INTERNET FILTERS IN LIBRARIES:
AN ANALYSIS OF PREDICTOR VARIABLES OF WILLINGNESS TO CENSOR

by

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They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety
deserve neither liberty nor safety.

- Benjamin Franklin
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES.............................................................................x
ABSTRACT......................................................................................xi

Chapter

1 INTRODUCTION.............................................................................1

Background.....................................................................................1
Legislative Attempts at Finding a Balance........................................5
Creating a Balance.........................................................................9
History of Internet Filters...............................................................14
Conclusion....................................................................................18

2 LITERATURE REVIEW.................................................................19

The Issue of Pornography and Censorship.....................................19

Pornography and the Internet..........................................................20
Three Distinct Views of Pornography.............................................22

Variables Constant within a Person................................................24

Age.................................................................................................24
Gender............................................................................................27
Education.......................................................................................28
Political Affiliation.........................................................................30
Commitment to General Democratic Principles..............................31
Political Knowledge........................................................................32

Variables Specific to the Situation..................................................32

Self-Knowledge and Knowledge of the Issues..............................33
Internet Use.....................................................................................34
Public Library Use..........................................................................35
Pornography Use............................................................................35
Children........................................................................................36
4 RESULTS...........................................................................................................63

Hypotheses and Research Questions...............................................................63

Hypothesis 1.................................................................................................63
Hypothesis 2.................................................................................................63
Hypothesis 3.................................................................................................64
Hypothesis 4.................................................................................................64
Hypothesis 5.................................................................................................64
Hypothesis 6.................................................................................................64
Hypothesis 7.................................................................................................64
Hypothesis 8.................................................................................................69
Hypothesis 9.................................................................................................69
Hypothesis 10...............................................................................................70
Research Question 1....................................................................................71
Research Question 2....................................................................................71
Research Question 3....................................................................................71
Research Question 4....................................................................................72
Research Question 5....................................................................................72
Research Question 6....................................................................................72
Research Question 7....................................................................................72
Research Question 8....................................................................................73
Research Question 9....................................................................................73
Research Question 10.................................................................................73
Research Question 11a...............................................................................73
Research Question 11b...............................................................................74
Research Question 12...............................................................................74
Research Question 13...............................................................................74
Research Question 14...............................................................................74

5 Discussion......................................................................................................78

Variables Inherent within a Person...............................................................79

Hypothesis 1.................................................................................................79
Hypothesis 2.................................................................................................79
Hypothesis 3.................................................................................................80
Hypothesis 4.................................................................................................81
Hypothesis 5.................................................................................................81
Hypothesis 6.................................................................................................82

Variables Specific to the Situation.................................................................82

Research Question 1....................................................................................82
Research Question 2....................................................................................83
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table Number</th>
<th>Table Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>The Sample: Descriptive Statistics</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Support for Internet Filters Scale</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Third-Person Perception Scale</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Third-Person Perception Descriptive Statistics</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Self-Perceived Knowledge Scale</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>Standing Decision Democratic Principles Scale</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Modified Knowledge Index</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>Knowledge of the Issue</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Pearson Correlations: Among the Variables of the Study</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Pearson Correlations: Third-Person Effects on Support for Library Internet Filters by Framing Condition</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Analysis of Research Question 13</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>Percentage of Respondents who Answered Each Actual Issue-Knowledge Question</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>Number of Actual Issue-Knowledge Questions Answered by Respondents</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.1</td>
<td>Breakdown of Questionnaire Versions</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

Whether or not Internet filters should be required in public libraries is a complicated issue because of the conflicting interests of protecting children and protecting first amendment rights. This thesis shows that creating a balance between these competing values is influenced by many factors but overall, those characteristics inherent within a person are the most influential. News framing had the next strongest impact followed by media use and finally those variables specific to the situation of Internet filters in public libraries.

The third-person effect was also examined in this thesis. In addition to the traditional negative effect of media content, this thesis examined the third-person effect in terms of positive effects. Additionally, this study examined the perceived effect of not only the medium but government regulations of that medium. The results showed that regardless of positive or negative effects of Internet pornography or the regulation of such content, people tend to perceive others as being more effected than themselves.
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

In today's technologically changing climate the advent of new media has broadened the scope of what is protected by the First Amendment. At the same time, the ease with which information can be accessed has created a pathway for objectionable material to fall easily into the hands of children. Because of this, America has been faced with the need to create a compromise between these two important values. Creating a balance between protecting the freedom of speech and protecting children from objectionable material is only possible with a compromise from at least one side. This study seeks to reveal the variables that influence an individual's decision when asked to create a balance between these two value-based issues.

Background

Objectionable content is easily accessed by youth in today's society. Children can be exposed to objectionable content through virtually any type of media use, such as listening to song lyrics by pop star Eminem or watching a televised event such as Janet Jackson's "costume failure" during the 2004 Super Bowl. One medium that has created a lot of concern is the Internet. Parents, government officials, and other adults argue that Internet pornography and other objectionable online material are too easily accessible to
the youth of America (Banks, 1998; Powell, 2000; Swartz, 2003). Although it is virtually impossible to keep this content from children at all times, it is possible to implement control in settings such as public schools and libraries. Unfortunately, the desire to protect children has the potential to compromise the First Amendment rights of adults.

Freedom of speech is one of our inherent rights as Americans. This right, made official in 1791 with the First Amendment to the Constitution, is arguably one of the most important and valued rights of Americans. This can be seen by the multitude of literature (e.g. Gillmor, Barron, & Simon, 1998; Marcus et al., 1995; Sullivan, Piereson, & Marcus, 1982) and court cases (e.g. Brandenburg v. Ohio, 1969; Hurley v. Irish-American Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Group of Boston, 1995; Schenck v. U.S., 1919; U.S. v. American Library Association, 2003; Wooley v. Maynard, 1977) addressing this right. Throughout history Americans have fought to maintain this freedom, which includes not only the right to speak but also the right to have access to a broad range of information and entertainment. In most circumstances, restrictions cannot be placed upon speech in order to block someone from exposure to that speech.

Although the First Amendment might appear to imply that every aspect of speech should be protected, that right does conflict with other important social goals. It is here where the issues of First Amendment rights and the protection of children intersect. On June 23, 2003 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the Children's Internet Protect Act (CIPA) is constitutional (U.S. v. American Library Association Inc., 2003). This act requires public libraries and schools to place Internet filters on their computers with access to the Internet in order to receive government funding to supplement the costs of
the new technologies. Although its critics charge that the CIPA might compromise the
First Amendment rights of adults, the U.S. Supreme Court has deemed it constitutional
because adults can request that the filter be disabled. Supporters of the CIPA argue that it
is a small price to pay to protect children from the harms of objectionable material on the
Internet.

Public opinion about how to create a balance between these issues is stratified
(Banks, 1998; Willems, 1998). One of the reasons for this is that the situation asks
people to make a decision between two values. This is arguably an impossible decision
for some, while for others protecting one over the other might seem like an easy choice.
Regardless of which is viewed to be more valuable, either decision potentially brings
about both negative and positive consequences. So how are people able to make a
decision?

The purpose of this study is to attempt to answer the question: what influences
people when they are trying to determine a balance between these two issues? Protecting
children from objectionable material and protecting First Amendment rights are ideal
issues to place on either side of this dichotomy because each issue alone is viewed
favorably. But what happens when a person is forced to balance these competing
interests? How do people make this decision?

It is important to learn what predicts specific censorship attitudes because it leads
to understanding why people support censorship in the first place (see e.g. Cowan, 1992;
Lambe, 2002; Rojas, Shah, & Faber, 1996; Salwen & Dupagne, 2001; Thompson, 1995).
If we can understand what influences people in their support for censorship, it will begin
to shed light on how people justify regulating civil liberties. Answering questions such as this has practical implications for both sides of the issue. It can assist educational programs designed to inform parents and their children about perceived harms of objectionable content. It can assist these programs by identifying characteristics of parents who do not take precautions to protect their children from objectionable content. The programs can then target these parents specifically. It can also provide insight for individuals and organizations attempting to protect First Amendment rights by creating a profile of the type of individual likely to support restrictions on the freedom of speech. Both sides can also use this information to create propaganda countering the opposing view. Finally, and possibly the most important, gaining knowledge concerning the freedom of speech and new technologies is an integral part of redefining the boundaries of the law so that it continues to apply to our technologically changing society.

This study examines four categories of variables that might influence people when they are trying to determine whether or not they support Internet filters in libraries. The first set of variables is that which is constant within a person, such as gender and age. The second category is situation-specific to the issue of Internet filters. Some of the variables examined within this category are: the amount of public library use, the number of children a person has, whether or not a person has home Internet access, and whether or not people’s perceptions of the effects of pornography and censorship (on both themselves and others) influence their opinions of Internet filters. Media use is the third category. Variables within this category include television use and Internet use. News framing of the issue is the final category. Participants received one of two fabricated
articles; one framed the issue of Internet filters as an issue of protecting children from objectionable content while the other framed it as a free speech issue.

This study is grounded in previous literature pertaining to censorship attitudes. As this area of research is still being developed, this study helps to further the knowledge in this area.

**Legislative Attempts at Finding a Balance**

For almost eight years, Congress has been trying to find a balance between protecting children from objectionable material on the Internet while still protecting the First Amendment rights of adults in this new medium. Although three attempts have been made, tension still exists between the two sides of the issue. The Communications Decency Act (CDA), enacted as part of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, was the first attempt made by Congress to solve the dilemma. The CDA criminally prohibited two actions: (1) knowingly transmitting, through a telecommunications device, “obscene or indecent” communication to any recipient under 18 years of age; and (2) purposefully using an interactive computer service to send “patently offensive” material to minors as measured by “contemporary community standards.” If a person violated the act, they faced sanctions including up to two years in prison. As could be expected, library employees were worried that if they allowed full access of the Internet in libraries, they too could be penalized for knowingly allowing minors access to objectionable material. As more people turned to local libraries for access to the Internet, the possibility of this type of conflict became more probable. Because of this, some public libraries took the initiative to begin filtering. Banks (1998), author of many books and articles concerning
the Internet, explains that one of the arguments librarians made for this early implementation of filters was that it is preferable to be liable for infringing on freedom of speech rather than liable for the effects of exposure to objectionable content.

Not long after the CDA was passed, two separate cases were filed challenging its constitutionality. Organizations and individuals who were involved in the computer and communication industries and citizens groups brought these cases. The case against the CDA quickly made its way to the Supreme Court where it was found unconstitutional. The CDA abridged the First Amendment because the restrictions on speech could not be properly analyzed as regulations of the “time, place, and manner of speech.” The act needed to be narrowly tailored to identify specific criteria for situations where restrictions would be constitutional. As it was, the act was too broad and ambiguous (Reno v. ACLU, 1997).

Under the Clinton administration, the Child Online Protection Act (COPA) was created as a second attempt to regulate the accessibility of objectionable Internet content to minors. COPA prohibited any person from knowingly making harmful communication available to minors. COPA specified “harmful material” to include communication that is considered obscene when applying “contemporary community standards” or “offensive with respect to minors” (Ashcroft v. ACLU, 2002).

A group of organizations filed suit claiming that COPA was unconstitutional. The organizations that filed were afraid that they would be prosecuted under COPA on the ground that the organizations’ websites contained some sexually oriented material that could be construed as “harmful to minors” in some communities. A U.S. District
Court decided that relying on community standards was unacceptable due to its broadness when identifying material that should be banned from the World Wide Web due to possible harm to minors (Ashcroft v. ACLU, 2002).

The case went to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit who affirmed the District Court’s decision that COPA’s reliance on community standards to identify material harmful to minors did not meet the specific criteria of the First Amendment. The case was remanded on the ground that using community standards to identify material harmful to minors “does not by itself render the statute substantially overbroad for purposes of the First Amendment” (Ashcroft v. ACLU, 2002).

The Appeals Court, after examining the case a second time, affirmed the original judgment of the District Court stating that although COPA is somewhat more narrow in scope than the CDA, it still has portions that are inconsistent with the Constitution. Along with being considerably broad, COPA does not provide the “least restrictive” means of protecting children from objectionable content (Ashcroft v. ACLU, 2002).

On March 2, 2004 the Supreme Court agreed to hear an appeal of the case against COPA. On June 29, 2004 the Supreme Court affirmed the decision of the Court of Appeals, which upholds the District Court’s decision that COPA does not meet the standards of the First Amendment (Ashcroft v. ACLU, 2004).

It was not until June 23, 2003 that the Supreme Court finally approved a legislative remedy that attempts to balance these competing interests. Under the Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA), public libraries and public K-12 schools are required to equip computers with Internet filters in order to receive government funding
that assists with the cost of this technology. Within the Supreme Court ruling a stipulation was placed in order to maintain adults’ First Amendment rights. If an adult requests, librarians must either override the filter for a particular site or disable the filter completely.

A concern that has not yet been addressed in court is what if an adult feels uncomfortable requesting that the filter be disabled? The CIPA requires adult library users to explicitly request that filters be removed. Not all users might be comfortable making such a request; hence, this might place some users in an awkward position because it requires them to identify themselves as a user of material that is possibly considered objectionable. If a situation such as this occurs, then the adult’s right to view the information might be compromised. The Supreme Court’s approval that the regulation is constitutional was made despite many protests from librarians and First Amendment activists who argue that regardless of the allowance for the filters to be disabled, the regulation still amounts to censorship (Swartz, 2003).

The CIPA also has negative implications on the “digital divide,” the gap that has separated the technologically savvy from those who do not have exposure or access to the new technologies. This divide is characterized as both an economic and racial separation. The government is forcing libraries to choose between funding and censorship. This is especially critical for those libraries in areas of poverty and isolation that cannot provide access to technology unless they receive government support. It is these areas where fewer people have home Internet access and therefore rely on public libraries for access.
It is these libraries that are not really given the choice of whether or not to implement filters on their computers (Haycock & Associates Inc., 2001).

Many adults still do not have access to the Internet in their homes but can obtain free access through public libraries. In fact, in 2001 49.5% of U.S. households did not have access to the Internet; moreover, the majority of those households were African-American and Hispanic (United States National Telecommunications and Information Administration, 2001). Of all Americans who use the Internet, 10% do so through their local libraries. Public libraries might be one of the only ways some adults have access to information on the Internet (Swartz, 2003).

Inequalities between gender, race, and socioeconomic classes exist in countless aspects of society. Livingstone (2003), author and professor, discusses how even limited access is a means to widening the digital divide. Internet filters are therefore contributing to the digital divide by subjecting those adults and children who are only able to access the Internet through libraries to the limitations of Internet filters.

Creating a Balance

Although there are many arguments as to why the CIPA should be revoked, it is important to acknowledge that there are many groups and individuals who are in favor of Internet filters in libraries. Some of these opinions are even held by librarians themselves. The majority of these arguments circle around the importance of protecting children from the ills of the Internet. Internet pornography is viewed as being harmful to children; therefore, this type of content should be filtered out in order to protect them.
Protecting those who allow access to the Internet is another argument made by librarians and other proponents of Internet filters. Some proponents hold the belief that using filters is a preventative action against potential lawsuits that can be filed against those employed in a library (Banks, 1998). The argument is: if libraries are not preventing access to objectionable material then someone can claim that libraries are allowing access to this type of content. According to Banks, posting rules about Internet use in the library is not enough. Some deviant users will still try to access inappropriate material and even leave it visible for other library patrons to view. Banks explains that filtering in libraries is just another way that librarians are able to choose library materials. The argument is that libraries do not carry every book and periodical ever published; therefore, libraries should not be required to offer access to every website and newsgroup on the Internet (Willems, 1998).

