Sex(ting) Education:
Analysing Quebec education concerning young people's digital sexual media production

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Abstract

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Young people have faced a history of moral panics concerning their presence online, and a recently reported increase in teenage sexting has intensified these fears. As a result, responses from stakeholders have told young people that their exploration of sexuality, particularly mediated through digital technology, is wrong, often correlating their behaviours with deviance and illegality. Yet, providing agency to young people in their sexual media production enables teenagers to communicate their sexual desires. As use of digital technology continues to accelerate among the youth sector, we must understand that mediating one's sexual life will be included in its use.

This thesis project explores how Quebec police departments attempt to educate young people (eighteen years and younger) regarding the practice of sexting, primarily the sharing of nude photographs. This project investigates Quebec's sexting campaigns "SEXTing is PORN," and "SEXTO," developed to shape adolescent access to digital sexual information. Campaign material is examined through situational analysis to identify discursive ideas of sexting presented in these pieces of media, the collection of stakeholders involved in the creation of these messages, and the potential absence of positions within these discourses of teenage sexting.

Overall, this research finds that the campaigns under study rely on police and government organizations framing teenage sexting as child pornography. Without expressing alternative positions, young people are left unequipped to deal with challenges they may face and may be scared to reach out in fear of legal repercussions.

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Introduction

A few years ago, I got the wonderful opportunity to not only be a camper but also a counsellor at an arts camp near Toronto. This camp was quite unique in that we had young people from ages eight to eighteen in our dorms. Here, I specifically worked with teenagers from about thirteen to sixteen. At camp, I got this one-of-a-kind opportunity to see young people completely embrace who they are and each other. I also, sadly, experienced several instances of the adults in their lives discredit their identity and exploration.

I'm grateful that I never had to experience that from the adults in my life, yet as I reflected on my teenage years with the knowledge that I had been acquiring during my bachelor's education, I realize how little I had been taught outside of my own home about identity and specifically knowledge about sex and sexuality. When reflecting, I realized that the extent of the sex education I received in school was a birthing video that was played to my class, and I had been out sick that day. Years later, to my surprise, I saw my high school posting that they have brought in "SEXTing is Porn" and I remember feeling so angry and disheartened that this message was being broadcasted in an environment that taught me nothing else about sex.

…

In 2017, Lt. Serge Boivin and Const. Robin Pouliot of the Saint-Jérôme police department received the Minister of Justice National Youth Justice Policing Award (Blue Line, 2017). The award, presented by the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP) and the Canadian Police Association (CPA), recognizes police initiatives that "develop innovative approaches or promising practices that go beyond the formal court system when dealing with youth in conflict with the law" (Department of Justice Canada, n.d.). This award was presented in response to the 2016 sexting awareness campaign titled "SEXTO," created by the police department of the city Saint-Jérôme, a Montreal suburb on the Rivière du Nord.

The SEXTO campaign, created in collaboration with the Director of Criminal and Penal Prosecutions (DCPP), is twofold. Firstly, campaign material aims to educate young people and their parents that sexting can be constituted as child pornography under the Canadian Criminal Code (Director of Criminal and Penal Prosecutions, 2021). Secondly, SEXTO developed an intervention kit for school officials and other police departments to employ, to quickly intervene in cases of teenage sexting. Since the launch of the campaign, the DCPP (2021) reports that over 10,000 students have been reached and educated on the associated risks of sexting. The intervention kit has also been deemed successful, as the investigation and legal processing time for sexting cases has been reduced from several months to an average of 4 days (Director of Criminal and Penal Prosecutions, 2021).

Since its initial deployment, SEXTO has since taken part in Québec's Ministère de la Famille's *Concerted Action Plan to Prevent and Counter Bullying and Cyberbullying 2020-2025*, which will finance the deployment of the campaign to all secondary schools across the province by 2025 (Director of Criminal and Penal Prosecutions, 2021). As young people continue to navigate their sexual identity and expression amid evolving digital practices, with an estimated

forty percent of young Canadians having sent a 'sext' (Ricciardelli and Adorjan, 2019, p.564), such educational messages are not unique.

