AIDS prevention advertising: Different message strategies for different communication objectives

June Marchand and Pierre Filiatrault
Laval University, Marketing Department, Quebec G1K 7P4, Canada;
Tel: +1 418 656 2131/7863; Fax: +1 418 656 2624; e-mail: june.marchand@mrk.ulaval.ca
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June Marchand is a professor in the Department of Marketing at Laval University. She received her PhD from the University of Quebec in Montreal. Her main research interests are in the area of social marketing and advertising. Her research has been published in books, various proceedings and journals, including the Journal of Advertising Research. This paper won the first prize for the Best Canadian Social Marketing Paper, a competition organised by the Centre for Social Marketing at Carleton University (Ottawa).

Pierre Filiatrault is a professor in the Department of Marketing at the University of Quebec in Montreal. He received his PhD from Laval University. His research interests are in the area of service marketing and marketing management. Professor Filiatrault’s research has been published in various journals, including the Journal of Consumer Research, Industrial Marketing Management and the Journal of Psychology. He is also co-author of books on banking marketing and service marketing.

ABSTRACT
AIDS prevention, especially when it concerns young adults, is a very serious matter. As a topic to advertise, it is therefore particularly challenging. Public policy makers have the difficult task of finding the message strategy most likely to persuade the target group while, at the same time, showing consideration for parents’ sensitivities. This study attempts to address this problem by testing three different message strategies on AIDS prevention: a rational strategy, an emotional strategy based on a negative emotion (fear), and an emotional strategy based on a positive emotion (rewarding improved behaviour). The results suggest that the rational message strategy generated more personal concern for AIDS prevention and the emotional message strategy based on a negative emotion presented a positive impact on behaviour intentions.

INTRODUCTION
For more than a decade now, information has been one of the primary weapons available in preventing transmission of the AIDS virus. Thus, a good advertising campaign promises to be a very useful and persuasive tool. A well-conceived message, however, is very difficult to obtain, especially in this particular context.

As opposed to traditional consumer goods advertising, prevention advertising involves certain characteristics which make the message strategy much more difficult to determine. For example prevention advertising often provokes a negative reaction from the target group since it condemns their actual behaviour, telling individuals that what they are doing is wrong and that they must change their habits. Also, in the particular
context of AIDS prevention, open discussion about sex, and young adults’ sexuality in particular, continues to be a sensitive topic. Thus, the message strategy has to be original enough to catch the target group’s attention, argumentative enough to be convincing, and subtle enough not to offend parents or certain social or religious groups.

To date, no research has provided irrefutable proof that any one message strategy is more effective than others in preventing the spread of AIDS. The study by Flora and Maibach, however, provides some insights by proving that emotional messages are more likely to be remembered than rational messages. This study attempts to take Flora and Maibach’s study one step further by testing, in addition to a rational strategy, specific emotions that could be used as message strategy. Thus, three message strategies were tested in this research: a rational strategy; an emotional strategy based on a negative emotion; and an emotional strategy based on a positive emotion.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Almost 50 years of research in health promotion has taught that a good mass communication campaign, although not sufficient, is a very effective way to obtain deep-seated attitudes and ingrained behaviours. Health information is a crucial element in a preventive approach but, in isolation from other kinds of reinforcement, it will not be powerful enough to generate long-term changes. In fact, five steps are necessary for a new behaviour to be adopted. First, the problem must be put on the public agenda (‘agenda setting’) and secondly, people must be informed adequately. Even if those two steps can be carried out, however, with a good mass media campaign, it is not enough to change ingrained behaviour. Consequently, as a third step, the campaign has to provoke interpersonal communication among all those concerned with the problem and mechanisms to facilitate those exchanges have to be organised. Fourthly, those who did succeed in changing their behaviour must be reinforced for having done so. And finally, community and government involvement should supplement the media; in other words, social support must be present. Unless those five steps have been completed, it is highly unlikely that the long-term maintenance of individual level effects will be achieved.

Nevertheless, health information is a key element in a preventive campaign because relevant health information empowers individuals to take charge of their own health. Although much has been written about what should be said in a message aimed at changing behaviour (use of accurate information, relevant appeals, list of solutions to the problem, and so on), with the exception of the use of fear, few studies have studied how the message should be delivered.

