previously described factor analysis of item evaluations of the slogans. However, the factor structure resulting from the

data is different from what was predicted. The resulting factor structure, with an Potency factor and a Self or Other-directed item, has previously been detailed in the section on Independent Variables. However, while this factor can be labeled and constructed from the data, it remains uninterpretable because it contains a mixture of items hypothesized to load differently. The disconfirmation of the clarity and motivational factors expected to be components of advertising messages makes the resulting factor unclear in relationship to the study. Tests of Potency factor are conducted and reported. Hypothesis eight and nine cannot be tested as hypothesized and are only referenced in relation to the findings of the described factor and item analysis. The tests of the data are still reported though interpretation of the results is difficult. Examination of Potency factor and individual items rated in the study provide relevant data for examination.

Tests of the mean ratings of the Potency factor for the four slogans shows a significant difference in the ratings (see Table 3, higher ratings are more positive evaluations). Subject ratings showed a clear preference for the slogan, "Protect Good Health - Make Sure Everyone is Buckled Up." The "Share a Good Habit" slogan was the next most highly rated. The Law slogan, hypothesized to rate the highest on the expected advertising factor, was rated the lowest on the resulting Potency factor. While the law is well known, focusing on the law in a campaign message is not highly rated on the Potency factor that emerged as important in this study. It appears that linking the message to good health or habits, or the originality of these messages, is stronger than referring to the law. The data suggest that citing or referring to the law as a strategy for increasing seat belt use is not an approach that is likely to be effective, as an overall campaign message, with the target audience. Given that the data show higher rated alternatives, the messages about the law would be least effective

overall. There may be some conditions where these responses may differ. Additional statistical tests, based on the manipulated conditions in the study, were conducted to determine if group preferences differed by condition.

TABLE 3
Potency Factor Means

Factor	Mean	Standard Deviation
Good Health	20.70 ^a	7.30
Habit	17.83 ^b	6.66
Care	14.00 ^c	5.48
Law	13.20 ^d	6.13
n=335		

Values with different superscripts differ at the $p < .05$ level in paired T-test.

Tests were conducted to examine differences for power and relationship for the Potency factor. Differences were found for ratings on the Law slogan only. Passengers, those lower in power, gave higher Potency scores ($M=13.93$, $SD=5.4$) than drivers ($M=12.58$, $SD=5.5$) on an Independent-samples T-Test ($t=2.26$, $p<.03$). This suggests that

the condition, low power, may affect the rating of the slogan and these low power individuals rate the Law slogan higher because it may be one they want to use, given their condition.

TABLE 4
Potency Factor Means by Condition

IV	Mean	Standard Deviation
Power	Law Slogan	
Low (Passenger)	13.93 ^a	5.4
High (Driver)	12.58 ^b	5.5
n=335		

Values with different superscripts differ at the $p < .05$ level in paired T-test.

For the independent variable relationship, differences exist only in the ratings for the Caring slogan. Friends gave higher recall ratings ($M=14.66$, $SD=6.1$) than acquaintances ($M=13.21$, $SD=6.1$) on an Independent-samples T-Test ($t=2.18$, $p=.03$). This suggests that relational intimacy may affect the recall ratings for the Caring slogan, which is the most directed at the other person. While no causality can be inferred from the data, intuitively it appears that the manipulated condition description can affect slogan ratings. Subjects would be predisposed to give higher ratings to a particular slogan because it may be one they are likely to use given the condition description in the study.

Additional support for this assumption was found by analyzing the single item Like for the slogans and conditions. The pattern and significance follow the findings for the Potency factor. Passengers liked the Law slogan ($M=3.99$, $SD=1.94$) more than drivers ($M=3.45$, $SD=1.79$; $t=2.64$, $p<.01$).

TABLE 5

Potency Factor Means by Condition

IV	Mean	Standard Deviation
Relationship	Caring Slogan	
Low (Acquaintance)	13.21 ^a	6.1
High (Friend)	14.66 ^b	6.1
n=335		

Values with different superscripts differ at the $p < .05$ level in paired T-test.

For tests of differences in relational intimacy, friends ($M=3.27$, $SD=1.85$) like the Caring slogan better than acquaintances ($M=2.93$, $SD=1.72$; $t=1.76$, $p<.05$). Again these results indicate that subjects may give higher ratings on liking a particular slogan based on the condition described in the study. The single item of self or Other-directedness was also tested; no differences were found for either the conditions of power or relationship for this item on the four slogans used in this study.

Hypothesis nine predicts that the slogan reminding subjects about the seat belt law

will score the lowest on the motivational factor. No clear motivational factor emerged, as was predicted, from the data. The second factor of particular interest in this study was the single item rating of self or Other-directedness of the slogan. While the means for this item hover around the midpoint of the scale, significant differences occur (see Table 6). The Law slogan is rated significantly more selfish (higher ratings are Other-directed and lower ratings are Self-directed) than two other slogans related to Good Health and forming a Good Habit about buckling up. No difference exists in the ratings of the Law and Show you Care slogans on Other-directedness. The Good Health slogan was rated the highest on this item as well as the previous Potency factor. Since the resulting factor structure did not support what was hypothesized, a review of the ratings on individual items is appropriate. All item means are presented in Table 6.