Other proponents for Internet filters in libraries still argue that current filtering systems are not the best choice. They argue that a system that allows different levels of access would be optimal. Author and professor, Willems (1998) states that some filter owners have attempted to use bar codes to link a particular level of access to a particular patron. This feature has allowed for the protection of minors from objectionable material while still allowing adults the freedom of unlimited or at least less-limited access to information.

Despite the Supreme Court's affirmation of the CIPA's constitutionality, there are many people who disagree. The ACLU, Internet site creators, librarians and other library employees are just some of the groups opposed to the CIPA. Their claim is that the CIPA
is unconstitutional in its current form. It is important to note that many of those opposed to the CIPA do not oppose Internet regulations in public libraries entirely; they specify that certain aspects of the CIPA do not coincide with constitutional law. Most of the arguments do agree that Internet filters are the problem. They argue that filters are a poor solution to the dilemma when it comes to protecting children from objectionable material in public libraries.

Some opponents of Internet filters argue that for most libraries, pornographic content has never been a part of the criteria for accepting or rejecting material for the library's collection. Because of this, very few libraries have had to define what they consider to be pornographic, therefore, allowing a filtering device to set the guidelines leaves the librarian out of the decision making process (Dority, 1999; Willems, 1998).

Allowing someone (or something) to replace librarians when it comes to making decisions about library content is against some of the core values held by librarians. This is not the only value that is compromised by using filters. Willems (1998) states that one of the fundamental values of public libraries is: “open access to information for all” (p.58). Dority (1999), author and Executive Director of the Washington Coalition Against Censorship, affirms this statement. She explains that libraries have always stood for more access to information, not less. While it is financially and spatially impossible to carry every book, magazine, or other publication, full Internet access does not cost more or take up more space than limited access. By installing filters on the Internet in libraries, library employees are weakening their stand on the core value of access to information for all.
Haycock and Associates Inc. (2001) and Wolinsky (2001) argue that the CIPA is actually forcing librarians to go against the fundamental values held by their institution. They claim that the government is subsidizing commercial filtering companies by either forcing or strongly urging libraries to buy filtering technology. They also discuss the fact that filtering companies are not really concerned with the protection of youth, rather they design the filters less for protection and mainly for the concern of monetary profit.

Wolinsky (2001), author and Technology Director of the Online Internet Institute, argues that over-filtering content is really a cost-cutting shortcut.

Other opponents of filtering argue less about the fault of those who are implementing the filters and more about the benefits of not having filters in place. By filtering out sexual content, sexual speech that is beneficial is filtered out as well. It is believed that some types of sexual speech might have value for adults as well as youth. This type of sexual speech might include information on safe sex, birth control, and artistic nude images. Supporters of this argument also claim that a government mandate for filters is in breach of the First Amendment. They argue this on the ground that the First Amendment forbids the government from censoring ideas simply because it considers them bad or dangerous, rather, the content must actually harm someone. Heins (1998), award winning author and former First Amendment lawyer for the ACLU, points out that speech can only be restricted in instances where it directly causes discrete "provable harm." There is no concrete evidence that constitutionally protected sexual speech harms youth.
Others argue that although protecting children is important, it is not worth compromising one of America's most important and valued civil liberties, the freedom of speech. If Internet filters are imposed on computers in libraries, then adults are only able to access material appropriate for children. Willems (1998) argues that Internet filters are ultimately the voice of one view attempting to affect society by determining what is good, bad, acceptable, and unacceptable information.

One of the overarching arguments held by almost all of those opposed to Internet filters is that they filter out legitimate websites as well as those pornographic in nature. Over-filtering is a characteristic of virtually every filter currently on the market (Willems, 1998, Wolinsky, 2001). The argument is that until filters are designed to be more selective, they should not be mandatory. Swartz (2003) discusses how librarians and civil liberties groups contend that filters are a form of censorship that block a vast amount of valuable information along with pornography. Along these same lines, there is another argument that claims that even with Internet filters in place, a substantial portion of pornographic content still gets through to the user. A study, conducted by communication researcher Hunter (2000) tested the effectiveness of four popular filters and found that not only did the filters let through 25% of the objectionable material but they also over-blocked 21% of non-objectionable material.

In order to create a better understanding of why filters over- and under-block content, the next section explains the evolution of the different types of filtering devices and how they function.
History of Internet Filters

The next few paragraphs provide a brief explanation of Internet filters and how some of the more common filters function. Wolinsky (2001) notes that more people would be against Internet filters if they knew how they worked and how unreliable they are.

Filters are software devices that are designed to be an intermediary between the Internet user and Internet content (www.internet-filters.net, retrieved January 3, 2004). They have the ability to prevent access to certain areas of the Internet based on predetermined settings. Many people who use Internet filters are unfamiliar with how they actually work.

One of the earliest Internet filtering devices is based upon a “self-rating” system where online publishers rate their own sites. William Leto (2003), the coordinator for Project Interconnect (an organization dedicated to helping institutions gain access to telecommunication services) explains that this type of rating system depends on webmasters embedding the rating within the design of their web pages. Not surprisingly, filtering companies soon found it impossible to persuade the majority of online publishers to personally rate their sites. According to The National Coalition Against Censorship it was not only those offering objectionable material who refused to self-rate but many noteworthy sites as well, such as online news organizations (Heins & Cho, 2001). Several of these rating systems are still in use today, including RSACi, ICRA, Weburbia, and SafeSurf (Leto, 2003)
"Third-party rating" devices are a type of filter that has become a popular choice among those who design and purchase filtering software. Third-party rating began by filtering companies actually reviewing and evaluating individual websites. Subjectivity however, is a massive problem with this form of filtering. The values and beliefs of the filter manufacturers are reflected in the types of sites that are blocked. Regardless of subjectivity there is another obvious reason as to why this method is not optimal. The rapid growth of the Internet discourages this method from being effective. There are too many sites to individually monitor (Heins & Cho, 2001).

Filtering companies have found their way around these major flaws by creating different types of third-party filters. Third-party filters have become so popular that they are now the standard filters in the U.S. (Heins & Cho, 2001). Although the CIPA does not specify the type of filter public schools and libraries must use, third-party filters are most likely the norm. Three main types of third-party rating systems have emerged. The first contains multiple categories of potentially offensive, "inappropriate," or "objectionable" material. (SurfWatch and Cyber Patrol are examples of this type of filtering device). Internet service providers such as America Online generally provide the second type of third-party rating. This type of filter provides "parental control" options that block specific websites based on word or phrase identification. The third type, referred to as a "white list," is a product that blocks the entire Internet except for a few hundred or thousand pre-selected sites (Heins & Cho, 2001). According to www.familyisafety.com (2003), a website dedicated to providing the public with the means to protect themselves from the dangers of the Internet, many of these third-party
filters provide the user with the ability to either turn the filter off and on or make adjustments to what is and is not blocked. Regardless, the use of any type of third-party filter has resulted in both the intentional and unintentional blocking of information that does not contain objectionable material.

So how do these manufacturers actually block the content? An explanation of some of the more popular methods follows.

Many filters contain more than one of the methods listed for blocking content. The first is restricting access by the type of file. These filtering devices are included within the settings of any Internet browser. They restrict viewing graphics, sounds, or video files. A more common method of filtering is restricting access to content based on specific words found on the web page. The main problem encountered here is that words cannot be analyzed in context, hence, many site are blocked that might not have been otherwise (Leto, 2003).

One of the more controversial methods of filtering is restricting access to websites by blocking Internet Protocol (IP) numbers. The problem with this method is that there are many sites with the same IP number because they use the same server (a server, as defined by Enzer (2003), author of an online dictionary of Internet terms, is a computer or software package that provides a specific kind of service to a client who runs the software on other computers). So if a server is the host to both objectionable and non-objectionable sites, then filters that block by IP numbers will automatically block the non-objectionable sites (Leto, 2003). A class action lawsuit resulted from this type of filtering and filtering companies were required to make changes. Wolinsky (2001)
explains that although these changes were made, many firewall companies who license the product are still using the flawed software. (A firewall, as defined by Enzer (2003) is a combination of hardware and software that separates a network into two or more parts for security purposes).

A similar method of filtering restricts access to websites by blocking the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) of a particular website. The blocking can work in two ways: to deny access to particular sites or to allow access only to those URLs in a database. Many filtering companies use this method (at least in part) because they can charge a renewal fee for updated lists of objectionable sites (Leto, 2003).

Moving away from the third-party filter are those that use a Platform for Internet Content Selection (PICS) file. This file is a text file that uses rules to define what sites can be viewed by an individual browser. Ultimately, it is a template with which individuals can build their own filter. Although the personal nature of this method makes it appear as the optimal choice, it is subject to a major flaw. As the file becomes larger, it takes more time to look up addresses and subsequently slows down the speed of each web response, thereby making the method an unpopular choice (Leto, 2003).

The filtering industry claims that they are creating new software programs designed to better distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable material. Skeptics of this claim argue that no filtering technology can make judgments in context about the value, offensiveness, or age-appropriateness of online communicative expressions (Heins & Cho, 2001). Regardless of their lack of accuracy and objectivity, ultimately, the
purpose of Internet filters are to weed out objectionable content from the Internet before it reaches the eyes of the user.

**Conclusion**

One of our greatest civil liberties, the freedom of speech, and the protection of one of our most cherished assets, children, are intertwined in a current controversial issue. The goal of this study is to gain insight into what influences individuals when they are determining whether or not to support Internet filters in libraries. Through a review of previous research concerning civil liberties, the next chapter offers several variables that might influence people’s decision-making processes when it comes to deciding whether or not to support Internet filters in libraries.

Following the review of literature are the methods of measurement that were used to carry out the study. Following this are the results and discussion of the study.
Chapter 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

This study sought to determine the variables that influence people's decisions when they are trying to determine whether or not to support Internet filters in libraries. The hypotheses and research questions regarding each variable were created based on previous research concerning civil liberties including studies that specifically examine attitudes about free expression. Before these hypotheses and research questions are presented, a background of the different views of objectionable material is provided to provide insight as to why people might hold such differing opinions concerning pornography and censorship.

The Issue of Pornography and Censorship

Although this study examines a specific instance where pornography and censorship intersect, it is important to discuss some of the general views people hold of pornography. This discussion is central to the subject at hand because an individual's view of pornography will likely influence how he or she balances the issues of protecting children from pornography and protecting First Amendment rights. Along with the discussion of different view points, it is important to begin with a brief discussion of the
The Internet, which can serve as a valuable tool providing a wealth of information on an unlimited selection of topics, has also become a host to many types of objectionable material including pornography. Currently there are 4.2 million websites containing pornographic material. That is approximately 12% of the total sites found on the World Wide Web as stated by Ropelato (2003), author and publisher of the online filter assessment website www.internetfilterreview.com. Even with the 4.2 million pornographic websites and the ease with which one may access these sites, it still might seem shocking that 25% of daily search engine requests are pornographic in nature. That is 68 million pornography searches per day (Ropelato, 2003).

Children’s access to Internet pornography is a current concern of parents, educators, and government officials. The concern tends to manifest in the possibility that pornographic content might negatively effect youth. Although the average age a child is first exposed to Internet pornography is 11 years old (Ropelato, 2003), the nature of children’s Internet use does not necessarily include pornography. A report from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (2002) found that children who have home access to the Internet and engage in online activities at least once a week spend that time exploring the web (surfing and searching), using it for educational purposes (general learning, homework, research), communicating (instant messaging, emailing, chat rooms), utilizing entertainment features (playing games, downloading and exchanging music, pictures, and
videos), and e-commerce (learning about or buying things online). The issue then is not purposeful Internet pornography encounters but those encounters that are accidental. Valkenburg and Soeters (2001) found that among 194 Dutch children ages 8 to 13 with home access to the Internet, only four percent reported a negative experience with exposure to pornography on the Internet. In the same study pornography was never mentioned as a positive experience or motive associated with accessing the Internet.

An aspect not considered in the results of these studies is the possibility for biases in the data due to self-reporting. The report from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting questioned parents and children through on-line surveys and specifically parents through a national telephone survey. Valkenburg and Soeters (2001) also used self-reported data in their study. Children filled out a questionnaire in a school classroom. Both children and parent might have provided socially desirable answers instead of reporting actual facts. This could have affected the results of both of these studies.

Whether or not pornography causes actual harm to children is still undecided. William Stayton, a Baptist minister and psychologist who served as the ACLU’s expert witness in the Supreme Court case Reno v. ACLU, stated that explicit sexual information and even pornography do not by themselves cause psychological harm to minors of any age. Stayton said that this is the mainstream view among sex educators (Heins, 1998). A meta-analysis (Donnerstein, Wilson, & Linz, 1992) examining the effects of exposure to movies that include nudity and scenes depicting sexual matters supports the view of sex educators. Although research suggests that exposure to these types of images increases
knowledge regarding sexual terms, there is no evidence that suggests changes in beliefs, attitudes, values, or actual behavior regarding sexual practices.

Even with the lack of empirical evidence supporting a negative effect of pornography on youth, Heins (1998) explains that there is still a belief that if minors are exposed to sexual expression, it will lead to risky or immoral behavior. It is this belief that has lead to the preventative action of installing Internet filtering software onto computers in order to protect children from any potential harm. But where does this belief that children are negatively affected by pornography come from? This belief might be due to how an individual views the general concept of pornography. Understanding a person’s view of pornography might assist in understanding why that person might be willing to censor such content.

Three Distinct Views of Pornography

Communication researchers Malamuth and Billings (1986) discuss three views of pornography. Each view is depicted in a model addressing the functions or dysfunctions of pornography. It is important to examine these three views of pornography because the distinct differences in each of these views suggest that the independent variables in this study are going to have a complex relationship with the dependent variable. For example, two of the views about to be discussed support censorship of pornography but for two very different reasons, therefore, the variables that predict censorship for one group might be distinctly different from the variables that predict censorship for the other group.
The first view of pornography offered by Malamuth and Billings (1986) is the sexual communications model. This perspective argues that modern versions of pornography are a manifestation of sexual expression that has occurred throughout history. This view claims that pornography has resulted naturally in society due to the fact that humans are sexual beings. Pornography is viewed as having a positive social function because it has an erotic or instructive value.

The second view, the feminist model, has a contrasting view of pornography. This model claims that pornography is a reflector and creator of male subjugation of women conveying male domination. Pornography is viewed as an expression of anti-female ideology that portrays women in roles contrary to the aspirations of women’s liberation. Although the feminist model is not against the depiction of sexual content, the model supports regulations enforcing favorable depictions of women. On the other hand, the sexual communications model views regulations as an indication of anti-sexual attitudes that fear that the more sexual communications are readily available, the less restrictions there will be of the free expression of sexuality (Malamuth & Billings, 1986).

The third view also presented by Malamuth and Billings (1984) is the moralist model of pornography. Unlike the first two models the moralist view argues that pornography serves no function. This view posits that pornography contributes to immoral sexual behavior, which in turn creates a less moral society, which inevitably leads to the decrease of the authority of moral institutions. Religious institutions are among those who support this perspective. Religious objection to pornography also extends the argument that sex is generally depicted outside of approved realms. Most
organized religions argue that sexual matters need to have defined boundaries as well as be restricted to private expression. Moralists argue that instead of respecting this view, pornography overemphasizes the importance of sex and encourages fantasies that debase sex and marriage.