The very first studies on the use of fear as a message strategy were conducted in the early 1950s. It is generally believed that the use of fear is effective for many health issues, as long as the audience is given a constructive way of reducing the fear. Fear will demarcate the advertisement from others and will get more attention from the audience, thus providing the motivation to process information. But fear can also have an inhibiting influence. If the audience feels attacked by a level of fear that is too high, an avoiding and defensive reaction in the audience can be observed, thus cancelling out the message’s persuasive effect. In a study on condom advertising, Zaichkowsky reported that respondents who were mainly young adults, the main target of AIDS prevention campaigns, do
not at all consider themselves at risk. Consequently, she concluded that a creative strategy based on fear will automatically cause the target audience to deny the message arguments. Also, many individual and/or environmental characteristics moderate or modify the impact of this technique. Individual level of involvement, prior knowledge, peer influence, and a sensation-seeking character are but a few of the many variables studied as moderators in the influence of a message based on fear.

Although the use of fear can still be an effective strategy, other emotions could be used in a message. McCarty\(^{11}\) refers to an individual’s subjective norms, the concern about others’ perception of themselves, as a factor of influence in the process of choosing a contraceptive method. As for Zaichkowsky’s study, it is suggested that since the use of condoms is a ‘masculine’ method, the best message strategy to promote the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases (such as AIDS) would be to inform men about women’s positive attitude towards this method. This message strategy also supports the recommendations made by Gros\(^{12}\) that AIDS prevention campaigns that target young adults should give ‘a positive image of their own sexuality, inducing the desire to be more self responsible without being pushed by fear or guilt’.

Finally, the last strategy that could also be effective is to adopt a straightforward and factual approach. A message that is rational and educational instead of emotional and persuasive can be a useful alternative, especially if the preciseness of the information has to be controlled in the different media. This strategy is appropriate during the agenda-setting period and when the target audience is the population at large.

The limits associated with the AIDS context amplify the difficulties associated with social campaigns in general. Even if it is now assumed that, in a difficult context, the best role for a prevention campaign is to inform the public, to put the problem on the public agenda and to help create a social environment that facilitates changing behaviour, ‘much of the research has looked at the impact of information rather than the characteristics of that information, not enough has focused on characteristics of messages and the impact of different characteristics’.\(^{13}\) It is precisely with this in mind that the present study was conducted.

**MESSAGE STRATEGY**

The choice of the three message strategies tested in this study finds some support in theory or in practice.

First, according to the Hierarchy of Effect Model,\(^{14}\) a rational strategy is especially appropriate when the communication objectives are awareness or comprehension, since facts activate information processing, which leads to persuasion. Thus, given that AIDS prevention is a complicated matter to discuss, a rational strategy could be expected to be effective.

In practice, however, emotional approaches are widely used. For example it has been shown that the use of fear has a significant impact on persuasion in similar contexts.\(^{15}\) Thus, the second message strategy tested in this study is based on fear, which is a negative emotion.

Finally, although many authors recommend that a positive image of sexuality in AIDS prevention advertising be presented,\(^{16}\) little attention has been paid thus far to a message strategy based on this type of appeal. Therefore, it seemed relevant to test this strategy in the present study by including a message based on rewarding improved behaviour, which evokes a positive emotion.
METHOD

Stimulus

Designing the commercials was not an easy task. These were two major constraints. First, the commercials had to be perceived as sufficiently different to represent the different creative strategies tested. This aspect was verified through manipulation checks (to be explained further). Secondly, at the same time, the commercials had to be sufficiently similar not to introduce uncontrolled variance. This last constraint needs to be explained in more detail.

The objective of this research was to measure the impact of different creative strategies by measuring respondents’ reactions. Thus, this reaction has to be caused by the creative strategy itself, that is, by the commercial as a whole. What has to be avoided absolutely is to have the respondent’s evaluation influenced by one particular element of the commercial, present in this one but not in the others and not inherent to the creative strategy itself. For example it is possible that the use of a blond woman in one commercial and a brunette in the other could have an impact on the commercial evaluation that has nothing to do with the creative strategy itself. Special attention was given to this problem.