TABLE 6
Item/Slogan Mean Ratings

Item	Slogan			
(mean/ standard deviation)	<i>Law</i>	<i>Good Habit</i>	<i>Caring</i>	<i>Good Health</i>
Easy to remember	2.25 ^d (1.53)	3.62 ^b (1.86)	2.59 ^c (1.63)	4.26 ^a (1.94)
Like	3.70 ^c (1.88)	4.15 ^b (1.87)	3.12 ^d (1.80)	4.78 ^a (1.88)
Clear	1.86 ^d (1.35)	2.79 ^b (1.73)	2.14 ^c (1.43)	3.49 ^a (1.96)
Positive	3.23 ^a (1.84)	2.48 ^c (1.48)	1.94 ^d (1.17)	2.83 ^b (1.50)
Other- directed	3.98 ^c (2.01)	4.09 ^b (2.01)	3.90 ^c (2.22)	4.38 ^a (1.86)
Informative	2.44 ^d (1.65)	3.61 ^b (1.83)	3.28 ^c (1.84)	3.90 ^a (1.89)
Effective	2.93 ^c (1.77)	3.65 ^b (1.72)	2.88 ^c (1.68)	4.25 ^a (1.85)
n=338				

Row values with different superscripts differ at the $p < .05$ level in paired T-test.
(Results have been recoded so that higher scores are ratings
of other directed and the positive adjective.)

The Good Health slogan scores the highest on most items, supporting this as the preferred slogan. The ratings for the Positive item are particularly interesting. The Law slogan scores highest although the overall means for this item are comparatively low (all below the midpoint of the scale). The low positive scores suggest that none of the slogans were viewed that positively or that the subject matter (reminding others about automotive safety belt use) in general is not seen very positively by the target audience. Other data, previously reported and in the self reports by the subjects, indicate the high regard most people have for safety belt issue. The data in this study shows that the ratings are not as favorable for asking people to request others buckle up. This perceived change in the positive nature of this issue must be recognized because it could effect any campaign using this two-step flow approach.

The differences in the rating of the potential slogans point to a campaign direction aimed at getting the attention of the target audience and serving as a catalyst for increasing discussion about seat belt use. Overall, the item scores for the Good Health slogan are the most positive, indicating that as the best slogan for a campaign to generate requests to buckle the safety belt. The Good Health slogan was most highly rated on the clear, like, easy to remember, informative, effective, and other-directed items. With comparatively high ratings on these characteristics, a slogan tied to overall good health can be an effective campaign message to encourage requests for automotive safety belt use. The Good Habit slogan was the next highest rated; while, not surprisingly, the Law slogan was the most poorly rated and only appropriate in certain conditions. Overall, these findings point to a campaign approach linking reminders of seat belt use to other, positive, health and habit issues.

Hypothesis ten predicts that subjects' willingness to ask others will affect scores on

the likelihood of compliance and sense of obligation ratings of the requests. Subjects were categorized as high or low based on the summed scores on two five point Likert-type items about the willingness to ask other drivers and passengers to buckle up, creating a high-low dichotomy on this independent variable. A median split was used to create the high and low groups. Results of the statistical tests for likelihood of compliance are reported in Table 7 and show no significant differences in the perceived likelihood of compliance based on existing attitudes about willingness to ask. In general, likelihood of compliance was judged to be high in all conditions.

TABLE 7

Means and Standard Deviations for Likelihood of Compliance
in Initial and Second Requests by Ratings of Likelihood of Asking Others

	Likelihood of Asking	
	Low	High
Initial Request n= 321	5.46 (1.37)	5.68 (1.35)
Second Request n= 312	5.74 (1.34)	5.94 (1.37)

NOTE: No significant differences at the $p < .05$ level. Standard deviations are in parentheses.

Additional statistical tests examined the sense of obligation in others as perceived by the subjects. The subjects who rate their likelihood of asking as high report generating a higher sense of obligation rating in the second request (Table 8) compared to the initial request. These data show only a change in second requests from the view of the requestor. The requestors more likely to ask think they generated a request stronger in sense of obligation for the other to comply than those less likely to ask. This suggests that those likely to ask believe they can generate a strong sense of obligation and may be successful

in increasing seat belt use. If the requestor can generate a request that he or she thinks creates a strong sense of obligation in the other, it should result in a high rate of compliance especially given the other directed benefits of this request. The fact that the sense of obligation increases in the second request indicates a perceived change from the perception of the requestor; though no other statistical differences exist, they must think that they have done something to different that makes them believe they have created a greater sense of obligation with the second request.

TABLE 8
Means and Standard Deviations for Sense of Obligation
in Initial and Second Requests by Ratings of Likelihood of Asking Others

	Likelihood of Asking	
	Low	High
Initial Request n= 321	4.94 (1.46)	5.36 (1.43)
Second Request n= 312	5.62 ^a (1.37)	6.01 ^b (1.26)

NOTE: Rows with different superscripts differ at the $p < .05$ level. Standard deviations are in parentheses.

These data show general perceptions by requestors that they can generate a high

likelihood of compliance and sense of obligation in others through their requests. The likelihood of compliance does not differ across the situations presented in this study. The sense of compliance is perceived as slightly higher by those more likely to ask in the second request condition. Overall these data support the utility of this peer pressure approach for raising seat belt use with the target group.