In fact, with 20 affiliated police departments being trained with SEXTO's sexting intervention kit, these messages are spreading quite far. In 2018, the police department of (Montreal suburb) Chateauguay, alongside CALACS (Centre d'Aide et de Lutte contre les Agressions à Caractère Sexuel) and in connection with SEXTO, launched their own anti-sexting campaign. Reaching over five thousand high school students in its first year (Service de police de Chateauguay, 2021), the campaign reached its 4th edition as of 2021. This campaign broadcasts the message "SEXTING is PORN", with police entering schools to hang posters and hand out pamphlets detailing the risk of sexting, and explicitly the implication of illegal actions and child pornography (CTV News, 2018). The police department explains the campaign "was designed to show young people the devastating impact of sexting" following the handling of over 30 child pornography cases in 2016 and 2017 (Service de police de Chateauguay, 2021). The Chateauguay police department further explains that following the 2018 launch of the campaign, 2018 and 2019 saw a 60% drop in child pornography cases (5 and 6 cases respectively), but a rise to 10 cases in 2020 (Service de police de Chateauguay, 2021). While these numbers appear to demonstrate the efficacy of the campaign, the police department does not differentiate these 30 cases, and the subsequent lower number of child pornography cases, between those where the perpetrator was an adult and those where the perpetrator was under age 18.

Given present-day sex panic discourses surrounding teenage sexting, media created for the purpose of sexting education has begun to encompass these notions. Using situational analysis, as explained by Clarke, Friese, and Washburn (2017) in *Situational Analysis: Grounded Theory After the Interpretive Turn*, this research project examines the messages and language portrayed in the "SEXTO" and "SEXTing is PORN" sexting education campaigns, as well as the sex education and legal landscape that is present throughout Quebec. Ultimately, this thesis provides a foundation to analyze how public health campaigns can be more effective in sexting education for young people in the future. This research project asks the following questions:

- How do police-run awareness campaigns in Quebec attempt to educate people eighteen years and younger regarding the practice of sexting, and how does this approach to education relate to existing approaches to sex education in the province?
- How are stakeholders such as police, government officials, school officials, etc., represented in campaign material?
- What information, themes, and topics-of-focus are included in the campaign materials, and how do these relate more broadly to societal understandings of young people's negotiations of technology and sexuality?

In addressing these research questions, the thesis explores a complicated history of Quebec's sex education curriculum where for many years no one individual or group was responsible for providing young people comprehensive sex education. Amidst this lack of responsibility to teach young people about sex, we see police officers stepping in to become educators. As these stakeholders have stepped in to educate teens on the more recently emerging topics of sex in the digital landscape, their messaging has focused on the legal aspects of teenage sexting. In the campaigns under study, child pornography laws have dominated the education and teenagers are being told that their participation in sexting will result in harsh consequences such as serious criminal charges.

Ultimately, this project demonstrates that young people in Quebec are provided a one-sided view on sexting. As the messages of Sexto and Sexting is Porn focus on stopping the practice of teenage sexting with their reliance on child pornography laws, young people are continually face to face with fears of the worst-case scenarios that result from sexting. Campaigns such as Sexto and Sexting is Porn ignore benefits that young people can receive through sexting and even outside of this alternative discourse, anti-sexting campaigns such as these do little to teach young people how to navigate their safety and boundaries if they do choose to send sexts.

Defining Sexting

"Sexting," combining the words "sex" and "text," describes the phenomenon of sending a sexually explicit message, image, or video, via digital technologies such as cell phones or through social media applications (Hasinoff, 2012; Lee and Darcy, 2020; Ringrose, Harvey, and Livingstone, 2013; Slane, 2013). According to Slane (2013), sexting, as a term, is "reported to have been first used by the media around 2005, and then to have come into widespread usage in 2009" (p.117). Notably, the definition of sexting does not make an explicit distinction between when sexting is being discussed as the sending of sexual text messages, and sexting as the sending of nude or semi-nude images. Despite the ambiguity present in the definition, this thesis primarily considers teenage sexting as the sending of sexually explicit *images*. The production and distribution of sexually explicit images, or more colloquially referred to as "nudes", between young people is the primary practice that is considered in anti-sexting campaigns and the law. The visual element of sexting has received more serious consideration in anti-sexting campaigns, as nude images sent or received by minors can be considered under child pornography law.