Three original television commercials were then designed with the creative vice-president of one of Montreal’s top advertising agencies. The scenarios were different, but the same basic technical elements were used in all three commercials. For example the same two actors played all the different roles, the commercials all lasted 30 seconds and they presented exactly the same verbal content. In fact, in order to transmit in precisely the same way the same number of identical information elements, the soundtrack of the rational strategy was used as a voice-over for the two other commercials (see Appendix A for the complete scenarios).

Measurement of respondents’ reactions

Three measures of respondents’ reactions were used in the research: cognitive responses (or spontaneous thoughts evoked by the ad); attitude towards the topic of the ad; and attitude towards the style of the ad.

Cognitive responses

The cognitive responses were classified into seven categories, which are presented in Table 1. Three independent judges reached an 85.7 per cent classification consensus from content analysis and Cohen’s kappa was 0.71.

Attitude towards the topic of the ad

Attitude towards the topic of the ad was measured according to the tridimensional paradigm of attitude; the cognitive, affective and conative dimensions were each evaluated by five statements (Likert-type scale).

The reliability test performed on the data produced a Cronbach’s alpha of 0.66 for the cognitive dimension, 0.70 for the affective dimension and 0.65 for the conative dimension. The coefficient obtained for the overall instrument was 0.84.

A factorial analysis was performed on the data (Varimax rotation), leading to the identification of two factors (Table 2). Semantic examination of items showed that the first factor was a measure of commercial efficiency (ie informational and educational aspects, interest, and its potential impact on behaviour), while the second factor represented an affective dimension as five of the seven items were exclusively affective. One item, which was almost equally correlated with the
Most previous studies have measured only the affective dimension of attitude by means of attribute scales. In this study, a new instrument was developed with complete statements (a Likert-type scale), based on the tridimensional paradigm of attitude. Five statements measured each dimension, for a total of 15 items (Appendix B). Cronbach’s alphas were 0.81 for the cognitive dimension, 0.80 for the affective dimension, and 0.85 for the conative dimension. The overall coefficient was 0.91.

A factorial analysis (Varimax rotation) revealed three factors that represented almost perfectly the conative (Factor 1), cognitive (Factor 2), and affective (Factor 3) dimensions (Table 3). Only two items were eliminated (items 7 and 13).

Table 1: Cognitive response categories used in this research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support argument</td>
<td>Statements supporting the commercial topic or its arguments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counter argument</td>
<td>Statements showing a discrepancy between the respondent’s beliefs and the commercial topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity</td>
<td>Statements expressing interest in additional information about the commercial topic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection</td>
<td>Statements where the respondent refers to him/herself, or makes a link between the commercial topic and him/herself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive execution</td>
<td>Statements supporting the style of the ad, from a visual or verbal point of view</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative execution</td>
<td>Statements made against the style of the ad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive emotion</td>
<td>Statements showing that a positive emotion was experienced while watching the commercial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative emotion</td>
<td>Statements showing that a negative emotion was experienced while watching the commercial</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attitude towards the style of the ad

Since the main purpose of this study was to evaluate different message strategies, special attention was paid to the measurement of attitude towards the style of the ad.

Table 2: Factor loadings of the measure of attitude towards the topic of the ad

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factor 1: Commercial efficiency</th>
<th>Factor 2: Affective dimension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AT4</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT5</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT11</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT10</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT15</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT7</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT14</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT1</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT13</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT6</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT12</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT3</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT2</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT9</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT8</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of explained variance</td>
<td>25.41</td>
<td>24.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most previous studies have measured only the affective dimension of attitude by means of attribute scales. In this study, a new instrument was developed with complete statements (a Likert-type scale), based on the tridimensional paradigm of attitude. Five statements measured each dimension, for a total of 15 items (Appendix B). Cronbach’s alphas were 0.81 for the cognitive dimension, 0.80 for the affective dimension, and 0.85 for the conative dimension. The overall coefficient was 0.91.

A factorial analysis (Varimax rotation) revealed three factors that represented almost perfectly the conative (Factor 1), cognitive (Factor 2), and affective (Factor 3) dimensions (Table 3). Only two items were eliminated (items 7 and 13).