Discussion

Initial Requests

The data in this study do not support the predictions about the main effects of power and relationship on compliance gaining strategies in the test situations. Specifically, the results from tests of hypotheses one, two, three, and four show subjects did not respond as the hypotheses predicted in initial requests. Although the seat belt situation is a routine and daily issue for the users, much like others that have been reported by Roloff and colleagues (Jordan and Roloff, 1990; Roloff and Janiszewski, 1989; Roloff, Janiszewski, McGrath, Burns and Monrai, 1988), this study goes beyond one's personal use and probes for persuasive requests in asking others to buckle up. This changes the characteristics of the request and the data suggest the other directed nature of this situation accounts for the lack of findings in the hypothesized direction. It is likely that the lack of support for the hypotheses is due mainly to the situational differences in asking others to wear seat belt compared to previous work. The result is that the predictions of the persuasive request strategies for directness, politeness, and elaboration used in the manipulated power and relationship situations, were not supported by the data for the automotive seat belt situations tested in this study.

While no main effects were found for politeness, directness, or elaboration of requests for the manipulated obstacles of power and relationship, the data show an interaction effect of power and relationship on directness. This indicates subjects weigh both power and relationship heavily in planning a request strategy in the described situation. This interaction effect for power and relationship shows opposite patterns for drivers and

passengers with friends and acquaintances on the measure of directness. Drivers are more direct with acquaintances and more indirect with friends. The passengers are more direct with friends than with acquaintances. The pattern shows how the two independent variables interact to cause differences in choices of directness of the request. The findings are consistent with earlier explanations of power and intimacy and request type. If drivers are more concerned with the relationship of a friend than an acquaintance, they will be less direct in requests to their friend. If passengers want to be clear to the driver regarding their request, they will be more direct. Subsequent tests show female subjects account for this difference and responded opposite the hypothesized direction. There was no interaction effect for politeness or elaboration found in the analysis. These differences found in the dependent variables support directness and politeness as separate constructs worthy of independent measurement and reporting, but do not support the hypotheses generated in this study.

The nature of this request, a safety request highly beneficial to the other, may be the reason for this focus on relationship and power. The requestor has much less of a personal, direct, physical benefit in the outcome than in other requests tested in the literature. It appears that with the situation (seat belt request) and the coding scheme focusing on the elaboration, directness, and politeness of requests, differences did not exist except among female subjects. In this type of a safety request several of the potential obstacles noted by Gibbs (1986), possession, ability, and permission, are removed or not evident and these might affect the elaboration, politeness, or directness of the requests. These safety requests may require other categories to better reflect the obstacles requestors perceive in this particular situation of a safety request with a high benefit to the other.

The gender differences found in the data were also surprising. The study was

constructed to minimize any gender differences, by specifying same sex pairs in the manipulation, so the focus would be on the obstacles to compliance with the seat belt request. The result of the study reinforce gender differences in communication.

The violations of the predictions for power and relationship and the interaction effect for directness also can be interpreted as showing that subjects either are not using one obstacle or do not perceive the obstacles as they have been manipulated. The stronger case, based on the interaction effect found in the ANOVA, suggests perceptions of both power and relationship in developing a persuasive strategy for female subjects. The data also suggest that the focus on benefit to the other person in this study may explain some of the lack of support for the hypotheses. The overall lack of support for the hypotheses suggest that the theoretical perspective of the obstacle hypothesis, requests are framed to address the single greatest obstacle, is not applicable to the problem of requesting unbuckled persons to wear their automobile safety belt.

This study examined requests of an altruistic nature, with benefits mostly to the other person not the requestor (law compliance in seat belt use benefits the driver in a certain way), different then what has previously been researched; the exchange of more tangible goods or services that benefit the requestor. Without a directly tangible physical benefit for the requestor, the relationship itself may take on additional importance. This would explain the maintenance of politeness and directness from the first to second requests; if the requestor was focused on maintaining the relationship, he or she might hesitate to be more direct and less polite in a second request. Females were even more polite in second requests, a low power strategy application. The description of a situations with a physical presence of another person in a vehicle may also work to put an elevated focus on the relationship.

While the goal of the study was not to focus on the physical proximity of the interactants, the description of the situation did indicate the subject would be in the car for the time it took to get to the theater. Further study should examine the degree to which subjects are in fact weighing both power and relationship considerations in this type of request, with high benefits to the other person and close physical proximity, compared to other requests that generally benefit the self.

Response to Rejection

Another key finding is the lack of a significant difference in the method and form of the request from the initial request to the second request. Subjects were told the other had not complied with the initial request and they had to ask again. This information did not result in a change in the elaboration, directness, or politeness forms of their follow up request. An explanation for the lack of a significant difference between the initial request and the second request is that subjects consider the situations more similar than they do distinct, despite refusal to comply with the initial request. The study expectation was that a change in the situation would change the perceived obstacles and the type of request likely to be used by telling subjects the first request had been ignored. It was expected this manipulation would alter the subject's view of the problem and result in predictable change in the persuasive approach. However, no manipulation check was built into the study to check this view of rejection of the initial request and to ask subjects about their perceptions of the obstacles at various points in the study. Other studies (Roloff, et al., 1988) have examined response to rejection as separate and different from the initial request. Further

study is needed to determine if this explanation for the lack of a change in persuasive strategy between the initial request and the second request is correct.