Discourses of Teenage Sexting

A secondary ambiguity that exists when defining sexting is the inability to distinguish between "good" and "bad" forms of sexting (Slane, 2013). Practicing "good" sexting can include "acts of sexual communication via digital technology that serve to enhance intimacy, operate as flirtation, or encourage appreciation for sexual expression" (Slane, 2013, p.117). However, views of "bad" sexting tend to dominate public discourse, as "much of the scholarly experimental literature on sexting is based on the assumption that there is something unusual and troubling about sexters" (Hasinoff, 2015, p.3). The notion of "troubled sexters" is amplified in mass media and policy discourses as well.

Coverage of teenage sexting throughout mainstream debate perpetuates a belief that sexting is inherently bad and teenage sexting will result in fatal consequences (Karaian and Van Meyl, 2015). The reliance on, what Slane (2013) identifies as "bad" sexting, that dominate the conversation of teenage sexting, frames the practice as risky due to concerns of sexual harassment, exposure to pornography, exploitation of minors (primarily by adults), cyberbullying from peers, and long-term repercussions from redistribution of a private image (Karaian and Van Meyl, 2015; Ringrose, et al., 2013; Setty, 2019; Slane, 2013). These concerns are additionally mirrored at the federal level.

Canada's National Crime Prevention Centre (NCPC) claims there is no form of sexting that can be considered safe (Angelides, 2013). The NCPC makes the universalizing claim that "the only way teens can remain wholly safe is if they 'never send or post sexually provocative picture[s]'" (Angelides, 2013, p.668). Although discourses considering the risks of sexting to

young people should not be disregarded, scholars argue that room is needed for conversations about "good" sexting rather than universalizing the claim that teenage sexting will always cause harm.

The warnings about teenage sexting "perpetuate the widely held belief that a direct and uncomplicated link exists between sexting and fatal consequences" (Karaian and Van Meyl, 2015, p.24). Except sexting and its unintended consequences are complicated. Karaian and Van Meyl (2015) explain that a 2013 study published to the Journal of Adolescent Health "found no correlations between sexting and sexual risk behaviours or psychological health" (p.24). Engaging in sexting does not inherently lead to severe repercussions or produce negative feelings about the practice even with the knowledge that an individual's photo may be redistributed (Karaian and Van Meyl, 2015, p.29). The knowledge that sexting is not inherently harmful is not being used to disregard any instances of harm or victimization that teens may be facing regarding their sexting practices. However, there is a middle ground to explore between the discourses of "good" and "bad" sexting. Hasinoff (2012) explains that "a teenager who chooses to send sexually explicit images to a peer is engaging in a very different activity than someone who distributes a private image with malicious intent or coerces another person to produce an explicit image" (p.450). Understanding the element of intent when discussing teenage sexting, such as this peer-to-peer consensual nature of sexting, extends the discourses of "good" or "bad" (read: right or wrong) sexting that are being showcased in mass media, policy, and educational materials.

Why Teenagers Might Sext

Honing in on what Slane (2013) considers "good" sexting, teens may choose to engage in sexting as a way to begin exploring their sexual identities (Lee and Darcy, 2020; Karaian and Van Meyl, 2015). According to Canadian non-profit organization, MediaSmarts, young people typically engage in sexting for three distinct reasons: "in lieu of sexual activity for younger adolescents who are not yet physically sexually active; to show interest in someone a teen would like to date; and, for sexually active youth, as proof of trust and intimacy" (MediaSmarts, Why kids sext; Lee and Darcy, 2020). Additionally, a potential benefit of sexting is to "increase sexual communication between partners and help them discuss their sexual needs in new ways" (Hasinoff, 2012, p.455), providing the pathway to facilitate conversations between young people prior to engaging in a physical sexual experience.