Subjects

Adults enrolled in summer classes at a major Montreal university were asked to participate. They were run in large groups on a voluntary basis. Experiments took place in the classroom. More than 500 questionnaires were completed, but only those completed by young adults, that is aged between 18 and 25 years, were kept for analysis.

The average age of the sample group was 22 years and included 152 female and
126 male respondents. The results of the different tests performed on the data showed no difference between treatment conditions based on sociodemographic or other personal characteristics measured.

**Experimental design**
A three-group between-subject design was used and subjects were randomly assigned to one of the three treatment conditions: the rational message strategy; the emotional message strategy based on a positive emotion; or the emotional message strategy based on a negative emotion.

**Procedure**
The commercials were shown and, as suggested by Wright, the subjects were given a period of two minutes to write down their thoughts. The subjects were given the following instructions: ‘You have just seen a commercial on AIDS prevention. Please write down every thought you had during its showing. Note everything that crossed your mind, even if not related to the commercial.’ The respondents were given a full page for their answers.

Attitude towards the topic of the ad and attitude towards the style of the ad were measured. Finally, questions on sociodemographic characteristics were asked and a procedure for detecting demand artifacts (post-inquiry technique) was applied. Of the 300 questionnaires completed, 7.3 per cent (22) were rejected because of potential artifact contamination, leaving a total of 278 for analysis. Of these, 100 respondents were exposed to the rational commercial, 81 to the negative emotion commercial and 97 to the positive emotion commercial.

**RESULTS**

**Manipulation checks**
Eighteen statements were used to measure how each message strategy was
each one measuring, respectively, the fear-arousal aspect (Factor 1), the positive image of sexuality aspect (Factor 2), and the rational aspect (Factor 3). The Cronbach’s alpha obtained was 0.9213 for Factor 1; 0.8317 for Factor 2; and 0.8539 for Factor 3.

Success of the manipulation
Each one of the three commercials has been evaluated on each one of the three aspects measured by manipulation check items: fear-arousal; positive image of sexuality; and rational aspects.

Two series of tests were performed. The first series was to verify the ‘within-group’ difference. Therefore, for each message strategy, the objective was to determine if there was a significant difference between:

— the rational aspect and the positive image of sexuality aspect
— the fear-arousal aspect and the positive image of sexuality aspect

Table 4: Factor loadings of the measure of the manipulation check

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factor 1: Fear-arousal aspect</th>
<th>Factor 2: Positive image aspect</th>
<th>Factor 3: Rational aspect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N3</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>-0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N4</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>-0.18</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N2</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N6</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N1</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>-0.20</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P5</td>
<td>-0.33</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P2</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P4</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P1</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P6</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R6</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R5</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R4</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of explained variance</td>
<td></td>
<td>35.94</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

perceived: whether it was seen as transmitting facts ‘rationally’, that is, without emotion (six items); as conveying a positive image of sexuality (six items); or as fear-arousing (six items) (see Appendix C for items).

Measure reliability
A factorial analysis (Varimax rotation) performed on the data revealed the presence of four factors. Based on the items/factors correlation matrix, four items were removed: two items (P3 and R1) because of their weak correlation with the factors; one item (R3) because it forms a unique factor by itself (it seems that the respondents did not understand the notion of ‘impartiality’); and one last item (N5) associated with items measuring the perception of a positive image of sexuality while it was supposed to measure the frightening aspect of the commercial.

A second factorial analysis (Varimax rotation) revealed three factors (Table 4),
— the fear-arousal aspect and the rational aspect

All results were conclusive ($F(2,275) = 21.41$, $p < 0.0001$; $F(2,275) = 74.64$, $p < 0.0001$; $F(2,275) = 123.57$, $p < 0.0001$, respectively). Thus, there were significant differences between the three aspects measured within each commercial.