Another interpretation is that the manipulations in the study were weak. With a weak manipulation, subjects might not perceive any great change in the situation which would require any change in persuasive strategy. This type of request may not require many changes in strategy. The focus in this study is mostly altruistic, or other-directed, requests without an exchange of goods or services. Consequently, subjects may not apply a large amount of cognitive effort in this situation as compared with others studied (ask for money, to borrow class notes: Roloff, et al., 1988). However, observation during data gathering indicates a wide range of time spent forming the requests and the qualitative data show a broad range of responses. Future studies would do well to monitor the time generating the request as a dependent variable perhaps indicative of the amount of cognitive effort put into the situation. The manipulations may be weak, even though situation specifications were repeated in the instructions, and could be improved upon in any additional work.

While the lack of significant findings may be easily explained by saying that situational differences did not cause any change in communication strategy, or that subjects view the problem as a simple issue, the qualitative information on the persuasive problem provides some additional data to consider. The fact that a new coding category had to be added to the second request data because so many subjects (11%) had examples or stories to tell about this issue shows some depth to the problem that would not be gleaned just from a review of the quantitative results. Subjects used personal information that included graphic details and fear appeals, to persuade the other to buckle up. The depth of qualitative information presented by subjects in the second requests varied from very serious and

personal, one's own experience with seat belts in an accident, to more humorous and personal, e.g., "I'm a bad driver and I won't pay your hospital bills if anything happens." It was clear from reviewing the text that these subjects did not feel the need to restate the request to buckle up but focused more on the strategy that would lead to compliance. In second requests that follow immediately from initial requests, subjects may not feel the need to restate a request. The conditions where this takes place may include a request with a high benefit to the other in a situation that is simple and direct. If there is a high benefit to the self, the requestor probably restates the request for clarity and to ensure that there is not a misunderstanding of the request. This restatement issue may reflect a strategy difference based on benefit to the self or the other. Other qualitative information from this study, the increased use of expletives in second requests, supports this interpretation. The requests were reviewed by a coder for the use of expletives and a change from the initial to the second request. In initial requests, only five contained expletives. That number increased by nearly four times to nineteen in the second requests suggesting a strategic change in persuasive strategy from time one to time two. This may be indicative of another consideration, such as force or urgency, the requestor is applying to the situation. While these changes were not evident in the statistical tests of directness, politeness, or elaboration, it is important to note and provides some considerations for interpreting the results of this study. This shows subjects made some adjustments in their requests that are better tracked through semantic and perhaps non-verbal methods than in the coding of text on the variables of politeness, directness, and elaboration used in this study. Reviewing the qualitative and quantitative results suggests the other-directness of this persuasive situation and the lack of a physical, tangible exchange of goods or services between the requestor and the other to be

the likely explanation for deviation from hypothesis predictions. Compared with what has been studied in the past, there is little benefit for the requestor in the seat belt situation, but there is also little cost to the other person. This makes this a very direct and perhaps simple situation. This may limit the number of request options that a requestor considers. The lack of change in directness of requests in the manipulated conditions shows that these mostly indirect requests are conventional in the described situation. This supports Gibbs (1985) position that indirect requests are conventional in certain contexts. The manipulations in this study did not change the context enough to cause a change in the directness of the request.

Slogan Evaluations

Although the hypothesis predictions were not supported by the data, the study holds some other valuable information. The data show some gaps in attitudes and current practices that can be reinforced to change the behaviors. Specifically, the data about persuasive approaches, campaigns, and slogan evaluation show the potential of peer pressure with the target audience. Subjects reported a high willingness to ask others (definitely/probably ask - 61% passenger and 41% driver). They also suggested that they want to be reminded by others if they are not buckled up (64% always/usually want to be reminded by others). The questionnaire data also indicates subjects believe they can influence others and think their requests generate a high likelihood of compliance. The high scores given for the sense of obligation and likelihood of compliance generated by the request suggest that subjects think this approach will work on the target group, their peers. Perhaps the requestors think that because there is so much benefit to the other, they feel a high sense of obligation and/or

likelihood of compliance are generated and there is little strategy needed by them in this situation.

The slogan evaluation ratings themselves show which appeals (Good Health and Habit) will work the best with the target audience, overall, and in which condition the Law approach may be relevant and fitting (passenger, low power). This finding about a Law reference is important because it shows a niche where the Law approach will work. Referencing the law can be effective for passengers to get drivers to buckle up. These data also show the difference between referencing the law when asking someone else to buckle up and forcing widespread compliance by strengthening the existing law. This study found people will use law to get others to buckle up but prefer the current state of secondary enforcement. The Caring slogan was liked best by friends, showing it too has value in encouraging safety belt use in a particular condition. In constructing campaign messages for nondrivers, it is acceptable to suggest they reference the safety belt use law to get drivers to buckle up. Messages for drivers encouraging others should take different approaches, such as indicating you care for a friend. Broader campaign messages, aimed at the young adult target group, should reference safety belt use in the context of overall healthful behavior or changing habits. These themes provide the most universal messages to generate requests to buckle up.