The last few pages have provided an overview of how people can view pornography very differently. These different points-of-view might provide insight into how individuals balance protecting children from pornography and protecting First Amendment rights. These views might explain why certain variables predict an individual's support for or against Internet filters in libraries. The rest of this chapter will detail the four categories of independent variables under examination in the study.

Variables Constant within a Person

One set of variables examined in this study is that which is constant within a person, such as age and gender. Many studies have been conducted measuring these types of variables and whether or not they are an indicator of people's opinions of civil liberties issues.

Age

Although some studies have found no significant evidence of a correlation between age and censorship attitudes (e.g., Cowan, 1992; Rucinski & Salmon, 1990; Schell & Bonin, 1989; Suedfeld, Steel, & Schmidt, 1994), many studies have found a person's age to be a significant predictor. Interestingly, support has been found for both younger and older people to be more supportive of censorship depending upon the
situation under examination. Several studies have reported younger people more likely to support censorship than older people. For example, Lambe (2002) found that when examining overall willingness to censor, older people are less willing to place restrictions on civil liberties. Rojas et al. (1996) found a similar relationship concerning age and general censorship attitudes. Another study was conducted examining students enrolled in education classes and the degree to which they are willing to censor the flow of information. Results indicated that the majority of younger respondents supported having school administrators restrict the use of words offensive to Christians, whereas the majority of older respondents did not support this restriction. They also found that younger respondents were more willing than older respondents to restrict the flow of information provided to the Contras in Nicaragua (Naylor, Dwyer, & Bliss, 1995).

Thompson (1995) found similar results concerning age and free speech issues. She found that people who are younger (freshmen and sophomores in college as compared to juniors and seniors) and have low need for cognition (those who are less "motivated to think about issues" p. 942) are more likely to support restrictions on hate speech groups and flag burning. Parallel results were found by Lambe (2003) providing evidence that younger people are more willing to censor hate speech. Salwen and Driscoll (1997) also found evidence that younger people are more likely to support restriction of free speech than older people. In this study the issue under examination was people's willingness to support restrictions of press coverage for the O. J. Simpson trial.
There are also many studies that indicate older people are more likely to support censorship than those who are younger. For example, an analysis of results from a series of studies conducted between 1936 and 1970 found that older people tend to place more restrictions on free speech issues than younger people (Erskine, 1970). Similar results were found between age and believing that libel suits are justified if a newspaper publisher accidentally prints false information about a public figure (Hansen & Moore, 1992). Fahy et al. (1995) also found that age is positively correlated with the acceptability of restrictions on advertising for several different products including alcoholic beverages and sex related products. A positive correlation was also found between age and censorship concerning the censorship of books by controversial authors from public libraries (White, 1986).

Research also supports that political tolerance tends to be greater among those who are younger. Stouffer (1955) found that younger community leaders are more likely to tolerate nonconformity in terms of politics. Sullivan, Piereson, and Marcus (1982) discuss similar correlations between age and political tolerance. Nunn, Crockett, and Williams (1978) also found that tolerance decreases with age. Nunn et al. explain that between the 1950s and 1970s the correlation between age and tolerance became stronger. They attribute this phenomenon to the increase in education after World War II.

Although there is a clear discrepancy between age and who is more likely to support restrictions of civil liberties, when the issue under examination involves pornography, evidence points strongly toward older people as being more likely to support restrictions. For example, Thompson, Chaffee, and Oshagan (1990) found that
older people tend to be proponents of regulating pornography. Another study found a similar correlation significantly linking older people and likeliness to support censorship of pornography (Rojas et al., 1996). Lambe (2002; 2003) also found support for this trend. Although their study examined sexual and sexually violent media rather than pornography, Fisher, Cook, and Shirkey (1994) found evidence that older people are more willing to support restrictions than younger people when sexual content is involved.

Like the last set of studies mentioned, the current study involved sexual content, specifically pornographic Internet content. Based on the strong support in previous research for older people to be more likely proponents of pornography restrictions than younger people, the following hypothesis was tested:

H1: Older people are more likely than younger people to endorse Internet filters in libraries.

Gender

The differences between men and women when it comes to civil liberties is somewhat mixed depending upon the situation under examination. Although many studies (Andsager & Miller, 1994; McLeod et al., 1997; 1998; Rucinski & Salmon, 1990; Suedfeld et al., 1994) have not found a significant difference between genders when it comes to censorship of civil liberties, the majority of studies that do find a difference point to men as being more accepting of civil liberty issues. Despite this, Keum et al. (2003) found evidence supporting that in general, females have a higher tolerance for extremist groups than men.
Research supports that there is a slight tendency for women to support censorship of civil liberties more than men. Using a scale to measure overall willingness to censor, Lambe (2002) found that women hold stronger censorship attitudes than men. Along these same lines Stouffer (1955) and Nunn et al. (1978) found that men are more willing than women to protect civil liberties. Evidence supports that gender has a similar influence when it come to tolerance of free expression (Immerwahr et al., 1982; Wilson, 1975). White (1986) found that women are more likely to support the removal of library books by controversial authors than men.

This trend of men being more tolerant is consistent within sexual media content research. Lambe (2002; 2003) found that women are more likely than men to support censorship of pornography. Cowan (1992) sampled recipients of the National Organization of Women Newsletter and found that gender was related to people’s attitude toward control of pornography with men less in favor of control. Fisher et al. (1994), Gunther, (1995), Herman and Bordner (1983), and Thompson et al. (1990) have all found consistent results showing men have more tolerance for pornography than women. Because the issue of Internet filters involves censoring pornography, the next hypothesis was tested:

H2: Women are more likely than men to support Internet filters in libraries.

Education

A person’s level of education is another variable that has provided insight into categorizing people’s opinions of civil liberties issues. Although some studies have found no relationship (Hense & Wright, 1992; Rojas et al. 1996; Suedfeld et al., 1994),
overall, studies suggest that those who are less educated tend to be less tolerant of extending civil liberties to all. For example, in an analysis of several studies Erskine (1970) found that those with a higher level of education tend to support freedom of speech more than those with a lower education level. Wilson (1975) also examined education and its relation to belief in freedom of speech and press. He found that those who were more highly educated were more likely to have a strong belief in freedom of speech and press. Consistent results were found for willingness to support the removal of books by controversial authors from public libraries. Those with less education were more willing to ban the books (White, 1986). McLeod et al. (1998) also found consistent results.

Studies examining political tolerance have had similar findings. Nunn et al. (1978) found that the higher a person’s education the more politically tolerant they are. Sullivan et al. (1982) also found that education is positively correlated with political tolerance. Stouffer’s (1955) research also supports this claim. He attributes this phenomenon to the fact that “schooling puts a person in touch with people whose ideas and values are different from one’s own” (p. 127), therefore the more educated a person is the more exposure that person has had to these different ideas.

This connection between level of education and tolerance holds true for pornography as well. Gunther’s (1995) research shows a negative correlation between education and support for regulation of pornography. Similarly, Herrman and Bordner (1983) found that individuals with a higher level of education tended to be more acceptant of erotica. Thompson et al. (1990) also found similar results. Although for the
most part those with less education tend to support censorship of pornography more than those with more education, Lambe (2002; 2003) has found some deviance from this trend. The study found that individuals with some college or vocational training were actually the least likely to censor pornography. Despite this finding, Lambe’s research still supports that those with a high school diploma or less are the most willing to censor pornographic content. Only a few studies show no significant relationship between education and tolerance for pornographic content (Hense and Wright, 1992; Rojas et al., 1996).

H3: Individuals with less education will be more likely than those with more education to support Internet filters in libraries.

Political Affiliation

Research has provided mixed findings for the predictive value of political affiliation and self-ranking liberalism/conservatism when it comes to predicting tolerance of civil liberties. Some studies have found that democrats are more willing to censor than republicans (Erskine, 1970; Rogers, 1955) while other studies have found that republicans are more willing to restrict civil liberties than democrats (Erskine, 1970; Immerwahr & Doble, 1982). Other studies examining civil liberties have found no relationship between political affiliation and censorship (Andsanger & Miller, 1994; Gunther, 1995; Hense & Wright, 1992; Rojas et al., 1996; Rucinski & Salmon, 1990).

Many studies use a liberal/conservative self-ranking scale in order to predict censorship attitudes. These studies are also inconsistent in their findings. Some studies have found no relationship between how a people rank themselves in terms of their
political ideology and their acceptance of civil liberties (Hansen & Moore, 1992; Sullivan et al., 1982; Thompson et al., 1990; Thompson, 1995) while other studies have found that those who rank themselves as liberal are more tolerant of civil liberties as compared to conservatives (Lambe, 2002; Keum et al., 2003; McLeod et al., 1997; 1998; Rojas et al., 1996; Suedfeld et al., 1994; Wilson, 1975). Although evidence for political ideology as a predictor of censorship attitudes is inconsistent, it tends to be related in a consistent direction. Due to this trend the following hypothesis was formulated:

H4: People who categorize themselves as conservative will be more likely to support Internet filters than people who say they are liberal.

Commitment to General Democratic Principles

Studies have supported that the strength of an individual's commitment to general democratic principles is related to how willing they are to censor free expression. Lambe (2003) found that when a person had a high commitment to democratic principles they were more tolerant of hate speech and pornography. They have also been found to be more politically tolerant in general (Marcus et al., 1995; Sullivan et al. 1981; Sullivan et al., 1982; Thompson, 1995). This study tested to see if this commitment to general democratic principles carries over to the issue of Internet filters with the following hypothesis:

H5: An individual with a higher commitment to civil liberties will be less likely to support Internet filters in libraries than an individual with a lower commitment to civil liberties.
Political Knowledge

This study also examined if political knowledge has predictive value for the issue at hand. Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996) expand their argument to include three main benefits of political knowledge: (1) knowledge can be used as an instrument to understand specific information relevant to a particular situation, (2) the more knowledge a person has the better “performance” that person will have in their role as a citizen, (3) when an individual has political knowledge, the society as a whole is strengthened. In other words, “all interests in society benefit from a greater consensus on democratic values and an accompanying tolerance for divergent viewpoints” (p. 219).

Previous research has shown support that when civil liberties are involved, those who have less political knowledge tend to have more support for restricting civil liberties (Sullivan et al., 1981).

H6: People with less political knowledge will be more likely to support Internet filters in libraries.

Variables Specific to the Situation

It is important to distinguish whether or not variables specific to the situation of mandatory Internet filters in public libraries have an influence on people’s opinions of filters. Marcus et al. (1995) found that when people make specific judgments about civil liberties not only do people’s pre-existing tendencies influence their opinions, but contemporary information does as well. Variables specific to the situation that were examined in this study included items such as Internet use, pornography use, and library use.
Self-Knowledge and Knowledge of the Issues

An individual's self-perceived knowledge can often play a role in his or her perception of that topic. For example, Salwen and Dupagne (2001) found that self-perceived knowledge of television violence is a positive predictor of a person's perceived effects of that content. Although this study did not test to see if that perceived effect was correlated with a person's attitude toward censorship of violent television content, knowledge has been found to be a predictor of support for censorship. Salwen and Dupagne (1999) found that self-perceived knowledge is positively correlated with support for media restrictions. In order to have a clearer view of the relationship between self-perceived knowledge and censorship the following research question was examined:

RQ1: Is self-perceived knowledge of the workings of Internet filters a predictor of an individual's support for Internet filters in libraries?

Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996) argue that knowledge is an instrument that assists people in not only determining their own self-interest but also assists in determining political action. Tyler (1990) and Wright (1994) expand on this notion of knowledge offering that people tend to agree with what they think is lawful. Because of this people will often side with laws and rules already established. Based upon these arguments this study examines whether or not individual knowledge of the U.S. Supreme Court case U.S. v. ALA has predictive value for support of Internet filters in libraries. This case is the culmination of the issue at hand; therefore it was determined to be an optimal choice for testing knowledge of the issue.
RQ2: Is knowledge of the U.S. Supreme Court case *U.S. v. ALA* a predictor of an individual’s support for Internet filters in libraries?

As discussed in the previous chapter, there is a belief that more people would be against Internet filters if they knew how they worked and how unreliable they are (Wolinsky, 2001). This study examined this belief by testing whether or not an individual’s knowledge of the workings Internet filters played a role in how individuals decided whether or not to support Internet filters in libraries.

RQ3: Is knowledge of the specifics of Internet filters a predictor of an individual’s support for Internet filters in libraries?

**Internet Use**

The amount an individual uses certain types of media has been linked to their censorship attitudes in several studies, although, the findings have been inconsistent. Some studies have found that those who have more exposure to the media (particularly newspapers) tend to have more lenient censorship attitudes (Lambe, 2002; McLeod et al., 1998; Salwen & Driscoll, 1997; Wilson, 1975). Despite newspaper reading having a negative correlation with willingness to censor, television use has not been found to be a significant predictor of general attitudes toward censorship (Lambe, 2002; Salwen & Driscoll, 1997) but has been found to be positively correlated with willingness to censor political speech and pornography (Lambe, 2002). Rojas et al. (1996) and Salwen (1998) found no support for the linkage between media use and support for general willingness to censor.
The Internet has been under recent examination to see if it has any predictive power when it comes to censorship attitudes. Lambe (2002) found that those who use the Internet less are more willing to censor abortion speech and pornography. Because of the mixed findings about media use and the lack of research defining the influence of Internet use on attitudes of civil liberties it was difficult to hypothesize if an individual’s Internet use would influence their support of Internet filters in libraries so the following research questions were examined:

RQ4: Does an individual’s amount of Internet use predict their support for Internet filters in libraries?

RQ5: Does an individual’s amount of Internet use in libraries predict their support for Internet filters in libraries?

Public Library Use

Since this study deals specifically with Internet filters in public libraries it was important to determine whether or not a person’s public library use influences their opinions of Internet filters.

RQ6: Is public library use a predictor of an individual’s support for Internet filters in libraries?

Pornography Use

Pornography use is another variable that has been found to correlate with attitudes toward censorship. Cowan (1992) found that those who had less exposure to pornography were more likely to have a “pro-control” attitude toward pornographic
material. Thompson et al. (1990) found that those who had more exposure to sexual movies and magazines had less conservative attitudes toward regulating pornography. Another study conducted by Fisher et al. (1994) found that those who were more sexually conservative expressed a greater support for censorship. Based upon these previous studies it was predicted that pornography use would be correlated with acceptance of Internet filters in libraries:

H7: People who do not use pornography will tend to support Internet filters in libraries more than people who use pornography.

**Children**

This study asked respondents to consider the protection of children, therefore it was necessary to examine if whether or not a person has children influences an individual's support for Internet filters. Only a limited number of studies dealing with civil liberties issues have examined whether or not a person's parental status has an effect on their attitudes toward civil liberties. Thompson et al. (1990) found that people with children were more likely to support regulation of pornography than those without children. This study examines if whether or not people have children influences opinions of the issue under examination. People with children, especially young children, might be more likely to want to protect youth. Although previous research leads to speculation of how a person's parental status would influence their opinions in this situation, due to the limited number of studies dealing with parental status it was difficult to predict exactly how the variable would influence this study. For this reason the following research questions were examined:
RQ7: Does a person’s parental status predict their support for Internet filters in libraries?
RQ8: If a person has children, does the age of the children (younger or older) predict an individual’s support for Internet filters?

Third-Person Effect

The third-person effect was first proposed by W. Phillips Davison (1983). He casually observed the effect in several situations and determined through a few exploratory studies that the effect was comprised of two components. The first part of the effect is the “perceptual bias” which supports that people tend to view the media as having as greater effect on others than on themselves (particularly negative content). Although this perception tends to be biased, Davison proposed that it is necessary to consider this effect because individuals often act on this misperception, which leads to the second component of the TPE, the behavioral aspect of the effect. There tends to be a positive correlation between the size of the third-person perceptual gap and their support for censorship of that particular content.