The second series of tests was to verify the ‘between-group’ difference. The objective was to determine whether the message strategy was perceived differently from the two others on:

— the fear-arousal aspect
— the positive image of sexuality aspect
— the rational aspect

Once again, the results were significant ($F(2,275) = 142.42$, $p < 0.0001$ for the fear-arousal aspect; $F(2,275) = 85.71$, $p < 0.0001$ for the positive image of sexuality aspect; and $F(2,275) = 39.53$, $p < 0.0001$ for the rational aspect). The three commercials were perceived differently on each aspect tested: the rational message strategy was perceived as more rational than the other two; the positive emotional message strategy was perceived as conveying a more positive image of sexuality than the other two; and the negative emotional message strategy was perceived as more fear-arousing than the other two. Thus, the manipulation of the independent variable was considered successful.

**Cognitive responses**

An overall mean number of two cognitive thoughts per commercial was observed. Variance analysis results show a significant difference in terms of the number of cognitive responses between respondents who saw the rational commercial and those who saw the others ($F(2,275) = 5.82$, $p < 0.005$, $\omega^2 = 0.03$). As shown in Figure 1, the rational commercial generated more thoughts than the others.

Univariate analyses of variance were also performed on individual cognitive responses. Results show significant differences between the three commercials on certain categories of responses.

First, more **connection** thoughts were obtained for the rational commercial than for the positive emotion commercial.
score was extremely high: 63.53 out of a maximum score of 75.

**Attitude towards the style of the ad**

A multivariate analysis of variance reveals a significant difference in attitude towards the style of each of the three commercials (Wilks’ $\lambda = 0.873$, $F(2,275) = 6.41$, $p < 0.0001$). Results of a univariate analysis of variance show that the main effect relates to the affective factor ($F(2,275) = 11.28$, $p < 0.0001$, $\lambda^2 = 0.07$), the negative emotion commercial scoring lowest. A second significant effect was observed with the conative factor ($F(2,275) = 4.39$, $p < 0.01$, $\lambda^2 = 0.02$): respondents believed that, from a technical point of view, the negative emotion commercial would be more effective in changing behaviour (see Figure 3 for a summary of these results).

**Attitude towards the topic of the ad**

The attitude towards the topic of the ad was not significantly different for the three message strategies, as shown by a multivariate analysis of variance (Wilks’ $\lambda = 0.980$, $F(2,274) = 0.92$, $p > 0.3$). For the three messages, however, the average score was extremely high: 63.53 out of a maximum score of 75.

**Figure 2**

Significant difference between message strategies on individual cognitive responses
DISCUSSION

Results obtained were interesting when examined in relation to the different objectives of social advertising campaigns. First, the results of this study show that the rational strategy generated more personal concern for AIDS prevention (more connection thoughts) than emotive strategies. Examination of these thoughts revealed that personal references were generally framed by a positive attitude. Here are some examples: ‘When I saw the commercial I thought that I should be more careful.’; ‘... I thought of the last time I had sexual intercourse ...’; ‘I thought of what I will do when I will make love with my new boyfriend ...’, and so on. In advertising literature, it is generally assumed that personal awareness must first be achieved in order for a positive attitude towards the topic of the message to be obtained.22 Thus, the view that a prevention campaign should begin with the use of a rational commercial is supported here, especially when it is known that the target group is not usually concerned about AIDS.22

Secondly, the ultimate objective of traditional advertising is to make individuals ‘buy the product’. To achieve this objective, advertising has to generate a positive attitude towards this product, thus placing it in the individual’s ‘evoked set’. For social advertising campaigns, the product is the topic of the message towards which, within a normal context, individuals’ attitudes will generally be positive a priori because this is what is ‘socially’ required (at least when opinions are expressed verbally). The high scores observed in this study concerning attitude towards the topic of the ad tend to corroborate this explanation; no difference was found between the three message strategies. In the context of AIDS prevention, however, does a positive attitude have a real impact on individual behavioural intention? Nobody has yet provided an answer to this question. But what is known is that, generally, if...
individuals feel personally involved in the commercial, they will be more inclined to behave as recommended.\textsuperscript{23} Again, this study shows that the commercial that presented the facts in a straightforward manner was the most successful in this regard.