Subjects also suggested which medium, television, is best for delivering messages aimed at encouraging discussion about seat belt use. However other, more precise, secondary media may address particular findings in this study. Print media, through billboards, bumper stickers, flyers, and interior stickers, can provide group targeting. Flyers or billboards with the Good Health theme in or near health clubs, sporting events, or athletic

fields match the theme with the audience. Interior stickers on the driver's or passenger's side of vehicles can remind person's of the appropriate strategy for that position (Caring for driver and Law for passenger). Message targeting is suggested by the data in this study and there is sufficient information from which to direct a campaign aimed at increasing peer reminders about seat belt use among young adults.

One goal of the study was to assess the viability of a campaign to increase automotive safety belt use; the data point to the utility of this approach. One is the gap identified (33%) between the number of subjects who indicate they want to be reminded to buckle up (64%) and the number who currently say they ask others (31%). A media campaign can be directed at raising the number of people who ask others given the expectation, from the data in this study, that there will be high compliance with the request because they are many others who want to be reminded to buckle up. This gap alone provides validation of the approach suggested in this study. Additionally, the sense of obligation and likelihood of compliance the requestors report suggests they believe that this approach will work. Although the sense of obligation and likelihood of compliance were highly correlated ($r=.51$, $p<.01$), they provide value as separate measures. Subjects who gave the highest ratings on sense of obligation ($n=149$) were direct in their requests (90% in the two most direct categories), but used different levels of politeness. One third used the least polite request form, while 62% fell into the two most polite categories. Elaboration of these requests averaged 13 words, near the mean for the entire study. In examining the strategies of the subjects who gave the highest ratings of likelihood of compliance ($n=203$), they showed a similar pattern of directness, with 91% in the two most direct categories, and elaboration (13 word average). The politeness of the requests changed with this group as 5% more of the requests were in

the least polite category, with the requests shifting from the two most polite categories to the least polite category. Subjects who gave their requests a high rating of sense of obligation or likelihood of compliance (or both), were direct in their request, average in elaboration and generally at either of the extremes of politeness. This provides a “profile” of the type of request that subjects rated with a high potential for getting the other to buckle up. This information can be included in advanced campaigns (“When asking another to buckle up, be direct but polite in your request.”) to further enhance compliance. Another part of the study provides data on mass media messages that support encouraging others to wear their seat belts.

The slogan evaluations provide some clear direction on the attractiveness of the campaign slogans to the sample population and hopefully to the target population as well. These differences are important for several reasons. For a slogan to be effective at generating behavioral change, it must be attention getting and memorable. Recall that making the issue of seat belt use more salient for the target group is a way to elicit behavior change (Langer, 1978; Abelson, 1977; Roloff, 1980). Also recall that Boster and Stiff (1984) pointed out the importance of benefit to other in persuasive communication and that the requestor is more likely to attempt different strategies and ask again, if the benefit to the other is high. The focus of other-directedness of this request makes this study stand out from previous work. The results of these slogan ratings support the benefit to the other component in the campaign and tie the seat belt behavior to other life goals (good health). The Good Health slogan is clearly preferred overall by the sample population and this slogan fits with the data on campaigns that are successful in leading to behavior change, in this case increased use of the seat belt.

The approach suggested in this study also parallels Geller's (1989) ABC model for seat belt behavior change. An activator is needed, here it is the mass media message or campaign slogan. This activates the behavior; one person asking another to buckle up. The consequence in this situation is either a consequence or a reward. It's a consequence if the unbuckled person does not comply with the request because they will be asked again (possibly more than twice). The second request contains a much greater likelihood of stories, personal experiences, fear appeals, and the use of expletives to assure compliance. Several of these can be viewed as consequences. However, there can be a reward if the person complies. The reward is the building of the relationship between the two people. This problem can result in a win-win situation without any personal (physical) cost and in a situation in a vehicle where the interactants are likely to be together, in close proximity, for at least a short period of time. The benefit of the approach outlined here compared to Geller's (1989) is the continued reinforcement from others that, over the long run, is more likely to result in long term behavior change at a lower cost than with the external rewards offered in his program. Even with the increased appearance of advanced safety and automatic systems, putting on the safety belt is still the greatest safety feature in a vehicle and the maximum benefits of the seat belt will not be realized until use is increased beyond the current plateau.

The high sense of obligation and likelihood of compliance found in this study, while measured from the perspective of the requestor, support this approach to persuasion. These requestors think that their request will result in compliance by the other. This really is the ultimate goal of the process and in this condition leads to the safety conscious behavior. The next step would be to test various persuasive messages generated to request someone buckle up and acquire rating of sense of obligation and likelihood of compliance from the person

being asked. This additional work would clarify the kind of messages that would make the target audience “Buckle Up” and provide data on the best persuasive approach from the point of view of the other. This would be important data because of the previously identified other-directed nature of this research.

A different study design, with a manipulation check, measures of cognitive complexity in generating the request, and tracking some expected non-verbal differences, could provide additional data on persuasive strategies and conditions for success in persuading the other. The ultimate campaign would go beyond the Good Habit slogan suggested here to a campaign actually reminding people to ask and suggesting successful strategies for the requests. A more realistic study that involves role playing or audio tapes of actual requests could provide valuable data on the non-verbal changes in requests not gleaned from the current study. This could lead to providing additional request information to maximize compliance. The lack of a significant difference found in the initial and second requests for politeness and directness could be a reflection of no verbal change but in reality non verbal aspects may change between the initial and second requests.