Since Davison’s publication, dozens of articles, book chapters, and papers have been written and presented on the perceived gap between effects on others and effects on self. This work presents overwhelming support for the perceptual component of the effect (Gunther, 1995; Hoffner & Buchanan, 2002; Hoffner et al., 1999; Lo & Wei, 2002; Perloff, 1999; Price et al., 1997; Price et al., 1998; Rojas et al., 1996; Rucinski & Salmon, 1990; Salwen & Driscoll, 1997; Salwen & Dupagne, 1999; 2001; Shah et al., 1999).

Despite the robust support for the perceptual component of the third-person effect, the behavioral component has had mixed findings. Some studies did not examine this second
component (Golan, 2002; Henriksen & Flora, 1999; Peiser & Peter, 2001, Tiedge et al., 1991), while other studies have not found a link between the two components of the third-person effect (Salwen & Driscoll, 1997; Rucinski & Salmon, 1990). Despite these results, many studies have found support (Gunther, 1995; Hoffner & Buchanan, 2002; Hoffner et al., 1999; Lo & Wei, 2002; Rojas et al, 1996; Salwen, 1998; Shah, Faber, & Youn, 1999). A few of these studies have found evidence of the behavioral component when pornography is the issue under examination (Gunther, 1995; Rojas et al., 1996). Lo & Wei (2002) found similar support specifically for restricting Internet pornography.

Based upon previous third-person effect research the following hypotheses and research questions were examined in this study:

H8: People will tend to perceive that Internet pornography has a greater negative effect on others than on themselves.

RQ9: Will people tend to perceive that Internet pornography has a greater positive effect on others than on themselves?

H9: People who perceive a greater gap between the negative effects of Internet pornography on themselves and others will tend to support Internet filters in libraries more than those who perceive a smaller effects-gap.

RQ10: Will people who perceive a greater or smaller gap between the positive effects of Internet pornography on themselves and others tend to support Internet filters in libraries more?

Up until now the third-person effect has been used to measure people’s perception of the effects of content but has never been used to measure people’s perception of the
effects of censorship. This study examined measuring people’s perceptions of the effects of the current regulation imposed on libraries as discussed previously. The reversal of the typical usage of the third-person effect is reflected in the following research questions:

RQ11a: Will people tend to perceive government regulations requiring Internet filters to have a greater negative effect on others or themselves?

RQ11b: Will people tend to perceive government regulations requiring Internet filters to have a greater positive effect on others or themselves?

Variables Pertaining to Media Use

An individual’s amount of media use can potentially play a role in his or her opinion of censorship of various media. Although only a few research questions are presented in this section, media use is considered more fully within the final research question.

Access to Technology

The next two research questions concern an individual’s access to new technologies. This is an important variable to consider since access to technology is one of the major concerns surrounding the issue of Internet filters in libraries.

RQ12: Is ownership of a computer a predictor of an individual’s support for Internet filters in libraries?

RQ13: Is home Internet access a predictor of an individual’s support for Internet filters in libraries?
News Framing as a Variable

One of the reasons why it is difficult to determine public opinion of civil liberties issues is due the multitude of influences a person has when formulating their opinion. Previous research suggests that because of these influences people often have trouble deciding which side they agree with when it comes to rights (Chong, 1993). Framing can often reveal some of these underlying uncertainties individuals have. Framing is the process by which media define and construct a political issue or public controversy (Nelson, Clawson, & Oxley, 1997).

An individual almost always obtains information from outside sources to assist in constructing a point of view on a given issue. Depending upon how that outside source frames the issue, individuals might form very different perspectives. The issue of framing is examined by Nelson et al. (1997) who focus on how the media influences people’s perceptions of civil liberties issues through the framing of a news story. They argue that news organizations publicly state the underlying causes and consequences of a problem by framing social and political issues. Nelson et al. also claim the news media frame potential remedies for the problem as well. Ultimately, framing affects public opinion by shaping individuals’ viewpoints.

Nelson et al. (1997) conducted an experiment using two news stories about a Ku Klux Klan rally. The first story framed the issue as a free speech story while the other framed the rally as a disruption of public order. Although both news stories were covering the same event, each provoked different views from the participants who watched them. Subjects who read the “free speech” news story reported a higher level of
tolerance for Ku Klux Klan speeches than subjects who read the "disruption of public order" frame.

Other research has been conducted that support this claim. In particular, Nelson and Oxley (1999) also conducted a study using news articles with manipulated content in order to examine framing issues. The study manipulated a newspaper story concerning the building of a new hotel and convention complex in Florida's marshlands. One article emphasized the economic benefits including thousands of new jobs while the other article emphasized the environmental impact including the consequence of endangering animal species. Participants in the economic framing condition were found to have significantly more favorable opinions toward the proposed construction than participants in the environmental framing condition.

Along with examining opinions, Nelson and Oxley (1999) found support that the articles framed belief importance. Participants exposed to the economic frame believed more than those exposed to the environmental frame that the economic impact of the property development was more important than the environmental impact in developing their opinion. On the other hand, those exposed to the environmental frame believed significantly more than those exposed to the economic frame that the environmental impact was more important in developing their opinion.

Keum et al. (2003) attempted to discover what influences people's reactions to news about civil liberties issues. Their findings suggest that people are influenced by both the media and their own views. The way in which a story is framed by the media is important in how an individual will interpret the story. People's ideological beliefs and
individual dispositions work in conjunction with media framing to influence people’s reactions to news about civil liberties issues.

Druckman (2001) also found evidence supporting framing effects. He created the study around the issue of government assistance for the poor. He framed the issue in one of two ways: as a humanitarian issue or as an issue of government expenditure. He also manipulated the source’s credibility by presenting the message as if it was from either Colin Powell’s website or from Jerry Springer’s website. A significant framing effect was found when the message was presented as being from the more credible source, Colin Powell. Interestingly, in parts of the manipulation, support was found for a negative persuasion effect where subjects did the opposite of what was suggested by the untrustworthy source.

Another study examining framing in terms of civil liberty issues was conducted by political science researcher, Brewer (2002). He examined how news framing influences participant’s explanations of their views on gay rights. The results supported that those who received an “equality” frame were more likely to explain their views on gay rights in terms of equality and that participants who received a “morality” frame were more likely to explain their views in terms of morality.

Shah, Domke, and Wackman (1996) also conducted a study concerning media framing. Similar to other studies discussed, Shah et al. manipulated a newspaper article. In this case they framed the issue of health care in one of two ways: in material terms or in terms of ethics. Material-framing was presented in terms of economics and expedience while ethical-framing presented the issue in terms of rights and morals. After receiving
the manipulation, subjects filled out a questionnaire. Shah et al. (1996) hypothesized that individuals receiving an issue with an ethical value-frame would be more likely to form an ethical interpretation of the issues they encounter than individuals receiving the same issue with a material value-frame. The hypothesis was supported using a sample of evangelical Christians and undergraduate students.

Like the review of studies discussed, this study tested whether or not media framing played a role in people's perceptions of First Amendment rights: specifically examining their perceptions of Internet filters. A framing effect was attempted by fabricating two news articles, one that was framed to emphasize the importance of protecting children with the other stressing possible consequences on free expression. This leads to the next hypothesis:

H10: Participants who read the fabricated newspaper article that emphasizes the importance of protecting children will be more likely to support Internet filters in libraries than the participants who read the fabricated newspaper article that portrays the possible consequences of Internet filters on free expression.

The Strongest Predictor Variable

After measuring each set of variables (those inherent within a person, those specific to the situation, media use, and news framing) this study attempted to determine which category of variables was the best predictor of an individual's support for Internet filters in libraries. The final research question addresses this overarching question:
RQ14: Which type of variable most strongly predicts people's opinions of Internet filters in libraries: those inherent within a person, those specific to the situation, media use, or news framing?

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed previous literature in order to provide insight into the variables that might influence people's decisions when they are faced with determining a balance between protecting the freedom of speech and protecting children from objectionable material. Although several hypotheses were presented, there are some areas where prior research is minimal, which made it difficult to make predictions. In these cases research questions were presented with the intention of providing valuable additions to the civil liberties literature.
Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Procedure

This study was designed to examine the variables that influence people’s support for Internet filters in public libraries. This issue was examined by distributing surveys to 314 people from three target groups (college students, parents of older children, and parents of younger children) in May, June, and August of 2004.

The questionnaire was designed to measure the following: support for Internet filters in public libraries, knowledge of Internet filters, general political knowledge, commitment to democratic principles, and third-person effects. The following demographic characteristics were also obtained: gender, age, education level, religiosity, race, number of children and/or grandchildren, Internet use, media use and ownership, library use, and pornography use.

The Nature of the Sample

In order to maximize variance of the key independent variables, a purposive sample was recruited. The sample was selected based upon parental status in order to provide variance for that particular variable. Other variables such as age and gender were
also purposely sampled as well (see Table 3.1). This total sample was comprised of four groups including:

(1) Students enrolled in a course entitled Introduction to Communication Research Methods at the University of Delaware during May, 2004 (n = 113). Students were given course credit for completing the survey.

(2) Adult relatives and other adults known by students enrolled in a course entitled Legal Issues of the Mass Media (n = 176). During May, 2004 students were given three surveys and trained in questionnaire administration. They were asked to find three adults (at least one male and one female) who have children to fill out the survey. Surveys were returned in an envelope sealed by the adult. The students received extra credit for returning up to three surveys.

(3) Parents of students enrolled in a music school located in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania (n = 10). Surveys were distributed during the students’ private lessons and collected at a following lesson in sealed envelopes.

(4) Parents of children enrolled in a daycare center located in Bucks County, Pennsylvania (n = 14). Surveys were sent home with parents and returned to the daycare center in sealed envelopes.
Table 3.1

The Sample: Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean Age</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>19.81</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td>67.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Relatives</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>46.33</td>
<td>10.88</td>
<td>21-86</td>
<td>48.9%</td>
<td>51.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Parents</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>4.38</td>
<td>42-56</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daycare Parents</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>38.43</td>
<td>7.51</td>
<td>26-57</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gender and Age

The overall sample (n = 314) included 133 males (42.36%) and 180 females (57.32%). One respondent did not indicate gender. Respondents ranged in age from 18 to 86 (M = 36.39, SD = 15.13). Two respondents did not indicate age.

Race

Respondents reported their race (see question 44 in Appendix A). The majority was Caucasian American (93.94%). Only a few were: African American (0.95%), Asian American (0.95%), Hispanic or Latino American (0.95%), and Native American (0.95%). Since there was so little variance, this variable was not used in the analysis.

Education

Overall the sample was fairly well educated (see question 43 in Appendix A). Most (39.8%) reported to have completed some college or a 2-year degree, followed by
college graduates (28.34%), high school graduates (15.6%), graduate or professional schools (14.33%), vocational school or other (1.9%). No one reported not having completed high school.

**Parental Status**

Respondents were asked to report the number of children (see question 57 in Appendix A) for which they are either the parent or guardian. Of all the respondents, 29.3% reported having no children, 16.56% reported to have one child, 27.39% reported to have two children, 15.61% reported to have three children, 2.23% reported to have four children, 0.96% reported to have five children, 0.32% reported to have six children, and 0.32% reported to have seven children.

Respondents were also asked the ages of their children (see question 57 in Appendix A). Ages were recorded by the age of the youngest child reported and placed into three groups. Of those who have children, 61.78% of the respondents reported the age of their youngest child as being between 0-12, 13.38% reported the age of their youngest child between the ages of 13-17, and 25.48% of respondents reported the age of their youngest child as 18 or older.

**Grandparent Status**

Similarly, respondents were asked to report the number of grandchildren they have (see question 58 in Appendix A). The majority of respondents (81.21%) reported having no grandchildren, 2.55% reported having one grandchild, 0.64% reported having two grandchildren, 1.91% reported having three grandchildren, 0.64% reported having
four grandchildren, 0.32% reported having six grandchildren, and 0.32 reported having seven grandchildren, the rest of the respondents did not indicate whether or not they had grandchildren.

Ages of grandchildren were recorded in the same format as children. Of those with grandchildren, 21 respondents (6.69%) reported the age of their grandchildren (see question 58 in Appendix A). Of the sample, 5.73% reported the age of their youngest grandchild to be between 0-12, 0.32% reported the age of their youngest grandchild as 13-17, and 0.64% of respondents reported the age of their youngest grandchild as 18 or older.

Liberalism/Conservatism

Respondents were asked to self-rank their liberalism/conservatism (see question 42 in Appendix A), 1 = very liberal, 6 = very conservative ($M = 3.32, SD = 1.19$).

Religiosity

Respondents were asked to self-report their degree of religiosity (see question 45 in Appendix A) on a scale ranging from: 1 = deeply religious (9.23%), 2 = fairly religious (49.36%), 3 = not very religious (29.94%), 4 = not religious at all (11.15%) ($M = 2.43, SD = .81$). This scale was reversed for analysis, so that a higher score indicated greater religiosity.
Computer Ownership and Internet Access

Because of the focus on Internet filters, respondents were asked several questions regarding their ownership of and access to technology (see questions 59 – 63 in Appendix A). Respondents were asked whether or not they own a computer; most (96.5%) did.

Respondents were asked whether or not they have an e-mail address; once again, most (96.8%) did. Respondents were then asked if they have home access to the Internet; again, most (97.13%) did. Any respondents who answered yes to having home access were then asked if they have an Internet filter running on their computer; most (83.12%) did not. The majority of respondents (70.38%) reported having access to the Internet at work.

Internet Use

Because this study focuses on Internet filters, respondents were asked to report their Internet use (see question 47 in Appendix A). Respondents indicated how often they used the Internet. Of the sample, 73.57% reported using the Internet everyday, 13.06% reported using it three to four times a week, 7.69% reported using it one to two times a week, 5.41% reported almost never using the Internet. Those respondents that reported using the Internet everyday were also asked to report about how many hours per day they use the Internet. Answers ranged from 1 – 24 hours ($M = 2.69; SD = 2.54$).
Online Activities

Respondents were then asked to estimate the percentage of time they spend with different Internet activities (see questions 48 – 50 in Appendix A). Overall, respondents spent the largest percentage of time with e-mail ($M = 41.94, SD = 29.71$), followed by web surfing ($M = 30.67, SD = 26.52$), and Instant Messaging ($M = 23.47, SD = 30.18$).

Television Use

Respondents were asked about their television use (see question 51 in Appendix A). Of the respondents, 69.43% reported watching television (to include all types of programming) everyday; 20% of respondents reported watching television three to four times a week; 5.41% of respondents reported watching television one to two times per week; 5.1% of respondents reported almost never watching television. Respondents who reported watching television everyday were asked to report the number of hours per day they watch television. Answers ranged between one and fourteen hours ($M = 2.56, SD = 1.53$).

Television News Use

Respondents were then asked about their amount of television news use (see question 53 in Appendix A). Many respondents (41.08%) reported watching television news everyday; 23.57% of respondents reported watching television news three to four times per week; 18.47% of respondents reported watching television news one to two times per week; 15.92% of respondents reported almost never watching television news. Respondents who reported watching television news everyday were asked to report the
number of hours per day they watch television news (see question 54 in Appendix A). Answers ranged between less than one and up to six hours ($M = 1.12; SD = .74$).