Diving into the technological considerations of sexting, the practice of sexting harnesses the ability for young people to produce sexual self-representations, liberating them from popular culture representations (Albury, 2015). Providing tools to create their own media provides young people with the avenues to express their authentic point of view where they may choose to challenge ideas presented throughout mass media (Hasinoff, 2012). Hasinoff presents this idea of teenagers engaging with mass media with the caveat that "most new media scholars do not position participatory media as universally positive and empowering" (Hasinoff, 2012, p.456). While participating in media creation, and amidst the practice of sexting, does indeed come with risks that have been explored above, there are rewards that may appeal to young people and drive them to engage with this type of media creation.

For example, these self-produced pieces of media enable young girls to play an active role in their online and offline representations, producing the means to relate to others and explore their sexual identity (García-Gómez, 2017, p.393). This exploration of sexuality can additionally offer

a safer environment than the same exploration being done offline (Cassell and Cramer, 2008). In the creation of self-produced media young girls "may find it easier to inhabit an authoritative, agentive, and in-control persona online" (Cassell and Cramer, 2008, p.67). As such, the digital technologies through which sexting takes place can facilitate a more comfortable and authentic experience to learn about sex.

Sexting in Canada

There are no comprehensive statistics to show how many teenagers in Canada are engaging in sexting. Though the existing studies that have been done identify that teenage sexting within Canada may be far from a common behaviour (Ricciardelli and Adorjan, 2019). That said, according to the 2014 National Canadian Sexuality and Romantic Relationships in the Digital Age survey conducted by MediaSmarts "eight percent of students in Grades 7-11 with access to a cellphone have sent a sext themselves to someone, while nearly 25 percent of those participants had received a sext" (Karaian and Brady, 2018, p.327). One year later, a 2015 survey of grade seven to grade eleven students with cellphone access reports that 24% of participants had received a sext (Ricciardelli and Adorjan, 2019, p.564). More specifically, when looking at the province of Quebec, an estimated 12.8% of adolescents (from secondary 1-5 known as grades 7-11) have received requests for sexual photos/videos at least once, and 22.6% of youth have sent photos and/or videos (Beaumont, et al., 2018, p.10). Although these statistics are relatively low and do not paint a complete picture of how many teenagers are sexting, teenage sexting has received a lot of attention within Canada.

Canada's history of young people sharing nude images has been emotionally charged by experiences such as fifteen-year-old Amanda Todd who died by suicide in 2012. Her death followed the flashing of her breasts on a live-streaming platform, where an unnamed individual screen-captured the moment then used the photo as (attempted) blackmail against Todd with threats to send it to her family and friends (Penney, 2016). Todd later received immense backlash and cyberbullying from peers (Penney, 2016; Ringrose, et al., 2013). Penney (2016) explains that the subsequent fallout of this tragic event saw Todd's experience with nude imagery being widely spread throughout Canadian media as a mistake a "good girl" made that thus transitioned her to a "bad girl" in need of protection (p.711). The rhetoric of mistake present in Todd's story frames her practice of showing her breasts as a transgression which Penney (2016) writes "relies on pre-established meaning-making systems related to gender norms and public decorum, as well as legal and social discourse about the prohibition of youth sexuality" (p.712). These discourses of transgression toward young people's exploration of sexuality continue to work to justify the obligation to protect youth, from themselves, within the country.

Despite statistics highlighting that less than half of teenagers across Canada are regularly engaging in sexting, the country's aim to eliminate teenage sexting is still far from over. In 2019, David Lametti, the Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada "announced additional funding in excess of $77,000 to support an anti-sexting campaign that inaccurately describes the consensual creation of teenager sexting as 'self-exploitation' and as criminal" (Karaian and Brady, 2018, p.347-348). This reliance on the criminality of teenager sexting is one of the primary arguments against sexting, mainly correlating the practice with Canada's child pornography laws. Although these laws do exist, and aim to protect young people, consensual teenage sexting exists uniquely within these existing laws.

