Injection, Reflection and Message Correction: Fright Messages and the HPV Vaccine. A Content Analysis of the UK and Philippines HPV Vaccine TV advertisement.

Purpose
The aim of this study is to contribute to the knowledge of fear inducing messages about HPV in advertisements. The impact of mass media and its role in amplifying the risks of the HPV vaccine has been well documented (Bennett, 1999). Newspaper articles, (MacDonald & Hoffman-Goetz, 2002) and print media (Hughes et al., 2009) have been cited as channels disseminating HPV vaccine information. Advertising is a “social and cultural artifact” (Leiss, Kline, & Jally 1990) and “reflects attitudes, behaviours and values and reinforces lifestyle and philosophies to help sell commodities” (Pollay & Gallagher, 1990). This paper aims to answer the calls for more socio-cultural research in this emerging area of health communications “to optimize the effectiveness of cancer messages for specific target audiences” Lang (2006). There is scant knowledge to date concerning analysis of HPV public health television advertisements.

Background and Contribution
Every year, more than 270,000 women die from cervical cancer (WHO, 2013). The HPV vaccine is a significant advancement in women’s health. The UK schools vaccination programme, commenced in 2008 and in the Philippines in 2013. Previous research on health advertising identified that “matching persuasive messages to people’s characteristics increases persuasion”, (Brinol & Petty, 2006). However, “studies assessing the effectiveness of health interventions have been disappointing in sustaining attitude and behaviour change” (Devos-Comby & Salovey, 2002; Rothman, 2000). This paper is in response to the need for research that identifies cultural factors that influence message effectiveness. Examination of culture and language within health literature has been limited (Andrulis & Brach, 2007; Chang & Kelly, 2007; Nguyen & Bowman, 2007). This study contributes to this emerging area of health communications with an inter-cultural perspective.

Methodology
This paper contributes to health advertising research by means of traditional content analysis of TV advertisements. It seeks to explore the use of fear- inducing messages using a priori coding scheme developed from existing literature on fright factors (Bennett, 1999) and the interpretation of emergent themes (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The author will discuss the interrelationships between health messages, culture, and language. Hypotheses predict that fright factors may be universal across both countries, the number of fear factors within the advertising message are likely to differ due to political health care policy and social-cultural perspectives of each country. Finally, it seeks to explore the extent to which the advertising message places the responsibility for managing the risks of cervical cancer on women.

Implications
This study will impact on the advertising management of health message content and contribute to the knowledge of the evolving area of health communications through analysis of TV advertising on HPV with an inter-cultural perspective.
References


World Health Organisation Human papillomavirus (HPV) and cervical cancer Fact sheet Nº380 September 2013