**Newspaper Use**

Respondents were also asked to report their amount of newspaper use (see question 55 in Appendix A). For the most part, the sample read newspapers regularly: 32.8% of respondents reported reading the newspaper everyday; 14.33% of respondents reported reading the newspaper three to four times per week; 22.61% of respondents reported reading the newspaper one to two times per week; 29.94% of respondents reported almost never reading the newspaper. Respondents who reported reading the newspaper everyday were asked to report the number of hours per day they read the newspaper (see question 56 in Appendix A). Answers ranged between less than one and up to five hours ($M = .96; SD = .60$).

**Public Library Use**

Respondents were asked about their personal use regarding public libraries and the Internet in public libraries (see question 67 in Appendix A): 4.78% of respondents reported using the library at least once a week; 11.46% reported using it at least once a month; 10.51% reported using it several times a year; the majority of respondents (60.51%) reported using it rarely; 11.78% of respondents reported never using a public library.
Internet Use in Public Libraries

Only a few respondents (.64%) reported using the Internet in a public library at least once a week; 5.1% reported using it at least once a month; 4.46% reported using it several times a year; close to half of the respondents (46.5%) reported rarely using the Internet in a public library; 42.36% of respondents reported never using the Internet in a public library (see question 68 in Appendix A).

Pornography Use

Respondents were asked about their pornography use; both pornography in general and Internet pornography (see questions 69 – 70 in Appendix A). Only a few reported using pornography: 10.83% of respondents reported viewing pornography about once a week; 6.37% reported viewing it about once a month; 4.46% reported viewing it several times a year; 17.2% reported rarely viewing it; the majority (60.83%) reported never viewing pornography.

Several respondents (10.51%) reported viewing Internet pornography about once a week; 4.46% reported viewing it about once a month; 3.5% reported viewing it several times a year; 18.15% reported rarely viewing it; the majority (63.06%) reported never viewing Internet pornography.

Exposure to a Filtered Internet

A set of items in the questionnaire focused on respondents’ experiences with Internet filters (see questions 64 – 66 in Appendix A). Of all the respondents, 61.78% reported surfing the Internet on a computer with an Internet filter. Of the respondents
who had surfed the Internet using a computer with an Internet filter 18.47% reported experiencing some type of problem caused by the filter.

Measurement

Support for Internet Filters

The dependent variable this study examined was support for Internet filters in public libraries. Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement (1 = strongly agree to 6 = strongly disagree) with seven items focusing on the implications of Internet filters in libraries. These items were developed specifically for this study. A pre-test of the measurement device was conducted during April, 2004 using 10 students enrolled in an undergraduate communication class. The pretest indicated that the scale was reliable ($\alpha = .81$) so all seven items were used in the study. The items, their range, means, and standard deviations, based on the thesis data collected are presented in Table 3.2.

The first item of the scale was eliminated from the scale in order to improve reliability. Also, the items were recoded so that a higher score would equal more support for Internet filters. Support for Internet filters ranged from 1-6 ($M = 3.4$, $SD = 1.14$, $\alpha = .91$).
Table 3.2
Support for Internet Filters Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internet filters are beneficial tools for libraries.</td>
<td>1–6</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet filters should be required in public places with Internet access.</td>
<td>1–6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The benefits of Internet filters in libraries outweigh the costs.</td>
<td>1–6</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I support requiring Internet filters in libraries.</td>
<td>1–6</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requiring Internet filters in libraries is against our First Amendment rights as Americans.</td>
<td>1–6</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet filters in libraries do not interfere with anyone’s First Amendment rights.</td>
<td>1–6</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A government regulation requiring Internet filters in libraries and other public places would have a negative effect on society.</td>
<td>1–6</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>1.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index Score</td>
<td>1–6</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Third-Person Perception

The third-person perception scale contained 8 items listed in Table 3.3. For purposes of analysis, the items were paired. Two pairs examined perceptions about the effects of Internet pornography while two pairs examined perceptions about the effects of government regulations. Third-person effects were computed by subtracting the perceived effect on self from the perceived effect on others. Third-person effects are summarized in Table 3.4 (the questions in both tables were recoded so that 1= strongly disagree and 6= strongly agree).
Table 3.3
Third-Person Perception Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internet pornography has a positive effect on me.</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet pornography has a positive effect on other people.</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet pornography has a negative effect on me.</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>1.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet pornography has a negative effect on other people.</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>1.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government regulations of the Internet have a positive effect on</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government regulations of the Internet have a positive effect on</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other people.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government regulations of the Internet have a negative effect on</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government regulations of the Internet have a negative effect on</td>
<td>1-6</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>others.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3.4
Third-Person Perception Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Third-Person Effect</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internet pornography: positive effects</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet pornography: negative effects</td>
<td>.45</td>
<td>1.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government regulations: negative effects</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government regulations: positive effects</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Self-Perceived Knowledge

In order to examine the effect of self-perceived knowledge on support for Internet filters, respondents indicated their knowledge of five statements (1 = I don’t have any knowledge, 6 = very knowledgeable). Self-perceived knowledge ranged from 1 - 6
(M = 3.78, SD = .82, a = .76). Information regarding each statement is reported in Table 3.5.

### Table 3.5

**Self-Perceived Knowledge Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The workings of Internet filters</td>
<td>1 – 6</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current free speech issues in society</td>
<td>1 – 6</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rights of Americans</td>
<td>1 – 6</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil liberties issues</td>
<td>1 – 6</td>
<td>4.02</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issues concerning the protection of America’s youth from Internet pornography</td>
<td>1 – 6</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index Score</td>
<td>1 – 6</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Commitment to Democratic Principles**

In order to measure an individual's commitment to general democratic principles the Standing Decision Democratic Principles Scale (Marcus et al., 1995) was used. The pre-test during April, 2004 also indicated that the scale is reliable (a = .81). Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement (1 = strongly agree to 6 = strongly disagree) with seven items. For purposes of analysis items four, five, six, and seven were recoded so that a higher score signaled a higher commitment to democratic principles. Items were then summed and divided by seven, providing a mean score for each respondent. Information about individual items is presented in Table 3.6.
Evaluations of prior combined studies using this scale indicated that the scale is reliable ($a = .70$). For this study, scores on the Standing Decision Democratic Principles Scales ranged from 1 – 6 ($M = 3.90$, $SD = .74$, $a = .71$).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>$M$</th>
<th>$SD$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If someone is suspected of treason or other serious crimes, he should not be entitled to be released on bail.</td>
<td>1 – 6</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>1.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society shouldn't have to put up with those who have political ideas that are extremely different from the majority.</td>
<td>1 – 6</td>
<td>5.04</td>
<td>1.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When the country is in great danger we may have to force people to testify against themselves even if it violates their rights.</td>
<td>1 – 6</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free speech ought to be allowed for all political groups even if some of the things these groups believe in are highly insulting and threatening to particular segments of society.*</td>
<td>1 – 6</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No matter what a person’s political beliefs are, he is entitled to the same legal rights and protections as anyone else.*</td>
<td>1 – 6</td>
<td>4.34</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is refreshing to hear someone stand up for an unpopular view.*</td>
<td>1 – 6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe in free speech for all no matter what their views might be.</td>
<td>1 – 6</td>
<td>3.98</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index Score</td>
<td>1 – 6</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Item reversed for further analysis

**Political Knowledge**

Respondents’ political knowledge was assessed using a five-item modification of the knowledge index created by Delli Carpini and Keeter (1996). The five-item scale was used rather than the original scale that is longer and more comprehensive because evaluations of combined studies show that when compared with the longer scale the short
scale still had high reliability ($\alpha = .71$). In order to measure political knowledge each respondent was asked to provide an answer to five questions. The answers were coded using the following scale: “0” for a wrong answer and “1” for a correct answer. The score for each answer was then summed for a total political knowledge score. This score was then divided by five to obtain a mean score for each respondent. Information about each item in the scale is presented in Table 3.7. The political knowledge scale ranged from 0 – 1. ($M = .75$, $SD = .27$, $\alpha = .64$).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you happen to know what job or political office is now held by</td>
<td>0 – 1</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dick Cheney?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whose responsibility is it to determine if a law is constitutional</td>
<td>0 – 1</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or not? Is it the President, the Congress, or the Supreme Court?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much of a majority is required for the U.S. Senate to override a</td>
<td>0 – 1</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>presidential veto?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which political party has the most members in the House of</td>
<td>0 – 1</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representatives?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which political party is more conservative at the national level?</td>
<td>0 – 1</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index Score</td>
<td>0 – 1</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Knowledge of the Issue

The survey also addressed respondents’ knowledge of Internet filters in public libraries and knowledge of the Supreme Court case that is the foundation for the concepts behind this study ($U.S. v. ALA$). Respondents were asked to provide short answers to four
questions regarding Internet filters in libraries. Respondents’ answers to three of the questions were then coded for analysis (0 = wrong, 1 = partially correct, 2 = correct). One item that asked respondents to list three brands of Internet filters, was coded 0 – 3 reflecting the number of brands listed. Information about each item is presented in Table 3.8. The range for each question in the knowledge of Internet filters scale varied, each range is reported in Table 3.8. A mean score was calculated for each respondent (\(M = .19, SD = .37, a = .62\)).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Range</th>
<th>(M)</th>
<th>(SD)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is a third party filter?</td>
<td>0 – 2</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you name three (3) brands of Internet filters?</td>
<td>0 – 3</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What does it mean if an Internet filter “over-blocks?”</td>
<td>0 – 2</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What did the Supreme Court rule on June, 23 2003 concerning Internet filters in public libraries?</td>
<td>0 – 2</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Frame

Part of this study focuses on the effects of news framing on people’s support for Internet filters. To test these effects, two news stories were created (see Appendix B). One news story framed Internet filters as restricting First Amendment rights (anti-filter version) while the other news story framed Internet filters as a means to protect children from objectionable material (pro-filter version). A pre-test was conducted as a
manipulation check. Twenty students enrolled in an introductory communication course were asked to read each story and summarize its main point. All students provided summaries consistent with the researcher’s intentions.

The Questionnaire

Three experimental conditions were used. In each questionnaire the first page contained the Standing Decision Democratic Principles Scale, then, for two of the conditions, the questionnaire contained one of the frame manipulations while the final condition (the control) did not contain a manipulation.

Overall, 106 received the pro-filter version; 105 received the anti-filter version; 103 were in the control group. In addition, to control for order effects and variance due to sensitization, three different orders of the questions that followed the framing manipulation were created. To include the three framing conditions and the three orders of questions, nine total questionnaire versions were created.

Statistical Analysis

After scale construction and reliability analysis, there were several steps to data analysis. One-tailed Pearson correlations were used to test the relationship between support for Internet filters in libraries and age (H1), education level (H3), liberalism/conservatism (H4), commitment to civil liberties (H5), political knowledge (H6), pornography use (H7), and the third-person effect (H9). A univariate ANOVA was used to test H10 (frame).
A *t*-test was used to test the second hypothesis, which predicted that women
would be more likely to support filters than men. A *t*-test was also used to test hypothesis
8 and research question 9, which concerned the third-person effect that people will
perceive others to be more affected by pornography than themselves.

Research Questions 11a and 11b also concerned third-person effects but that of
government regulations. These research questions were answered using paired-sample *t-
tests as well.

Two-tailed Pearson correlations were used to answer Research Questions 1 – 8, 10, 12, and 13, which concerned the relationship between support for Internet filters in libraries and self-perceived knowledge of the specifics of Internet filters, *actual knowledge of the specifics of Internet filters, knowledge of the U.S. Supreme Court case U.S. v. ALA, Internet use, Internet use in libraries, public library use, parental status, grandparent status, computer ownership, and home Internet access.*

The final research question, asking which of the study’s variables had the
greatest impact on support for Internet filters, was answered using four separate
hierarchical multiple regression analyses. In each, one block of variables was added first,
to assess the amount of variance each contributed to support for Internet filters in
libraries, then, it could be seen which block contributed the most to understanding
support for Internet filters.
Chapter 4

RESULTS

Hypotheses and Research Questions

This chapter presents the results from the statistical analysis examining each of 10 hypotheses and 14 research questions.

Hypothesis 1

H1 predicted that age would be positively linked to support for Internet filters in libraries. This hypothesis was supported; age was positively correlated with support for Internet filters: \( r = .17, p < .001 \). All correlations are summarized in Table 4.1.

Hypothesis 2

The second hypothesis predicted that females would be more likely than males to support Internet filters in libraries. A t-test found no support for the hypothesis. Females \((M = 3.48)\) were no more likely to support filters than males: \((M = 3.28): t(310) = 1.48, p = .14\).
Hypothesis 3

The third hypothesis predicted that education would be negatively linked to support for Internet filters. A Pearson correlation found no support for this prediction: $r = .07, p = .10$.

Hypothesis 4

H4 predicted that conservatism would be positively correlated with support for filters. A one-tailed correlation supported this hypothesis: $r = .25, p < .001$.

Hypothesis 5

The fifth hypothesis predicted that commitment to civil liberties would be negatively related to support for Internet filters in libraries. A one-tailed Pearson correlation found support for this hypothesis: $r = -.14, p < .01$.

Hypothesis 6

Hypothesis 6 predicted that those with less political knowledge would tend to have more support for Internet filters in libraries. A Pearson correlation showed a significant negative relationship between political knowledge and support for Internet filters in libraries, so that less knowledge was associated with greater support for Internet filters: $r = -.14, p < .05$.

Hypothesis 7

The seventh hypothesis predicted that pornography use would be related to support for Internet filters in libraries. This hypothesis was also supported. Both Internet
pornography use ($r = .11, p < .05$) and general pornography use ($r = .16, p < .01$) were linked to less support for Internet filters in libraries.
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<tr>
<td>Self-reported issue knowledge</td>
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<td>.15**</td>
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<td>.10</td>
<td>.30***</td>
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<tr>
<td>Negative third-person porn effect</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.15**</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>Positive third-person porn effect</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.14**</td>
<td>-.12*</td>
<td>-.08</td>
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<td>-.1*</td>
<td>-.14**</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.05</td>
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<td>Home Internet access</td>
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<td>-.14**</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.01</td>
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*** p < .001 1-tailed
** p < .01 1-tailed
* p < .05 1-tailed
+ p < .05 2-tailed
Hypothesis 8

Hypothesis eight, modeled after classic third-person effects research, predicted that people would tend to perceive that Internet pornography has a greater negative effect on others than on themselves. A t-test was used to test this hypothesis and found that people saw others ($M = 4.17$) as significantly more negatively effected by pornography than themselves ($M = 3.72$): $t(311) = 5.53$, $p < .001$.

Hypothesis 9

Hypothesis nine predicted that larger perceived third-person negative-effects of Internet pornography would be related to greater support for filters. This hypothesis was not supported. There was no significant relationship between third-person effects and support for filters: $r = .04$, $p = .26$.

Lack of support for H9 was partially affected by the frame manipulation. When Pearson correlations were computed for pro-filter framing condition, the relationship between the third-person effect and support for filters was still non-significant. Within the anti-filter frame, however, the correlation between negative third-person effect and support for Internet filters was significant: $r = .16$, $p = .05$. See Table 4.2. Perhaps some of those who read the anti-filter frame had a pre-disposition of support for Internet filters in libraries and were not swayed by the framing effect.
Hypothesis 10

A univariate ANOVA was used to test H10, which predicted that participants who read the fabricated newspaper article that emphasized the importance of protecting children would be more likely to support Internet filters in libraries than the participants who read the fabricated newspaper article that portrays the possible consequences of Internet filters on free expression. The frame made a significant difference in an individual's likeliness to support Internet filters in libraries: $F(2, 310) = 12.06, p < .001$.