Teenage Sexting and the Law in Canada

The criminalization of the creation and distribution of nude or semi-nude images of a person under 18 years old as child pornography in Canada is "justified by a legal system's obligation to protect minors from sexual exploitation, based on the belief that youth are more vulnerable to exploitation because of their still-developing reasoning capacity, lower financial and social independence, and lack of life experience" (Slane, 2010, p.566). According to their article in the *Osgoode Hall Law Journal*, Karaian and Brady (2018) have identified that at both the federal and provincial level, police and child protection agencies "have been informing young people that they do not have the legal right to consensually create and share digital sexual images with an intimate partner and that doing so could result in child pornography charges" (p.306) since 2005 – the same year the term "sexting" was first being used in the media.

Laws regarding child pornography, when applied to teenage sexting, have been justified on the grounds of harm reduction as to not see young individuals being treated exclusively for sexual means (Slane, 2013). From this standpoint, the law is stepping in and focusing on responses to "bad" sexting as "the law is generally designed to regulate problematic behaviour" (Slane, 2013, p.117). As previously noted, ideas of "bad" sexting traditionally dominate the public discourse about teenage sexting. Consequently, teenage sexting is being conflated with child pornography, regardless of whether it is a "good" or "bad" case of sexting. Despite officials relying on child pornography charges in all instances of teenage sexting (Karaian and Brady, 2018), consensual peer-to-peer teenage sexting is typically addressed outside of the law (Slane, 2010). As a result, the threats of child pornography charges to teens engaging in "good" sexting are "largely hypothetical" (Slane, 2010, p.585) and Canada has never actually prosecuted a young person for child pornography when the messages have remained consensual and not shared beyond the intended participants (Slane, 2013). With this fact in mind, it is important to understand how sexting is being represented in the criminal justice system, as discourse about teenage sexting relies so heavily on the threat of child pornography charges.

The Criminal Code and Exceptions

Child pornography is defined under Section 163.1 of *The Criminal Code of Canada* as:

Any visual representation (photographic or drawn) that shows a person who is under 18 (or depicted as under 18) engaged in explicit sexual activity, or which depicts the sexual organs or anal region of a person under 18 for a sexual purpose. (Slane, 2013, p.118)

Amended in 1993, the original child pornography law in *The Criminal Code* requires officials to uphold the legislative action to protect all youth from sexual exploitation and abuse including exploitation from pornographic performances and material as per the 1991 ratification of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (Slane, 2010, p.560). Deriving from this ratification, *The Criminal Code* uses the term "exploitation" to "describe offences where the offender exerts power to coerce a person to perform for the benefit of the offender or where a person's vulnerabilities have been taken advantage of the offender" (Slane, 2010, p.563). Young people are seen as victims of child pornography and exploitation under the laws of child pornography in cases where images depict sexual activity or where images are of ones' sexual organ(s) and being used for a sexual purpose (Slane, 2010; Lee and Darcy, 2020). There are, however, limited exceptions that have been introduced to these laws.

In 2001, the Supreme Court of Canada came to a decision in the *R. v. Sharpe* case where they "recognized young people's right to engage in a narrow subset of consensual sexually expressive practices" (Karaian and Van Meyl, 2015, p.19) without the threat of facing any legal ramification for possession of child pornography. In order to qualify for this exception, The Sharpe Court outlined three conditions for the possession of sexual images of a young person that must be met: 1) the actant(s) must be of legal age of consent (16 years and older in Canada); 2) the participation in the activity must be consensual; and 3) the images must remain between the consenting parties (Karaian and Brady, 2018; Lee and Darcy, 20; Slane, 2010; Slane, 2013). As a result, abiding by these exceptions would mean that the only instance where teenage sexting could be prosecuted under child pornography laws is if an image is shared non-consensually to a third party and if the people engaging in sexting don't meet the age of consent.