Thirdly, in accordance with the fear drive paradigm,\textsuperscript{24} the emotional message strategy based on a negative emotion provoked the greatest reaction among respondents on the attitude towards the style of the ad variable. Contrary to the theory, however, these reactions were not all positive. In fact, this strategy obtained a lower score on the affective dimension of attitude. In a way, such a reaction is reassuring as it tends to corroborate the transmission of the negative emotion initially required for the commercial. On the other hand, although their emotional reaction was negative, the respondents also thought that the commercial would have a greater effect than the other two on their and others’ behaviour (conative factor of attitude towards the style of the ad). This result confirms previous studies, which conclude that the use of fear is judged to be more effective than other message strategies.\textsuperscript{25} According to the sleeper effect theory, however, this immediate effect on behaviour will decline over time after exposure.\textsuperscript{26} And, once again, a crucial question remains unanswered: in the context of prevention, are verbal opinions or intentions a valid predictor of behaviour itself?\textsuperscript{27}

Fourthly, the technical aspect of the emotional message strategy based on a positive emotion received more criticism. Technically, this commercial was no worse than the others. Examination of respondents’ comments suggests that this low evaluation was perhaps due to their perception of a certain condescension in the commercial. Although perceived as transmitting a positive emotion, respondents also felt that they were being talked down to. Young adults simply dislike this type of strategy. Any form of condescension will deter young adults. Schiele,\textsuperscript{28} for example, advised advertisers to be absolutely, perfectly and totally direct in commercials aimed at this target group. Although advertisers may consider a particular approach to be ‘in’, the target group’s perception may be completely different. This seems to be the case here. On the other hand, the negative evaluation obtained for this message strategy might also have been caused by the scenario itself. It is possible that the choice of scenario, not the strategy itself, was partly responsible for the results obtained. This is probably the principal limitation of this study.

CONCLUSION

Despite the many variables used to measure respondents’ reactions, that is, cognitive thoughts, cognitive, affective and conative dimensions of attitude towards the ad and of attitude towards the topic of the ad, none of the three messages tested was truly preferred by the respondents. One out of those three approaches, however, elicited a very important reaction, namely, a feeling of self-concern about the topic of the ad. This is a very important step within the AIDS prevention context.

Even though they might have a positive attitude towards the topic of the ad, people will not necessarily behave as recommended in the message.\textsuperscript{29} In fact, if people do not feel personally concerned, they will not modify or change their behaviour. Because neither the consequences of bad behaviour nor the rewards for good behaviour are immediate, people do not feel concerned, \textit{a priori}, about prevention. In social marketing, making people feel concerned per-
sonally is the first key objective of any prevention campaign aimed at changing, in the long run, a deeply ingrained behaviour. Of course, people have to be adequately informed, but a good prevention campaign also has to be aimed at convincing people that the problem presented in the ad is their problem rather than just a problem for other people. According to the results of this study, an AIDS prevention campaign targeting young adults will have more impact if it is rational and direct. A factual approach provokes more self-concern and self-consciousness among those in the target group.

The results of this study might also be interpreted as a warning against communicators’ perpetual quest for the outstanding original creation. Just as it is best for parents to talk directly and simply to their teenagers about serious issues, within an AIDS prevention context, a rational strategy is likely to be the most effective approach for a mass communication campaign.

APPENDIX A

Rational strategy scenario

VISUAL
Close-up of a young woman talking to the camera.

Close-up of a young man talking to the camera.

Camera backs up and both young man and woman are in view.

Fade out.

VERBAL
Woman: If you think that only gays or drug users get AIDS, You’re making a big mistake...

Man: If you think that you’re not at risk because you have one sexual partner, You’re making another mistake...

The fact is that AIDS can hide in a person’s body for many years. Woman: Also, the fact is that all of us can get AIDS if we have unprotected sexual intercourse. Please, protect yourself, always use a condom...

Man: Always...

Emotional strategy based on fear (negative emotion) scenario

VISUAL
Fade into a smooth and sexy atmosphere.
Camera slowly moves up from a foot to a man’s hand.

VERBAL
Off-screen woman’s voice: If you think that only gays or drug users get AIDS, You’re making a big mistake...
VISUAL
A woman’s hand is touching the man’s hand.
The woman’s hand is slowly going up to the man’s elbow.
Close-up of the woman’s hand caressing the man’s chest and slowly going up to his throat.

HIGH ANGLE SHOT:
The woman is a nurse taking the man’s pulse.
She suddenly pulls the bedsheet over the man’s face because he is dead.
Fade out.