The data from this study support previous information about the safety belt law being well known and viewed as a good law that most people support. However, reminding people in the low use target audience about the law is not, generally, a good way to promote buckling up by those who currently don't use their seat belts. However, when the requestor is the passenger, a low power position, the law approach may be beneficial in providing clarity and directness to the request. The reference to the seat belt law may also help give credibility or equalize the perception of situational power from the view of the passenger making the request. The only finding for relationship showed that subjects in the friend

condition preferred the Show you Care- Remind Others slogan more than acquaintances. This is not surprising given the focus on other and the level of the relationship. These findings show message preference can be affected by the condition, in certain instances, and this may be valuable information for targeting messages in the future. Overall, the data in this study show that connecting safety belt use to other healthy behaviors and good habits is much preferred as a campaign strategy.

These slogans may indirectly address some of the reasons for not using seat belts: discomfort, forgetfulness, fear of entrapment, and the risk of an accident (Fhaner and Hane, 1973; 1974) by putting a positive spin on seat belt use and connecting use to other larger issues like overall good health. Given the other, self-report, data on wanting to be reminded to buckle up, it seems reasonable to expect that the right campaign message could positively affect seat belt use through a “two-step flow” approach from media to individual communication. This approach also lets the state maintain a secondary type of enforcement with some assurances that belt use will increase but the choice will be made by the individual. Keeping secondary enforcement averts any criticism or negative affect toward the seat belt issue that can result from moving to primary enforcement.

Is there a broader application to other health and safety issues which benefit society, the self, or the other person? The automotive safety belt issue and the campaign approach outlined in this study may provide an enhancement and catalyst for behavioral change. The data gathered and the approach suggested here follow guidelines of a formative research project outlined by Atkin and Freimuth (1991) that lead to a successful media campaign. Formative research should outline the audience characteristics and provide some pre-production data to guide the campaign (Atkin and Freimuth, 1991). This study tested

persuasive requests within a theoretical framework, provided audience characteristics, profiled subject request styles, and tested some slogans to determine a preference. Subjects also provided suggestions for media choices in delivering the message. Although the data do not support hypotheses generated by the theory, the findings contribute to the literature and provide much of the detail of a formative research project. The study addresses issues aimed at changing individual behavior: increased interpersonal communication and self-awareness that increases cognitive awareness (Roloff, 1980), and specifically targets a group of low users. The data identifies a gap in the perceptions that others (peers) expect me to buckle up. The campaign approach suggested here can generate communication that may change the perceptions of peer use and raise expectations of seat belt use among the target group. All these make for a viable, cost effective, approach to increased seat belt use with the expectation that the change will be long lasting. The peer reminder approach suggested here takes advantage of the two-step flow of mass media and interpersonal communication and provides the format applicable for increasing automotive safety belt use. Also recall that children exert an upward influence (Wagenaar and Webster, 1986) on overall use rates except with the target group, young adults. Think how effective adult peer pressure and use might be as a persuasive strategy with a low user group. If the perception of use among college students, a subset of the young adult target audience, can be raised it could filter into the larger population of the young adult target group encouraging and reinforcing seat belt use. The data in this study suggests this possibility and supports the generalizability of the data to the larger target audience of young adults.

Other media campaigns, see Rice and Atkin (1991) for a review, have documented positive changes in affect, education, and behavior among targeted groups. These campaigns

are examples of the potential of mass media, and in some cases interpersonal communication, to affect change. The situation outlined in this study, high awareness of the law, a gap between self-report of wants and current behaviors, several viable message slogan choices, media choices recommended by the target audience, and close proximity of the interactants, should lead to high communication and enhance the success of this “two step flow” approach. This may be the ideal condition for mass media and interpersonal communication to work together to affect positive change. The approach presented here can be used to guide a campaign, and is worthy of a field test, in a controlled experiment of comparable groups or in a pre-test and post-test situation, to quantify results. This would be the next logical step based on the findings in this work.

APPENDIX A

TABLE A-1

Characteristics of the Subject Sample

Gender	Female - 53%	Male - 47%		
Age (X =19.25) - Percent of Sample	18 - 33%	19 - 29%	20- 13%	21 - 12%
Licensed driver	Yes - 97%			
State	Michigan - 90%	Other - 10%		

TABLE A-2a

Factor Analysis Correlation Matrix							
	CLEAR	EASY	EFF	INFO	LIKE	POS	OTHER
CLEAR	1.00000						
EASY	.52436	1.00000					
EFF	.42118	.53094	1.00000				
INFO	.36694	.38550	.59072	1.00000			
LIKE	.25948	.48161	.55155	.37554	1.00000		
POS	.36792	.27366	.35243	.32135	.44635	1.00000	
OTHER	-.25331	-.33567	-.30784	-.20030	-.22708	-.01539	1.00000

TABLE A-2b

Factor Analysis Extraction Principal Components					
Variable	Communality *	Factor	Eigenvalue	Pct of Var	Cum Pct
CLEAR	1.00000 *	1	3.24435	46.3	46.3
EASY	1.00000 *	2	1.02672	14.7	61.0
EFF	1.00000 *	3	.76438	10.9	71.9
INFO	1.00000 *	4	.69737	10.0	81.9
LIKE	1.00000 *	5	.57847	8.3	90.2
POS	1.00000 *	6	.36081	5.2	95.3
OTHER	1.00000 *	7	.32790	4.7	100.0

PC extracted 2 factors.