Despite the clear exemptions that have been made throughout the criminal justice system and the absence of any prosecution for consensual teenage sexting within the country, "present day social, political, and extra/legal debates surrounding teenage sexting in Canada tend not to acknowledge the constitutionality of this subset of teenagers' consensual sexual expression" (Karaian and Van Meyl, 2015, p.20). This manipulation of the law may be due to the inconsistencies that have arisen when defining sexting. There are several components to consider when defining teenage sexting such as 1) the sending, receiving, or forwarding of the sext; 2) what is presented in the content (nude or semi-nude); 3) type of media (photo, video, text message); and 4) how the sext was sent (by phone, through application, or social media channels) (Lee and Darcy, 2020, p.565). With such ambiguities at play when attempting to understand what a young person is doing when they are sexting, different stakeholders may have different opinions which result in uncertain or inconsistent judicial outcome for teenagers (Lee and Darcy, 2020). Despite sexting identifying such a wide range of actions, the inability for Canadian stakeholders to appropriately acknowledge cases of teenage sexting that meet the criteria of legal exception functions to eliminate the young person's agency and intent when engaging in sexting.

To recall, Hasinoff (2012) has made a clear distinction between teenagers who are choosing to send sexually explicit images and someone who chooses to distribute private images for malicious purposes. Notably, un-consensually sharing private images intending to inflict harm is a serious offence that disqualifies the individual from the protection of exceptions to child pornography prosecution. Nevertheless, intent is still the most important element to consider. Teens, of the age of consent, partaking in consensual creation and exchange of sexual imagery for personal and private enjoyment should be, and inherently are, constitutionally protected (Karaian and Van Meyl, 2015, p.20). Yet we still see debates around teenage sexting that do not take these intentions into consideration. Although sexting is a relatively new sexual practice given the ever-changing advancements in technology, the concerns around emerging and different sexual explorations do have a strong history which may explain the complex systems that are in place to address them.

Considerations of Canada's Cyberbullying Laws

An additional and more recent legal consideration made regarding any non-consensual sharing of an intimate image (depicting sexual organs) is the Canada's Bill C-13, the Protecting Canadians from Online Crime Act. The Bill, which took effect on March 10th of 2015, makes it "an offence to share intimate or sexual pictures of someone without their consent" for both adults and anyone under 18 years of age (Kruse Law, n.d., para.3). With the issue of cyberbullying at the

forefront, this bill is to be used in cases where there was an expectation of privacy, meaning that the person in the photo never consented to anyone seeing the photo beyond who it was sent to or anyone that the person did decide that it could be shared with (Kruse Law, n.d.; Nicol and Valiquet, 2013). If a person is found guilty under Bill C-13, they may face "up to five years' imprisonment or, upon summary conviction, to a fine of not more than $5,000 and/or six months' imprisonment" (Nicol and Valiquet, 2013, p.4). This punishment is far less severe than a young person facing child pornography distribution or possession.

Bill C-13 has been created in response to child pornography laws as a report from the Coordinating Committee of Senior Officials Cybercrime Working Group in 2013 found that "child pornography charges are 'too blunt an instrument' to address the non-consensual distribution of intimate images, particularly where the accused is under 18" (Nicol and Valiquet, 2013, p.4). The report made considerations that the non-consensual sharing of an intimate image was more of a privacy breach that can result in harm (such as harassment, exploitation, intimidation…) rather than the sexual exploitation of a minor (Kruse Law, n.d.; Nicol and Valiquet, 2013). Cyberbullying laws may be a step in the right direction as punitive measures are being taken by law enforcement in cases when an intimate photo is shared beyond the intended recipient. Focusing on the non-consensual sharing of an image can provide some peace of mind to young people who are only sharing sexts consensually between their intended recipient(s). Under the cyberbullying laws, consensual teenage sexting would be protected.