Emotional strategy based on a positive emotion scenario

VISUAL
Fade into a smooth and sexy atmosphere.
Camera is slowly going up from the foot to the head of the bed.
Under the bed sheets, a foot is getting closer to another foot.
Camera continues to move up and bed sheets still moving.
Camera stops on two young people, face to face, kissing and smiling.
The man takes a condom on the bedside table.
The woman smiles approvingly.
They continue to kiss.
Fade out.

VERBAL
Off-screen man’s voice:
If you think that you’re not at risk because you have one sexual partner,
You’re making another mistake...
The fact is that AIDS can hide in a person’s body for many years.

Off-screen woman’s voice:
Also the fact is that all of us risk to get AIDS if we have unprotected sexual intercourse.
Please, protect yourself, always use a condom...

Off-screen man’s voice:
Always...

Emotional strategy based on a positive emotion scenario

VISUAL
Fade into a smooth and sexy atmosphere.
Camera is slowly going up from the foot to the head of the bed.
Under the bed sheets, a foot is getting closer to another foot.
Camera continues to move up and bed sheets still moving.
Camera stops on two young people, face to face, kissing and smiling.
The man takes a condom on the bedside table.
The woman smiles approvingly.
They continue to kiss.
Fade out.

VERBAL
Off-screen man’s voice:
If you think that only gays or drug users get AIDS,
You’re making a big mistake...

Off-screen woman’s voice:
If you think that you are not at risk because you have only one sexual partner,
You’re making another mistake...
The fact is that AIDS can hide in a person’s body for many years.
Off-screen woman’s voice:
Also the fact is that all of us risk to get AIDS if we have unprotected sexual intercourse.
Please, protect yourself, always use a condom...
Off-screen man’s voice:
Always...
### APPENDIX B

**Attitude towards the ad measure items**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Dimension measured</th>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AP2</td>
<td>Cognition</td>
<td>An advertising campaign like this one would be very useful for AIDS prevention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP4</td>
<td>Cognition</td>
<td>I think this campaign would be very educational for the public.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP8</td>
<td>Cognition</td>
<td>I think that this message would not adequately inform people about this disease.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP11</td>
<td>Cognition</td>
<td>This message is not appropriate for AIDS prevention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP13</td>
<td>Cognition</td>
<td>This campaign would surely get me interested in the AIDS problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP1</td>
<td>Affection</td>
<td>I would like to see this commercial on TV.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP5</td>
<td>Affection</td>
<td>I would not like this style of prevention campaign.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP9</td>
<td>Affection</td>
<td>I would not be shocked by this message.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP12</td>
<td>Affection</td>
<td>I would find this campaign in bad taste.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP7</td>
<td>Conation</td>
<td>I think all campaigns should be made in this style.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP3</td>
<td>Conation</td>
<td>My behaviour would not be changed by this message.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP6</td>
<td>Conation</td>
<td>This message would certainly make people think about the AIDS problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP10</td>
<td>Conation</td>
<td>This message would certainly make me think before acting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP14</td>
<td>Conation</td>
<td>I would probably not be influenced by this message.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP15</td>
<td>Conation</td>
<td>This message would make people practise safe sex.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### APPENDIX C

**Items measuring manipulation check**

**Rational aspect**

1. This message is rational.
2. This message gives facts in a rational manner.
3. We can say that this message is impartial.
4. This message gives facts as they really are.
5. The information in this message is objectively given.
6. We can say that this message objectively informs people.

**Negative emotional aspect**

1. I think that this message is based on fear.
2. We can say that this message frightens when we see it.
3. This message is quite frightening.
4. This message is transmitting a negative emotion.
5. This message gives an awful feeling.
6. We can say that seeing this message is not pleasant.
Positive emotional aspect

1. We can say that this message gives a positive image of people who practise safe sex.
2. I think that this message gives a good image of sexuality.
3. This message does not make people who have a sex life feel guilty.
4. This message presents the sexual aspect of life positively.
5. A positive emotion is transmitted by this message.
6. Personally, I would feel good by seeing this message.

References

(14) Ray, M. L. (1973) ‘Marketing Communication and the


(22) See Ref. (10).


(29) See Ref. (27).