Post-hoc $t$-tests were conducted to identify the specific frame effects. Compared to the pro-filters condition ($M = 3.55$), respondents who were exposed to the anti-filters frame ($M = 2.98$) showed significantly lower support for Internet filters in libraries: $t(209) = 3.69, p < .001$. The anti-frame group also supported filters significantly less than the control group ($M = 3.68$): $t(205) = 4.63, p < .001$. There was no difference between the pro-filters condition and the control group: $t(206) = .84, p = .40$. 

Table 4.2

Pearson Correlations:

Third-Person Effects on Support for Library Internet Filters by Framing Condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Anti-Filter Frame</th>
<th>Pro-Filter Frame</th>
<th>No Frame</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Support for Filters</td>
<td>Support for Filters</td>
<td>Support for Filters</td>
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<td></td>
<td>$r$</td>
<td>$p$</td>
<td>$r$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Third-Person Effect</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Third-Person Effect</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>-.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A final test was conducted for H10 to determine if any covariates were responsible for the framing effect. The framing effect remained significant when age, self-ranked liberalism/conservatism, parental status, democratic principles, general pornography use, political knowledge, and library Internet use were used as covariates.

Research Question 1

The first research question asked if self-perceived knowledge of the workings of Internet filters was related to support for Internet filters in libraries. Two-tailed Pearson correlations were performed for RQ1 through RQ12 (The correlations are presented in Table 4.1). Self-perceived knowledge of the workings of Internet filters was found to have no significant relationship with support for Internet filters in libraries: $r = .05, p = .41$.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 asked if knowledge of the U.S. Supreme Court cases *U.S. v. ALA* was linked to support for Internet filters in libraries. Knowledge of *U.S. v. ALA* was not correlated with support for Internet filters: $(r = .02, p = .72)$.

Research Question 3

The third research question asked how actual knowledge of the specifics of Internet filters was related to support for Internet filters in libraries. Knowledge of the specifics of Internet filters was not found to be correlated to support for filters: $r = -.02, p = .75$. 

71
Research Question 4

Research question four asked if an individual's amount of Internet use was related to support for Internet filters in libraries. The two-tailed correlation did not find a relationship between Internet use and support for Internet filters in libraries: $r = .04, p = .47$.

Research Question 5

The fifth research question asked if library Internet use was related to support for Internet filters in libraries. Pearson correlation results showed that the less experience an individual had using the Internet in libraries, the more likely that individual was to support Internet filters in libraries: $r = -.28, p < .05$.

Research Question 6

Research Question six asked if public library use was related to support for Internet filters in libraries. Public library use was not related to support for Internet filters in libraries: $r = .09, p = .11$.

Research Question 7

Research question seven asked if a person's parental status affected support for Internet filters in libraries. There was a relationship between parental status and support for filters, so that people with children were more likely to support Internet filters in libraries: $r = .14, p < .05$. 
Research Question 8

Research question eight asked if the age of respondents' children would be related to support for filters. Children's ages were not significantly related to support for filters: $r = -.07, p = .34$.

Research Question 9

Research question nine examined an alternative to the classic third-person hypothesis. H9 queried: do people tend to perceive that Internet pornography has a greater positive effect on others or on themselves? People saw others ($M = 2.55$) as significantly more positively effected by pornography than themselves ($M = 1.88$): $t(311) = 10.09, p < .001$.

Research Question 10

RQ10 examined the relationship between positive third-person effects and support for Internet filters in libraries. This hypothesis was not supported. There was no correlation between positive third-person effects and support for filters: $r = .01, p = .45$.

As discussed previously in the results of hypothesis 9, this lack of support for research question 10 was not affected by the frame manipulation (see Table 4.2).

Research Question 11a

RQ11 asked about the impact of government regulations on self and others. RQ11a asked whether people would perceive government regulations requiring Internet filters to have a greater negative effect on others or themselves. Paired Sample t-tests were used to answer RQ11a and RQ11b. The tests provided significant evidence that
people tend to perceive others ($M = 3.52$) as being more negatively affected by
government regulations requiring Internet filters in libraries than themselves: ($M = 3.23$):

\[ t(310) = 3.96, p < .001. \]

Research Question 11b

RQ11b asked whether people would perceive government regulations requiring
Internet filters to have a greater positive effect on others or themselves. Results show that
people tend to perceive others ($M = 3.53$): as being more positively affected by
government regulations requiring Internet filters in libraries than themselves: ($M = 3.21$)

\[ t(311) = 4.33, p < .001. \]

Research Question 12

Research Question 12 asked if computer ownership was a predictor of an
individual’s support for Internet filters in libraries. Computer ownership was not
significantly related to support for filters: $r = .01, p = .93$.

Research Question 13

Research Question 13 asked if home Internet access was a predictor of an
individual’s support for Internet filters in libraries. Home Internet access was not
significantly related to support for filters: $r = .02, p = .80$.

Research Question 14

The final research question asked which types of variables most strongly predict
people’s support for Internet filters in libraries: those inherent within a person, those
variables related to Internet filters in libraries, media use, or the frame condition. In order to reduce the number of variables used in this analysis and to maximize statistical power, the first step in answering this question was to examine the correlations between support for Internet filters and the variables of this study (see Table 4.1). Based on those correlations, only variables that were significantly linked to support for Internet filters were included in the analysis.

Based on the correlations, attributes inherent within a person included age, religiosity, self-ranked liberal-conservatism, parental status, grandparent status, and political knowledge. Variables related to Internet filters in libraries included percentage of time an individual reports surfing the Internet, Internet pornography use, and general pornography use. The items in the media use category included newspaper use and television news use. In order to assess the effect of the study’s framing manipulation two dummy variables were created to reflect the three framing conditions. Condition one was the anti-filter frame, condition two was the pro-filter frame, and condition three contained no frame.

In order to assess the relative strength of each set of variables in predicting support for Internet filters, four separate hierarchical multiple regressions were computed. In each, one set of variables was entered first so the relative variance explained by each set of variables could be assessed. The regression with the inherent personal attributes entered first had the greatest explanatory power; the results of that regression are the only ones reported here.
Overall, all the variables of the study explained 28.6% of the variance in support for Internet filters: $F(14, 247) = 5.25, p < .001$. Overall, attributes inherent within a person accounted for most of the variance in support for Internet filters (10.3%), followed by the framing manipulation (8.6%), followed by media use (5.4%), and lastly, contextual variables (4.3%).

The analysis revealed that several variables remain significant predictors of support for Internet filters in libraries, even when the other independent variables are taken into account. Conservatism ($\beta = .18, p < .01$) was a positive predictor of support for Internet filters in libraries. Political knowledge ($\beta = -.13, p < .05$), amount of time spent surfing the Internet ($\beta = -.15, p < .05$), and television news use ($\beta = -.16, p < .05$) were all negative predictors of support for Internet filters in libraries. The dummy variables were also significant components of the equation. Compared to those who read the frame focusing on problems with Internet filters in libraries, those who read the frame focusing on positive attributes of Internet filters were more likely to support Internet filters in libraries ($\beta = .25, p < .001$). Similarly, the control condition was more likely to support filters, compared to those who read the article negatively portraying Internet filters ($\beta = .26, p < .001$). The results are summarized in Table 4.3.
Table 4.3

Analysis of Research Question 13

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<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>$R^2$ change</th>
<th>Final $\beta$</th>
<th>Final $t$</th>
<th>$p &lt;$</th>
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*** $p < .001$

** $p < .01$

* $p < .05$
Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

This discussion examines the results and possible implications of the findings of this study. Each hypothesis and research question is discussed and then future research ideas are offered. Following this examination the limitations of the study are discussed.

The main purpose of this study was to identify variables that predict support for Internet filters in libraries. This is important information because the issue centers around two competing social goals – protecting freedom of speech, and protecting children. Identifying the variables that predict support for speech restrictions in libraries can shed light on how people strike this balance.

Ten hypotheses examined variables that might lead to support for Internet filters in libraries. Overall, the results of this thesis suggest that characteristics of individuals provide the best explanation for their willingness to support censorship of the Internet in public libraries. Fourteen research questions also helped to provide insight into what characteristics of individuals predict support for or against Internet filters in libraries. Each of the hypotheses and research questions are discussed within the four categories of variables examined in this study.
Variables Inherent Within a Person

Hypothesis 1

The results of H1 supported that age was a predictor of endorsement for Internet filters in libraries. Older people were more likely to support filters than those who were younger. The results of this hypothesis are consistent with findings from other studies examining age and willingness to censor pornographic material (Fisher et al., 2004; Lambe, 2002, 2003; Rojas et al., 1996; Thompson et al., 1990). Although other studies have found the opposite in terms of more general censorship attitudes (Naylor, Dwyer, & Bliss, 1995; Rojas et al., 1996; Salwen & Driscoll, 1997; Thompson, 1995) it can be speculated that in this study older people were more likely to support Internet filters due to the presence of pornography on the Internet. These divergent findings suggest that willingness to censor is, in part, dependent on the topic. There might be other reasons for this dichotomy such as different operational definitions of censorship (Lambe, 2002). Future research would benefit from an examination of a longitudinal impact of age on censorship. Does a person tend to support censorship of pornographic material more as they get older or are people's opinions of this issue more defined in terms of cohort differences?

Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis two predicted that women would be more likely than men to support Internet filters in libraries. The results of this study reveal no gender difference. These results are contrary to findings of prior research that found that women are more likely than men to support censorship when pornography is involved (Cowan, 1992; Fisher et
al., 1994; Gunther, 1995; Herrman & Bordner 1983; Immerwahr et al., 1982; Lambe, 2002, 2003; Nunn et al., 1978; Stouffer, 1995; Thompson et al., 1990; White, 1986; Wilson, 1975). Perhaps for this sample pornography was not as central an issue as it has been in some previous research. Perhaps the issue of protecting children from objectionable material had a stronger influence on people (particularly males) when trying to determine a balance between the two issues. A topic for future research would be to determine the variables, such as situations involving the protection of children that tend to sway men toward censorship of pornography.

Hypothesis 3

Research supports that people with less education tend to support censorship more than people with more education (Erskine, 1970; Gunther, 1995; Hense & Wright, 1992; Herrman & Bordner, 1983; Lambe, 2002, 2003; McLeod et al., 1998; Nunn et al., 1978; Rojas et al., 1996; Stouffer, 1955; Sullivan et al., 1982; Thompson et al., 1990; White, 1986; Wilson, 1975). The results in this study do not support the findings of this previous research. One reason for this inconsistency might be the particular sample used for this study. Most people who participated in this study were either currently enrolled in college or had a college education. There might not have been enough variance among lower levels of education; everyone in the study completed high school or had their G.E.D. Another reason why H3 was not supported might be due to a bias in age. The majority of participants whose highest level of completed education was high school or some-college were the 18 – 22 age bracket while the majority of participants who
completed schooling above these levels were parents of 18 – 22 year-olds. Future research should use a random sample in terms of education and test this hypothesis again.

**Hypothesis 4**

As predicted, people who ranked themselves as more conservative were more likely to support Internet filters in libraries than people who ranked themselves as more liberal, thus finding support for H4. These results are consistent with previous research (Erskine, 1970; Immerwahr & Doble, 1982; Lambe, 2002; Keum et al., 2003; McLeod et al., 1997; 1998; Rojas et al., 1996; Suedfeld et al., 1994; Wilson, 1975). Additional tests could be conducted with the data gathered for this study to determine if the “anti-filter” frame swayed conservatives to be less likely to support Internet filters in libraries or if the “pro-filter” frame swayed liberals to be more likely to support Internet filters.

**Hypothesis 5**

H5 predicted that an individual who has a higher general commitment to civil liberties will be less likely to support Internet filters in libraries than an individual with a lower commitment to civil liberties. Consistent with previous research, this hypothesis was supported (Lambe, 2003; Marcus et al., 1995; Sullivan et al. 1981; Sullivan et al., 1982; Thompson, 1995). Political tolerance research has previously examined variables within a person that lead them to have a higher or lower commitment to civil liberties. Researchers conducting censorship studies should include a measure of general commitment to civil liberties to include as a covariate with censorship attitudes.
Hypothesis 6

Hypothesis six predicted that people with lower political knowledge would tend to have more support for Internet filters in libraries. Support was found showing that the less political knowledge a person has the more that person will tend to support Internet filters in libraries. Some suggestions for future research in this area are to gather a national random sample to see if those individuals who have less knowledge about government and politics tend to support censorship more often than those who have more political knowledge. The link between conservatism/liberalism and political knowledge would be important to explore with a national random sample. This would serve as valuable information for First Amendment activists and politicians interested in educating the public about these issues.

Variables Specific to the Situation

Research Question 1

It was speculated that how much people think they know about the issue of Internet filters in libraries would influence their opinions of support for filters. No significant relationship was found between the two variables. One reason why no relationship was found might be due to selective perception of respondents. Klapper (1960) suggests that differences between people play an important role in how one interprets media content. He argues that people interpret media content in a way that reinforces and maintains their existing beliefs. Perhaps in this study self-ranked knowledge of the issue did not have a relationship with people's support for filters.
because each person interpreted their knowledge to be consistent with their beliefs about the issue.

A methodological reason for no connection between these two variables might be due to a lack of variance within the self-perceived knowledge variable. Respondents might not have perceived themselves as being very knowledgeable. Also, the measurement might not have been specific enough.

It would be valuable to change this portion of the study in two ways: first, to create a more specific measure with additional items, so that more variance is created and second, to sample individuals highly involved in the issue such as librarians, public school teachers and administration, as well as individuals involved in politics and the court system.

**Research Question 2**

Research question two asked if knowledge of the U.S. Supreme Court case *U.S. v. ALA* would predict support for Internet filters in libraries. Knowledge of the case did not have predictive power for support for Internet filters. The reason why this question was asked is because people tend to side with what they believe to be the legal norm (Tyler, 1990; Wright, 1994). Perhaps no support was found for this research question because of limited variance of knowledge of this case (very few people indicated that they knew about the ruling; see Table 5.1). An alternative explanation is that the legal norm is not clear in this specific situation – on one hand the Supreme Court declared that it is legal for the government to require Internet filters in libraries and on the other hand the Constitution states that the freedom of speech should be protected.
Table 5.1

Percentage of Respondents who Answered Each Actual Issue-Knowledge Question

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is a third-party filter?</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can you name three (3) brands of Internet filters?</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What does it mean if an Internet filters over-blocks?</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What did the Supreme Court rule on June 23, 2003 concerning Internet filters in public libraries?</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Question 3

Research question three asked if actual knowledge of the specifics of Internet filters would be a predictor of support for Internet filters in libraries. No support was found linking these two variables. Knowledge of the issue was thought to be an important factor because it enables people to make sense of their experiences in the social world (McQuail, 2002). McQuail also posits that information, images, and ideas provided by the media are people's main source of awareness of their past and present. Since Internet filters in libraries have been an issue in the media it was suspected that knowledge of the issue would influence people's opinions.

The reason why no support was found for this research question and the previous one might have been the type of questions used as well as their placement in the questionnaire. Short-answer questions were used to determine whether or not people had knowledge of the issue and knowledge of the case U.S. v. ALA. Most respondents left the questions blank (see Table 5.1 and Table 5.2). Also, the questions used to measure these two hypotheses were the final questions asked on all versions of the questionnaire.
Although this placement was purposeful as to not induce biases in other questions, it might have caused respondents to skip or overlook the questions. This might have led to the lack of variance for these variables. In a future study, these variables might be more effectively measured by multiple-choice questions rather than short-answer.