Theoretical Framework

To understand the harsh criticisms and relegation to child pornography laws that teenage sexters have had to face, it is crucial to understand the history of sexual hierarchy and sex panics that sex laws and regulations have been built upon, far before sex could be done digitally. The theories to be considered in this section are Gayle Rubin's 'charmed circle' and Janice Irvine's exploration into 'sex panics'. In what follows, sex panics will showcase why authority figures feel the need to step in when people engage in perceived "abnormal" or high-risk sexual practices. The charmed circle will be introduced to highlight judgement people face when they explore sex outside of specified norms.

Irvine's Sex Panics and the Media

In "Transient feelings: Sex panics and the politics of emotions", Irvine (2008) explains sex panics as "the political moment of sex, where moral values are positioned into political action" (p.2). While moral panics react to a "deviant" behaviour through social control, sex panics move a step further providing a focus on sexual regulation "among courts, law enforcement agents and agencies, and legislators" (Irvine, 2008, p.6). Irvine (2008) further explains that "the panic of moral panics legitimizes enhanced state power through fostering the illusion of a singular public mobilized in support of traditional values" (p.3). These moral positions speak to which areas of sex require an infiltration from those in power to aid in "regulating" sexual practice as a way of making them fit into this perceived idea of morality. Irvine (2008) effectively sheds light on how fear tactics are being put to work as a way of justifying control being enacting upon someone. The reliance on these panicked discourses "produce anger, fear, and disgust among parents [as well as

adults in general] by tapping into those affective expectations inherent in our cultural narrative about violating childhood innocence" (Irvine, 2008, p.20). It is evident here how sex panic discourses are used as a catalyst when it comes to the motivation to protect young people from this most intimate part of their lives, theoretically aiming to reduce them into non-sexual individuals due to their perceived vulnerability.

These existing panics about sex have additionally been compounded with panics about use of digital technologies as a whole. Facer (2012) notes that one of the reasons adults may panic about young people online is the disruption of the "status quo" (p.398). Young people have traditionally been regulated in environments such as the family home or at school, yet the rise of the internet and digital technology has opened a new environment for young people that may have less adult protection attached (Facer, 2012, p.398). Influenced by the myth that online sexual exploitation is happening from unknown predators (Cassell and Cramer, 2007; Hasinoff, 2012), rather than in-person by individuals already known to a person, panics about such solicitation portray the internet as an unsafe space for young people to explore sexuality.

Although digital technologies complicate harm reduction in sexting practices, as they offer a permanent record of the act and potentially continuous victimization of an individual (Slane, 2010, p.562), harm and sexting are not mutually exclusive. Sex panics and their advertising of extreme consequences gain power as they are repeated again and again (Angelides, 2013; Irvine, 2008). Ahmed (2014) argues that "signs become sticky through repetition; if a word is used in a certain way, again and again, then that 'use' becomes intrinsic" (p.91). As the "sex panic scripts" become "sticky", they accumulate affective value (Ahmed, 2014, as cited in Irvine, 2008, p.19). These sex panic scripts are continuously at work in the lives of young people, highlighting the messages of fear and disgust. As encounters with social control regarding young people's sexual experiences continuously makes their way into the lives of young people, the messages of "wrongness" potentially become "stickier" over time. As the panics about teenage sexting continue to gain traction, these panics themselves can cause their own harm. Patchin and Hinduja (2020) explain the more frequently serious consequences about sexting are discussed, young people who have engaged in the practice may feel trapped and unable to seek help from an adult due to fear of consequence. Although the repetition of the worst-case scenarios and panics does little to help young people (Patchin and Hinduja, 2020), sexting education campaigns have continued to broadcast these messages.

Rubin's Charmed Circle

Much like the affective emotions at play inherent to a sex panic, the charmed circle conceptualizes similar ideas as to what is good and what is bad when it comes to different sexual practices. Rubin (1984) illustrates a sexual hierarchy, referred to as the "charmed circle" (*see Figure 1*), where a line is drawn between "good" (the inner circle) and "bad" (the outer circle) sex where "a very small portion of human sexual capacity [is considered] sanctifiable, safe, healthy, mature, legal, or politically correct" (1984, p.281). These "bad" sexual endeavours encompass anything outside the lines of heteronormativity, monogamy, sex for procreation, and more (Rubin, 1984, p.281).