Factor Matrix:

	Factor 1	Factor 2
EFF	.81932	-.01441
EASY	.76253	-.20579
LIKE	.71971	.19351
INFO	.69953	.08616
CLEAR	.67418	-.06775
POS	.57848	.60284
OTHER	-.44173	.75583

Final Statistics:

Variable	Communality *	Factor	Eigenvalue	Pct of Var	Cum Pct
	*				
CLEAR	.45911 *	1	3.24435	46.3	46.3
EASY	.62381 *	2	1.02672	14.7	61.0
EFF	.67149 *				
INFO	.49676 *				
LIKE	.55543 *				
POS	.69806 *				
OTHER	.76641 *				

APPENDIX B

COMMUNICATION RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE**INSTRUCTIONS**

The attached survey asks you for your responses to questions and several situations. Please answer all questions as you believe you would respond in the described context. Your responses will remain confidential and will be analyzed as a representative college-age group. Additional items ask for information and some general opinions on related issues.

Please circle, check, or write in the your answers on the forms. There are no right or wrong answers, just your opinions. For all references to automotive safety belt use assume full and proper use of the safety system (lap and shoulder belts if applicable) as instructed in the owners manual.

Your instructor has gratefully offered class time for your participation and will provide you with extra credit. The entire survey should take 15 to 20 minutes. Thank You for your participation. You can turn your survey over when completed and someone will pick it up.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. Age _____
 2. Sex: Female [] Male []
 3. Do you currently have a valid driver's license? YES NO
 - 3a. From which state or nation? _____
 4. In 1985, Michigan passed a law requiring safety belt use. What's your opinion of this law?
- | | | | | |
|-----------|----------|------------|----------|----------|
| VERY MUCH | SOMEWHAT | | SOMEWHAT | STRONGLY |
| IN FAVOR | IN FAVOR | IN BETWEEN | OPPOSE | OPPOSE |
5. How strictly do you think the safety belt law should be enforced?
- | | | | | |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|--------|
| VERY | SOMEWHAT | AS IT IS | LESS | NOT AT |
| STRICTLY | STRICTLY | NOW | STRICTLY | ALL |
6. When driving, how often do you ask unbuckled passengers to buckle up?
- | | | | | |
|--------|-------|-----------|--------|-------|
| ALWAYS | OFTEN | SOMETIMES | SELDOM | NEVER |
|--------|-------|-----------|--------|-------|
7. When you're a passenger, how often do you ask an unbuckled driver to buckle up?
- | | | | | |
|--------|-------|-----------|--------|-------|
| ALWAYS | OFTEN | SOMETIMES | SELDOM | NEVER |
|--------|-------|-----------|--------|-------|
8. Do you think unbuckled passengers want to be reminded to buckle up?
- | | | | |
|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| MOST OF THEM | SOME OF THEM | A FEW OF THEM | NONE OF THEM |
|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
9. Do you think unbuckled drivers want to be reminded to buckle up?
- | | | | |
|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| MOST OF THEM | SOME OF THEM | A FEW OF THEM | NONE OF THEM |
|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
10. If you are unbuckled, do you want someone to remind you to buckle up?
- | | | | | |
|--------|---------|-----------|--------|-------|
| ALWAYS | USUALLY | SOMETIMES | SELDOM | NEVER |
|--------|---------|-----------|--------|-------|

Please respond to the following statements.

11. **Safety belts significantly reduce the severity of injuries in accidents.**

STRONGLY AGREE AGREE NEUTRAL DISAGREE STRONGLY DISAGREE

12. How important are the following reasons for wearing a safety belt?

Circle (1) Very Important, (2) Important, (3) Somewhat Important or (4) Not Important:

- | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. Because I feel safer when buckled. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. Because I'm used to buckling up now. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. Because the law requires seat belt use. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| d. Because I'm worried about being in an accident. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| e. Because others expect me to buckle up. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

13. Would you ever ask a passenger in the car you're driving to buckle up his/her seat belt before you drive away?

DEFINITELY PROBABLY POSSIBLY NO

14. Would you ever ask a driver in the car you're riding in to buckle up his/her safety belt before driving away?

DEFINITELY PROBABLY POSSIBLY NO

15. How much influence over a passenger's safety belt use do you have as the driver of the car?

A LOT OF INFLUENCE SOME INFLUENCE A LITTLE INFLUENCE NOT MUCH INFLUENCE NO INFLUENCE

16. How much influence over the driver's safety belt use do you have as the passenger of the car?

A LOT OF SOME A LITTLE NOT MUCH NO
INFLUENCE INFLUENCE INFLUENCE INFLUENCE INFLUENCE

17. If you were going to use seat belts more often, how helpful would it be to have reminders in the media you see daily?

VERY HELPFUL SOMEWHAT HELPFUL A LITTLE HELPFUL NOT HELPFUL

Imagine that you are enrolled in a Humanities course that counts toward your general studies requirement. One way to pick-up extra credit for the course is to view, and write a short critique, of a foreign film shown at a theater across town. The instructor encourages viewing and discussing the film with a classmate as a way to enhance understanding and generate ideas. With this in mind, you make arrangements with a same sex **friend/acquaintance** from class to see the film.