Table 5.2

| Number of Actual Issue-Knowledge Questions Answered by Respondents |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| None          | One           | Two           | Three         | Four          |
| 67.3%         | 19.2%         | 10.9%         | 2.2%          | 0.3%          |

Research Question 4

No support was found for the fourth research question, which asked if an individual's amount of Internet use was linked to whether or not they support Internet filters in libraries. Although support for Internet censorship in libraries has not been examined in regards to Internet use, previous research has shown significant relationships between Internet use and more personal variables such as depression and introversion (Petrie & Gunn, 1998).

The reason why no support was found might be due to the particular group of people sampled. A large majority of them were Internet users. Different results might be found if a sample is used where a portion of the sample does not use the Internet. As
more people are becoming technologically savvy it will be harder to find a random sample containing a large amount of variance with this variable.

Research Question 5

RQ5 asked if library Internet use was related to support for Internet filters in libraries. The two variables were related. More experience using the Internet in libraries was correlated with being less likely to support Internet filters in libraries. This is an interesting finding in that perhaps if more people had personal experience with library Internet use or more people were dependent on the library for Internet access, there might be a trend to have less support for the restriction. This is an unsettling finding since only 10% of the national population uses the Internet in public libraries (Swartz, 2003). This implies that the people who the restriction directly affects are only a small voice.

Research Question 6

No support was found for RQ6, which asked if public library use was related to support for Internet filters in libraries. It was speculated that these two variables might be connected in that if someone uses the public library they would likely be more sensitized to the issue. Although this study did not show support, it might serve valuable to examine this research question again with a different population, perhaps a random sample or one specific to library users. Again, a lack of variance might have muted this relationship.
Hypothesis 7

The results of this study found support for the hypothesis that people who use pornography tend to have less support for Internet filters in libraries. Previous research has also found that people who use pornography tend to have less support for censorship (Cowan, 1992; Fisher et al., 1994; Thompson et al., 1990). These results leave at least a few questions. Does this lack of support for censorship among pornography users fade or lessen with those who use pornography infrequently as compared to those who use it regularly? Also, if a person stops using pornography are they likely to change their opinion about censorship of pornography?

Research Question 7

Research question seven asked if parental status was related to support for Internet filters in libraries. As speculated, there was a relationship between these two variables. People with children were more likely to support Internet filters in libraries. This makes sense if people with children have a vested interested in protecting their children and people without children might be looking more at how the issue affects children generally or how it affects themselves. This research question exemplifies a central concept discussed in the first two chapters; the issue under examination is really a dilemma between two goods. It can be assumed that ideally most people would want to protect both children and the freedom of speech if they could, but in this particular circumstance a balance must be found between these two competing values. The findings of this study suggest that parental status is a contributor to this decision.
Research Question 8

Similar to RQ7, this research question examined how parental status affected support for Internet filters. The eighth research question asked if the age of children was related to support for Internet filters. Although no significant link was found in this study, it might have been due to the way it was analyzed. Children's ages were put into groups rather than looking at the raw age. A future analysis of this variable might lead to more insight into whether or not these two variables are related. It was speculated that those people with a younger child would have a vested interest and therefore have more support for Internet filters. Since only the youngest child's age was used in the analysis, at least one of two scenarios might explain why no relationship was found. Many people might have had older children in addition to their younger child and therefore might have been less sensitized to the protection of children from the Internet. Or, the reverse might have been the case; perhaps parents were more concerned about their older children (middle school and high school ages) since these age groups might be particularly interested in sexual content.

Hypothesis 8 and Research Question 9

Hypothesis eight predicted that people will tend to perceive that Internet pornography has a greater negative effect on others than on themselves. As previous research suggests (Gunther, 1995; Hoffner & Buchanan, 2002; Hoffner et al., 1999; Lo & Wei, 2002; Perloff, 1999; Price et al., 1997; Price et al., 1998; Rojas et al., 1996; Rucinski & Salmon, 1990; Salwen & Driscoll, 1997; Salwen & Dupagne, 1999; 2001; Shah et al., 1999), H8 was supported. Research question nine asked the same question
but in terms of positive effects of pornography. Research question nine was supported, showing that people generally perceived Internet pornography to have a greater positive effect on others than on themselves. Previous third-person research has generally only examined existence of a perceived effect without specifying whether the perceived effect is positive or negative. Both H8 and RQ9 add to existing research by showing that regardless of negative or positive perceptions of the effects of pornography, people tend to perceive themselves as being less affected than others. There are several different explanations as to why this might have happened. It could be due to a person's perception of how much they view pornography as compared to others. It could also be due to respondents' attempts to answer questions consistent with social norms. Or perhaps respondents answered questions in line with their actual beliefs.

Hypothesis 9 and Research Question 10

Hypothesis nine predicted that people who perceive a greater gap between the negative effects of Internet pornography on themselves and others will tend to support Internet filters in libraries more than those who perceive a smaller effects-gap. Despite previous research (Gunther, 1995; Hoffner & Buchanan, 2002; Hoffner et al., 1999; Lo & Wei, 2002; Rojas et al, 1996; Salwen, 1998; Shah, Faber, & Youn, 1999) no significant support was found for this hypothesis or research question 10, which asked if there was an effects-gap for perceptions of positive effects of Internet pornography on self and other.

Other third-person effect research has found a lack of support for the behavioral effect (Salwen & Driscoll, 1997; Rucinski & Salmon, 1990). Perloff (2002) discusses
several explanations of why some research might not show support for the behavioral component. In terms of civil liberties, he offers that people might be less likely to restrict the First Amendment due to fear of the effect of the restriction. The benefits of the restriction might not be viewed as worthwhile when considering the loss of fundamental rights. This rationale is supported by the framing effect found in this study.

A procedural reason why H9 and RQ10 might not have been supported is because there might not have been enough variance with whether or not people perceive themselves to be affected by Internet pornography. As the results from H8 and RQ9 imply, people tended not to perceive themselves as being affected by pornography either positively or negatively. As previously mentioned, a pressure to comply with social norms might have influenced the answers of some respondents. If the impact of social desirability could be removed or compensated for it would be interesting to see if the results for H9 and RQ10 would change.

Another procedural reason for a lack of support for H9 and RQ10 is due to the strength of the framing effect. As previously discussed, within the anti-filter frame the correlation between negative third-person effect and support for Internet filters is significant.

Research Question 11a

This research question was a modification of the third-person effect hypothesis. Third-person effect research generally examines the impact of media messages on people (Hoffner et al., 1999; Perloff, 1999; Price et al., 1997; Price et al., 1998; Rojas et al., 1996; Rucinski & Salmon, 1990; Salwen & Driscoll, 1997; Salwen & Dupagne, 1999;
2001; Shah et al., 1999), while this research question (and the following) asked about effects of government regulations on self and other. Research Question 1la asked if people perceived government regulations to have a greater negative affect on others or themselves. This study found that people tended to perceive others to be more negatively affected by government regulations than themselves. Although this question examined a different area than traditional third-person research, the result was similar in that people perceived others to be more affected.

Research Question 1lb

The second part of research question 11 showed findings similar to the first. This research question asked if people perceived government regulations to have a greater positive effect on others or themselves. Again, people perceived others to be more affected by government regulations than themselves. The findings for both parts of RQ1l are rather interesting in that regardless of whether or not the effect is positive or negative, people perceive others to be more affected by government regulations than themselves. This might imply that people tend to view themselves as not being vulnerable to the world around them. Perloff (2002) discusses the notion of ego-enhancement as it applies to the third-person effect. He explains that humans have a tendency to perceive the self in ways that make them look good or at least better than other people. Admitting that one can be influenced by the media (or by a government regulation on media) is like admitting gullibility, in other words, it’s admitting the possession of an undesirable trait.
These two research questions are examining a new area of third-person effects research. Previous research examining the third-person hypothesis has always looked at the effects of a medium on self and other and then asked about censorship of that medium. These questions are looking at perceived effects of censorship.

**Variables Pertaining to Media Use**

**Research Question 12**

There was speculation that computer ownership would be related to support for Internet filters in libraries. The two variables were not linked in this study. One reason this might have happened is because the large majority of the sample owned a computer so there was only minimal variance within the computer-ownership variable. A sample containing more variance among computer ownership status might provide different results to this research question.

**Research Question 13**

Research question 13 asked if home Internet access was related to individuals' support for Internet filters in libraries. Although home Internet access was not found to be related to support for filters, like the computer ownership variable, Internet access was very much widespread among this particular sample. Again, a study with more variance within this variable might provide a different conclusion to this research question.
Hypothesis 10

H10 predicted that participants who read the fabricated newspaper article that emphasized the importance of protecting children would be more likely to support Internet filters in libraries than the participants who read the fabricated newspaper article that portrays the possible consequences of Internet filters on free expression. As previous research predicts, (Brewer, 2002; Druckman, 2001; Keum et al., 2003; Nelson et al., 1997; Nelson & Oxley, 1999; Shah et al., 1996) support was found for this hypothesis showing that the frame version a respondent read made a significant difference in individuals' likeliness to support Internet filters in libraries. These results remained significant even when covariates were considered. The existence of framing effects is supported by these results. Nelson et al. (1997) offer a two fold theory regarding media framing. They claim that news organizations publicly state the underlying causes and consequences of social and political issues and offer potential remedies for these problems; this bias is then reflected in public opinion. The results for H10 clearly support this theory. The fabricated news articles used in this study were based on a current social issue (the use of Internet filters in public libraries) and offered a solution to the problem (protecting children in one article and protecting First Amendment rights in the other). A definite bias was found in the opinions of respondents who read different articles, thus supporting the theory.

This research has implications for biases caused by news media framing and even possibly framing effects from other types of media such as talk shows, dramas, and even
sitcoms. These results highlight the responsibility of the news media to provide an unbiased view. It also demonstrates the power and influence they can have on mass opinion just by framing facts in a particular light.

These results also suggest that there might have been a bias in how the news media reported the issue of Internet filters in libraries. The fact that the control group tended to side with censorship might imply that the news media framed the issue as one of protecting children more than one of protecting freedom of speech. A content analysis of media coverage compared with public opinion of this issue would provide insight into this speculation.

Some of the factors not examined in this study are how long the framing effect lasts. If it is a temporary bias, is there a primacy or recency effect? Future research might want to look at some of these issues using the variables in this study.

**The Strongest Predictor**

**Research Question 14**

RQ14 asked which types of variables most strongly predict people’s support for Internet filters in libraries: those inherent within a person, those specific to the situation, media use, or the frame. Variables inherent within a person accounted for more of the variance. After accounting for the variance due to factors inherent within people, the order of the other categories was: the frame, media use, and variables specific to the situation. This finding provides insight into how to approach informational or political campaigns involving Internet filters driven at either protecting children from
objectionable material or protecting First Amendment rights of adults. The variables that are innate within a person can provide a starting place for whom to target and with what type of message. This finding also shows that media coverage is an influential way to target people on this issue, although, this study does not indicate how long such a framing effect lasts, since respondents completed the survey in 20 – 30 minutes. This would be a good place for future research to expand knowledge of this issue. Another area for future research is to explore other variables that predict support for Internet filters. This study only explains 28.6% of the variance. Due to the purposive nature of the sample, several of the variables had very limited variance. Future studies can begin to fill in the 61.4% gap by examining these and other variables likely to be related to support for Internet filters in libraries.

Limitations

Although some limitations were mentioned throughout the previous sections of this discussion, this section will highlight some of the overall limitations of this study. First, as one of the major limitations in much of communication research, the population sampled in this study was not a randomized national sample. This makes it very difficult for the findings to be generalized to a larger population. This sample did not have a proportional sampling of race or gender. Although not asked on the questionnaire, it can be assumed that the sample was not representative of different socioeconomic classes. Also, the sample was gathered in the states of Delaware and Pennsylvania, which limits the studies generalizability among other geographic regions.
One of the fundamental limitations in this study was how variance in age was gathered. In terms of age, three main groups were gathered: college students, adults known by college students (primarily their parents), and parents of younger children. The majority of the sample was comprised of the first two groups mentioned. This created a split in age with only a minimal range in the middle. This might have caused a lack of significant results for hypotheses and research questions such as that dealing with children of respondents and children’s ages of respondents. In the case of the children-of-respondents variable, people with children tended to be specifically older and people without children tended to be younger without range in the middle – just by the nature of how the sample was collected.

Another limitation, discussed in brief earlier, was the format that was used for the issue knowledge questions. Very few respondents answered these questions, which made it difficult to find any significance when correlating this variable to others. It is likely that more people had knowledge of the issue of Internet filters in libraries; after all, it was highlighted in both local and national news. There is a strong possibility that if the questions had been multiple-choice, similar to the political knowledge scale, more people might have attempted answering the questions. It is speculated that people did not answer them not because they did not know but because it was the end of the questionnaire and those questions involved the most time.

The most prevalent limitation of this study was the way in which the “adults known by college students” sample was collected. College students were asked to find three adults, at least one male and one female, to fill out the survey in order to receive
extra credit in a college course. Surveys were provided to students during the last two weeks of the spring 2004 semester. During the examination of completed questionnaires it was suspected that some students handed in bogus questionnaires. As a result, for the questionnaires that blatantly had the same handwriting, only one questionnaire was used in this study from each of the three that were submitted. In total, 50 questionnaires were removed from the study for this reason.

Conclusion

Whether or not Internet filters should be required in public libraries is a complicated issue because of the dual interests at stake. This study shows that creating a balance between the competing values of protecting First Amendment rights and protecting children from objectionable material is influenced by many factors but overall, those characteristics within a person are the most influential. A predicted but nonetheless unsettling finding is the fact that news framing had the next strongest impact. This finding is one more confirmation of the power the media has on public opinion as well as the great responsibility of media to strive for objectivity.

Another important contribution of this study is its expanded use of the third-person hypothesis. The third-person hypothesis was broadened in two ways. In addition to the traditional negative effects of media content, this study examined the third-person effect in terms of positive effects. Additionally, this study examined the perceived effect not only of the medium but the government regulations of that medium. The results support the idea that ego-enhancement is an important mechanism behind third-person perceptual differences.
This study provides those concerned about Internet filters in libraries with a
description of those likely to be for or against restrictions. Knowing these variables can
be valuable in order to target a message to a particular audience. Taking these variables
into consideration is worthwhile because as this study shows, media messages about this
issue can potentially have an effect on how individuals strike a balance between two
competing values.

An integral contribution of this study is that it has furthered knowledge
concerning the freedom of speech and new technologies, which is a vital part of
redefining the boundaries of U.S. law so that it continues to apply to our technologically
changing society.

Finally, although this study answers many of the proposed questions, there is still
much to be learned about the issue of restricting the Internet in libraries as well as civil
liberty issues in general. There is more to examine regarding how people form a balance
between restricting the freedom of speech and protecting children. It is a complicated
issue because there is no straightforward solution. The best that can be done is to break
apart the issue, as done in this study, and weigh the options carefully.
Appendix A

SURVEY INSTRUMENT
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Democratic</th>
<th>Anti-filters</th>
<th>Support for Self-ranked Pornography</th>
<th>Demographic</th>
<th>Political</th>
<th>Actual issue</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
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<th>Person</th>
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<th>Filters</th>
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Table A.1

Breakdown of Questionnaire Versions
Civil Liberties Issues Survey

University of Delaware
Department of Communication

For questions, please contact:

Myriah S. Goldenberg
Department of Communication
250 Pearson Hall
Newark, DE 19716
myriah@udel.edu
(610) 329-0742
Survey

This survey is investigating public opinion of current civil liberties issues. The following questions are asking for your opinion. There are no right or wrong answers.

