

# Third-person Effect & Rectifying Behaviors:

Studying Antisocial and Prosocial Online Messages of Youth Drug Abuse

Janice Wan-chi Leung



He doesn't want anyone to know



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Comparative Communication Research  
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# Foreword

Winning an award at a peer-reviewed conference is an honor that most academics cherish. We like it because we enjoy being recognized by the research community. In addition, when rightly done, an award speaks to the quality of a paper. All this probably explains why the annual conventions of major communication associations of the world—ICA, NCA, AEJMC, WAPOR, IAMCR and the like—have set up awards for top student papers. While the authors will find the awards encouraging, the award-winning papers can be a source of inspiration to many others. Graduate students and budding scholars are particularly curious about these papers.

The graduate students in our School have been very active in joining all the aforesaid conferences. As teachers, we are happy to find that quite a few have won awards for their outstanding works. To meet the demand for easy access to these papers, the Centre for Chinese Media and Comparative Communication Research (the C-Centre) has launched this Award-winning Student Paper series as part of its e-publication plan. As the copyright owner, the authors are expected to revise and publish the e-papers in the more traditional venues of journals and books later. We publish the e-version as working monographs in order to speed up the dissemination of research ideas. We encourage you to share the e-papers with others. You are also invited to refer student award-winning papers to us for possible inclusion in the series.

**Joseph M. Chan, PhD**  
Director, the C-Centre  
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# Abstract

This study examined third-person perceptions for two types of online messages, the antisocial drug-encouraging messages and the prosocial anti-youth-drug-abuse messages, and their relationship with three types of rectifying behaviors, restrictive, corrective and promotional. The regression analysis showed that perceived effects of both antisocial messages and prosocial messages on others predicted greater support for all three types of rectifying behaviors. Perceived effect of prosocial messages on the self significantly predicted greater support for such behaviors; in contrast, perceived effect of antisocial messages on the self significantly predicted lower support for rectifying behaviors. The study findings imply that more emphasis should be put on perceived effects on self and on others as predictors of behavioral consequences instead of the third-person perceptual gap.

This paper was awarded the Amanda L. Kundrat Health Communication Thesis of the Year Award, jointly given by the Health Communication Divisions of the International Communication Association (ICA) and the National Communication Association (NCA) in 2012.