The day of the film arrives and you drive over to pick-up your **friend/acquaintance**. You are buckled in and your classmate gets in and says "Let's go!" but does not put on his/her seat belt. At this time you are going to request that he/she "Buckle Up!". In the space below, write **the exact words** you would say to request that your **friend/acquaintance** put on the seat belt.

(After completing this part, go on to the next page.)

Thinking about how you asked your **friend/acquaintance** to wear his/her seat belt, rate your request on the following scales.

How much do you think your request generates a sense of obligation in the other person?

No **Strong**
obligation **obligation**

How likely is it that this person would comply with your request to wear a seat belt in this situation?

No **Certain**
likelihood **likelihood**
of compliance **of compliance**

Imagine that you are enrolled in a Humanities course that counts toward your general studies requirement. One way to pick-up extra credit for the course is to view, and write a short critique, of a foreign film shown at a theater across town. The instructor encourages viewing and discussing the film with a classmate as a way to enhance understanding and generate ideas. With this in mind, you make arrangements with a same sex **friend/acquaintance** from class to see the film.

The day of the film arrives and your **friend/acquaintance** arrives to pick you up. You get in the front seat and buckle your seat belt. Your **friend/acquaintance** says "Let's go!" but he/she does not have on a seat belt. At this time you are going to request that he/she "Buckle Up!". In the space below, write **the exact words** you would say to request that your **friend/acquaintance** put on the seat belt.

(After completing this part, go on to the next page.)

For whatever reason your **friend/acquaintance** did not put on his/her seat belt when you asked. You are willing to try again to persuade him/her to "Buckle Up!". In the space below, write **the exact words** you would say now to request that your **friend/acquaintance** put on the seat belt.

(After completing this part, go on to the next page.)

Thinking about your second request to your **friend/acquaintance** to wear his/her seat belt, rate your request on the following scales.

How much do you think your request generates a sense of obligation in the other person?

No		Strong
obligation	_ _ _ _ _	obligation

How likely is it that this person would comply with your request to wear a seat belt in this situation?

No		Certain
likelihood		likelihood
of compliance	_ _ _ _ _	of compliance

The next several pages will ask for your evaluations of various messages that can be used to encourage people to request that others who are not buckled up wear their seat belts. Please read each message and evaluate it on the scales provided then move to the next page.

MAKE SURE EVERYONE IS BUCKLED UP - IT'S THE LAW

Easy to remember	____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____	Not easy to remember
Dislike	____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____	Like
Clear	____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____	Unclear
Negative	____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____	Positive
Self- directed	____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____	Other- directed
Informative	____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____	Uninformative
Effective	____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____	Ineffective

SHOW YOU CARE - REMIND OTHERS TO BUCKLE UP

Easy to
remember

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

Not easy
to remember

Dislike

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

Like

Clear

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

Unclear

Negative

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

Positive

Self-
directed

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

Other-
directed

Informative

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

Uninformative

Effective

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___

Ineffective

SHARE A GOOD HABIT - REMIND OTHERS TO BUCKLE UP

Easy to
remember

— — — — —

Not easy
to remember

Dislike

— — — — —

Like

Clear

— — — — —

Unclear

Negative

— — — — —

Positive

Self-
directed

— — — — —

Other-
directed

Informative

— — — — —

Uninformative

Effective

— — — — —

Ineffective

PROTECT GOOD HEALTH - MAKE SURE EVERYONE IS BUCKLED UP

Easy to
remember

— — — — —

Not easy
to remember

Dislike

— — — — —

Like

Clear

— — — — —

Unclear

Negative

— — — — —

Positive

Self-
directed

— — — — —

Other-
directed

Informative

— — — — —

Uninformative

Effective

— — — — —

Ineffective

Finally, messages about seat belt use targeted at people like you can be delivered through a variety of media. If the goal is to increase seat belt use, finding the media that best allows for encouraging interpersonal messages about buckling up is important. Below are listed a variety of ways messages about seat belt use can be delivered. Please check a primary and secondary media that you think will be most effective for messages about seat belt use to people like you.

Primary Media (*check one*)

television ads _____ radio ads _____ bumper stickers _____
 billboards _____ buttons _____ newspaper ads _____
 magazine ads _____ posters _____
 reminder stickers inside the car _____

Secondary Media (*check one*)

television ads _____ radio ads _____ bumper stickers _____
 billboards _____ buttons _____ newspaper ads _____
 magazine ads _____ posters _____
 reminder stickers inside the car _____

This completes the questionnaire. Thank you for your time!
 Please turn your completed questionnaire into your instructor.

APPENDIX C

POLITENESS

(Comparative ratings from most to least polite)

Please + imperative (most polite)

Should you + imperative

Did you + imperative

Do you think that you + imperative

You should + imperative

Should + need assertion

Don't you think you + need assertion (Neutral)

Need assertion

Why don't you + imperative

Don't you think + imperative

I think + need assertion

I think you + imperative

Do + need assertion

Do you think + need assertion

Imperative only (least polite)

DIRECTNESS

(Comparative ratings from most to least direct)

Imperative only (most direct)

You should + imperative

Why don't you + imperative

Don't you think you + imperative

Do you think that you + imperative

Please + imperative

I think you + imperative

(neutral)

Did you + imperative

Should + need assertion

Should you + imperative

Don't you think + need assertion

Do + need assertion

Need assertion only

Do you think + need assertion

I think + need assertion

(From Kemper & Thissen, 1981)

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