There are seven brief sections of this survey. There are instructions at the beginning of each section. Please read each set of instructions carefully. Please indicate only one answer for each question. The entire survey will take about 20 minutes to complete.

What is your date of birth?

MM/DD/YYYY

SECTION ONE: On a scale of 1-6, please rank your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

1. If someone is suspected of treason or other serious crimes, he should not be entitled to be released on bail.
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   Strongly Agree
   Strongly Disagree

2. Society shouldn't have to put up with those who have political ideas that are extremely different from the majority.
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   Strongly Agree
   Strongly Disagree

3. When the country is in great danger we may have to force people to testify against themselves even if it violates their rights.
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   Strongly Agree
   Strongly Disagree

4. Free speech ought to be allowed for all political groups even if some of the things these groups believe in are highly insulting and threatening to particular segments of society.
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   Strongly Agree
   Strongly Disagree

5. No matter what a person's political beliefs are, he is entitled to the same legal rights and protections as anyone else.
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   Strongly Agree
   Strongly Disagree

6. It is refreshing to hear someone stand up for an unpopular view.
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   Strongly Agree
   Strongly Disagree

7. I believe in free speech for all no matter what their views might be.
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   Strongly Agree
   Strongly Disagree
SECTION TWO: On a scale of 1-6, please rank your level of agreement with each of the following statements:

8. Pornography is harmful to those who view it.
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   Strongly Agree

9. It’s okay to view pornography.
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   Strongly Agree

10. I would never want my spouse to look at pornography.
    1 2 3 4 5 6
    Strongly Agree

11. Internet pornography is not harmful to children.
    1 2 3 4 5 6
    Strongly Agree

12. The Internet is unsafe for children because of pornography.
    1 2 3 4 5 6
    Strongly Agree

13. Internet filters are the best way to protect children from Internet pornography.
    1 2 3 4 5 6
    Strongly Agree

14. Internet pornography has a positive effect on me.
    1 2 3 4 5 6
    Strongly Agree

15. Internet pornography has a negative effect on other people.
    1 2 3 4 5 6
    Strongly Agree

16. Internet pornography has a negative effect on me.
    1 2 3 4 5 6
    Strongly Agree

17. Internet pornography has a positive effect on other people.
    1 2 3 4 5 6
    Strongly Agree

18. Government regulations of the Internet have a negative effect on me.
    1 2 3 4 5 6
    Strongly Agree

19. Government regulations of the Internet have a positive effect on other people.
    1 2 3 4 5 6
    Strongly Agree

20. Government regulations of the Internet have a negative effect on others.
    1 2 3 4 5 6
    Strongly Agree

21. Government regulations of the Internet have a positive effect on me.
    1 2 3 4 5 6
    Strongly Agree
22. The first amendment gives us the right to free speech on the Internet.
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   Strongly Agree
   Strongly Disagree

23. Internet filters inhibit our right to access information freely.
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   Strongly Agree
   Strongly Disagree

24. Internet filters tend to block non-pornographic information.
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   Strongly Agree
   Strongly Disagree

25. The first amendment does not apply to those Americans publishing on the Internet.
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   Strongly Agree
   Strongly Disagree

26. Internet filters block pornographic material.
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   Strongly Agree
   Strongly Disagree

27. Even with an Internet filter in place an individual can still view pornographic material.
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   Strongly Agree
   Strongly Disagree

28. Internet filters are beneficial tools for libraries.
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   Strongly Agree
   Strongly Disagree

29. Internet filters should be required in public places with Internet access.
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   Strongly Agree
   Strongly Disagree

30. The benefits of Internet filters in libraries outweigh the costs.
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   Strongly Agree
   Strongly Disagree

31. I support requiring Internet filters in libraries.
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   Strongly Agree
   Strongly Disagree

32. Requiring Internet filters in libraries is against our first amendment rights as Americans.
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   Strongly Agree
   Strongly Disagree

33. Internet filters in libraries do not interfere with anyone's first amendment rights.
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   Strongly Agree
   Strongly Disagree

34. A government regulation requiring Internet filters in libraries and other public places would have a negative effect on society.
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   Strongly Agree
   Strongly Disagree

SECTION THREE: On a scale of 1-6, please rank your level of knowledge of each of the following:

35. The workings of Internet filters

36. Current free speech issues in society
   1 2 3 4 5 6
   I don't have Very any Knowledge Knowledgeable

   1 2 3 4 5 6
   I don't have Very any Knowledge Knowledgeable
37. Rights of Americans
1 2 3 4 5 6
I don’t have Very
any Knowledge Knowledgeable

38. Civil liberties issues
1 2 3 4 5 6
I don’t have Very
any Knowledge Knowledgeable

39. Issues concerning the protection of America’s youth from Internet pornography.
1 2 3 4 5 6
I don’t have Very
any Knowledge Knowledgeable

SECTION FOUR: The next section asks you to please provide some information about yourself:

40. Your age: __________

41. Your gender (circle one): male female

42. I am:
1 2 3 4 5 6
Very Liberal
Very Conservative

43. How far did you go in school? (Please check the highest level of education you have completed.)

___ elementary school
___ high school
___ some college or 2-year degree
___ graduated from college
___ graduate/professional school (please specify)
___ vocational school or other (please specify)

44. Your race: (check one)

___ African American
___ Asian American
___ Caucasian American
___ Hispanic/Latino American
___ Native American
___ I am not a U.S. citizen
___ Other: ________________________

45. How religious do you consider yourself?

___ deeply religious
___ fairly religious
___ not very religious
___ not religious at all

46. I use the Internet:

___ Everyday
___ 3-4 times a week
___ 1-2 times a week
___ Almost never

47. If you answered “Everyday” above, about how many hours a day do you use the Internet? I use the Internet about _____ hours per day.


49. Of the time I spend on the Internet I spend _____% of it using e-mail.

50. Of the time I spend on the Internet I spend _____% of it using Instant Messaging (IM).

51. I watch TV (all types of programming):

___ Everyday
___ 3-4 times a week
___ 1-2 times a week
___ Almost never

52. If you answered “Everyday” above, about how many hours a day do you watch TV? I watch TV about _____ hours per day.
53. I watch TV News:
   ___ Everyday
   ___ 3-4 times a week
   ___ 1-2 times a week
   ___ Almost never

54. If you answered “Everyday” above, about how many hours a day do you watch TV News?
I watch TV News about ____ hours per day.

55. I read the newspaper:
   ___ Everyday
   ___ 3-4 times a week
   ___ 1-2 times a week
   ___ Almost never

56. If you answered “Everyday” above, about how many hours a day do you read the newspaper?
I read the newspaper about ____ hours per day.

57. I have ____ children. (If you are either the parent or guardian).
   Their ages are: _____________________.

58. I have ____ grandchildren.
   Their ages are: _____________________.

59. I own a computer.
   Yes  No

60. I have an e-mail address.
   Yes  No

61. I have home Internet access.
   Yes  No

62. If you answered yes to the question above, do you have an Internet filter running on your computer?
   Yes  No

63. I have access to the Internet at work.
   Yes  No

64. I have surfed the Internet on a computer that has an Internet filter.
   Yes  No

65. If you answered yes to the question above, did you experience any problems?
   Yes  No

66. If yes, please describe
    ______________________________________
    ______________________________________
    ______________________________________

67. I use the public library (not including a college or university library):
   ___ At least once a week
   ___ At least once a month
   ___ Several times a year
   ___ Rarely
   ___ I've never used a public library

68. I use the Internet in the public library (not including a college or university library):
   ___ At least once a week
   ___ At least once a month
   ___ Several times a year
   ___ Rarely
   ___ I've never used the Internet in a public library

69. I view pornography:
   ___ About once a week
   ___ About once a month
   ___ Several times a year
   ___ Rarely
   ___ Never

70. I view Internet pornography:
   ___ About once a week
   ___ About once a month
   ___ Several times a year
   ___ Rarely
   ___ Never
SECTION FIVE: Here are a few questions about the government in Washington. Many people don't know these answers, so if there are some you don't know, just check the space and move on.

71. Do you happen to know what job or political office is now held by Dick Cheney?

_________________  don’t know/not sure

72. Whose responsibility is it to determine if a law is constitutional or not? Is it the President, the Congress, or the Supreme Court?

____ President  ____ Congress  ____ Supreme Court

73. How much of a majority is required for the U.S. Senate to override a presidential veto?

_________________  don’t know/not sure

74. Which political party has the most members in the House of Representatives?

_________________  don’t know/not sure

75. Which political party is more conservative at the national level?

_________________  don’t know/not sure
SECTION SIX: Finally, here are a few questions about a current civil liberties issue. If you don't know the answer, check the space and move on.

76. What is a third-party Internet filter?

________________________________________

________________________________________

don't know/not sure

77. Can you name three (3) brands of Internet filters?

________________________________________

________________________________________

don't know/not sure

78. What does it mean if an Internet filter overblocks?

________________________________________

________________________________________

don't know/not sure

79. What did the Supreme Court rule on June 23, 2003 concerning Internet filters in public libraries?

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

I don't know/not sure
Appendix B

Framing Manipulation
FILTERS PROTECT

Susan Millbury, a Delaware Valley librarian, said she received 3 complaints already this month from library patrons who were with their children and unexpectedly saw another library user viewing pornography on the Internet. "It’s a difficult situation," Millbury said, "we’ve tried posting rules. We’ve even tried educating parents and children."

One of Millbury’s largest concerns is for the protection of children. She explains it is her job as a librarian to make the library a safe place for kids. "It is easy to see the absurdity of uncontrolled Internet access for children and other patrons," Millbury said.

Several other libraries in the area have turned to Internet filters to sort through the vast amount of information on the Internet. Internet filters are a proactive way in which librarians and others in charge of public Internet access can prevent pornography from making its way into public venues. Internet filters are computer software programs that assist these professionals in restricting pornographic content.

Millbury said she and other librarians she works with are planning to implement Internet filters in their library as soon as the board of trustees passes their request.

Millbury said Internet filters will be significantly more effective than other methods they have tried. She adds, "My staff and I won’t be content until we know that we’ve done our job as best we can."
FILTERS ARE FLAWED

Susan Millbury, a Delaware Valley librarian, said she received 3 complaints already this month from library patrons who were unable to access information on the World Wide Web due to Internet filters. “I’ve had it,” Millbury said, “we’ve tried lowering the filter settings but they still seem to block legitimate websites.”

One of Millbury’s largest concerns is full access to information. She explains that it is her job as a librarian to make sure people are able to have access to a variety of information. “You never know which websites are going to be blocked by a filter.”

Several other libraries in the area have removed the Internet filters from their computers. Internet filters are seen as a poor substitute for librarians who otherwise select content in a pro-active manner. Millbury explains, it is these librarians and other professionals who should be choosing content, not computer software.

Millbury said she and other librarians she works with are planning to remove the Internet filters in their library as soon as the board of trustees passes their request.

“Internet filters are only harming our library,” Millbury said, “finally our patrons won’t have to feel like they’re only able to access part of the information that’s available to them.”
Appendix C

INSTRUCTION SHEETS ACCOMPANYING SURVEY
INFORMATION ABOUT THE CIVIL LIBERTIES SURVEY

This survey asks about people's opinions of civil liberties issues related to communication. We will also ask you some questions about yourself. You are selected as a possible participant because you live in the Pennsylvania or Delaware area, and may be concerned about these issues. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Myriah Goldenberg, a Master's candidate, and Dr. Jennifer Lambe, a faculty member in the Department of Communication at the University of Delaware.

Background Information & Procedures:
This study examines individual's opinions about civil liberties issues pertaining to the Internet. The results will be developed into a Master's thesis and possibly submitted to academic conferences and journals. If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to express your level of agreement to questions addressing civil liberties issues and the Internet. The questions will take about 20 minutes to answer. You will be asked to do this only once. Participation is strictly voluntary.

Risks of Being in the Study
There are no foreseeable risks.

Confidentiality
The records of this study will be kept private. Results from this study will be presented as statistical summaries, but no information will be presented about individual respondents. About 600 people will complete this survey. Research records will be kept in a secure file; I will be the only one with access to these files.

Voluntary Nature of the Study
Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Delaware. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:
The researcher conducting this study is Myriah Goldenberg, a Master's candidate in the Department of Communication. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you may contact Myriah Goldenberg at (610) 329-0742. If you have questions about the rights of research subjects more generally, you may contact T. W. Fraser Russell, Vice Provost for Research at the University of Delaware at (302) 831-4007.
INFORMATION ABOUT THE CIVIL LIBERTIES SURVEY

This survey asks about people's opinions of civil liberties issues related to communication. We will also ask you some questions about yourself. You are selected as a possible participant because you are a student in the Department of Communication and may be especially interested in the issue being investigated. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate in this study. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Myriah Goldenberg, a Master's candidate, and Dr. Jennifer Lambe, a faculty member in the Department of Communication at the University of Delaware.

Background Information & Procedures:
This study examines individual's opinions about civil liberties issues pertaining to the Internet. The results will be developed into a Master's thesis and possibly submitted to academic conferences and journals. If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to express your level of agreement to questions addressing civil liberties issues and the Internet. The questions will take about 20 minutes to answer. You will be asked to do this only once. Participation is strictly voluntary.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study
There are no foreseeable risks of being involved in this study.

You will get credit in one of your current Communication classes for participation in this study. Be sure to inform whoever is administering this research to include your name and Communication class number on the sign-up sheet. You may also complete an alternative assignment for extra credit if you choose not to participate in this study.

Confidentiality
The records of this study will be kept private. Results from this study will be presented as statistical summaries, but no information will be presented about individual respondents. Because you do not need to write your name on this survey there is no way that you can be identified. About 600 people will complete this survey. Research records will be kept in a secure file; the investigator will be the only one with access to these files.

Voluntary Nature of the Study
Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Delaware. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:
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INSTRUCTIONS

Enclosed please find 2 surveys to be filled out. Using the instructions below, you will be responsible for finding 2 different adults who have children to complete these surveys. Thank you for your help!

1. PLEASE SELECT 2 ADULTS (NOT COLLEGE AGE) ONE MALE, ONE FEMALE WHO HAVE CHILDREN AND ASK THEM TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY. (Their children can be of any age.)

2. Keep in mind, respondents should be people who are willing to participate and capable of answering. People are not required to participate. Be polite if they refuse.

3. Give respondents time and space to complete the survey. They should complete it by themselves (NOT in groups or with other people). They should NOT discuss the questions with you or anyone else.

4. If any of the respondents would like to know more about the research project, they may e-mail Myriah Goldenberg at myriah@udel.edu or call the Department of Communication at (302) 831-8041.

5. ASK THE RESPONDENT TO SEAL THE SURVEY IN THE ENVELOPE AND ASSURE THEM THAT THEIR RESPONSES ARE CONFIDENTIAL AND ANONYMOUS.

6. Thank the respondent for participating.

7. Please INDICATE YOUR NAME on the outside of each envelope after the questionnaire has been collected so that you receive credit for completing this assignment.

8. As soon as your 2 surveys are complete, please HAND THEM IN TO THE COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT, 250 Pearson Hall. Do NOT discard any surveys. If you have special problems collecting information or would like to complete an alternate assignment, contact Myriah Goldenberg (myriah@udel.edu).

9. SURVEYS ARE DUE NO LATER THAN: MAY 27TH, 2004 BY 3PM TO 250 PEARSON HALL.

Again, thank you for your help with this research project!
REFERENCES


_Ashcroft v. American Civil Liberties Union, et al., 00-1293, 2002._


Internet-Filter.net: Software tools for safe Internet access.


124