These "bad" sexual practices are shown in Figure 1 as "the outer limit." Referring to these behaviours that fall lower on the scale, Rubin (1984) writes that the individuals who practice these behaviours face "extreme and punitive stigmas" where they "are subjected to a presumption of mental illness, disreputability, criminality, restricted social and physical mobility, loss of

institutional support, and economic sanctions" (p.279). While pornography may be the most relative behaviour listed in the outer circle, teenage sexting could also encompass the "bad, abnormal, unnatural, damned sexuality" behaviours listed such as "promiscuous," "casual," "unmarried," "non-procreative," and even "with manufactured objects" (Rubin, 1984, p.281). Not only do these practices already fall outside of the "good" sexual practices, but these practices are compounded with an existing panic that surrounds youth sexuality. According to Rubin, for over a century "no tactic for stirring up erotic hysteria has been as reliable as the appeal to protect children" (Rubin, 1984, p.271). With this hysteria in mind, Rubin furthers that with the motivation to protect children, laws and regulations that are enacted do little to mediate the concerns.

Figure 1
Rubin's charmed circle
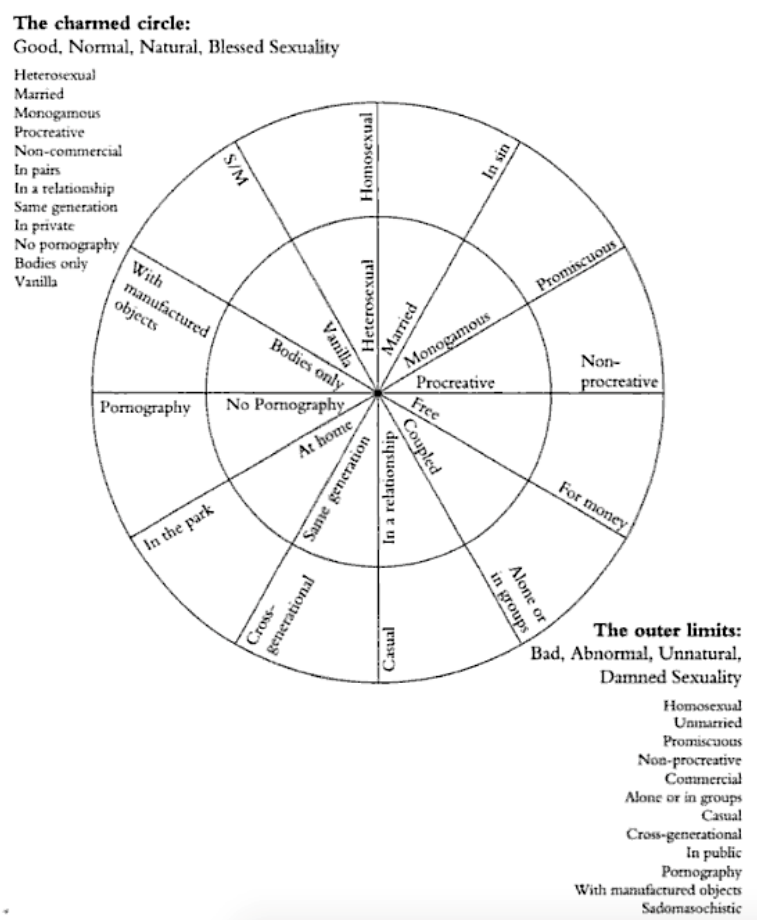
Note. From Rubin, G. (1989). *Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality*. (p.281)

The most crucial idea that Rubin presents in this text is that "the laws produced by the child porn panic are ill-conceived and misdirected. They represent far-reaching alterations in the regulation of sexual behaviour and abrogate important sexual civil liberties" (1984, p.272). During a moral panic such as this panic surrounding youth sexuality and porn laws, the "fears attach to

some unfortunate sexual activity or population" where "the police are activated, and the state enacts new laws and regulations" (Rubin, 1984, p.297). Having discussed the existing child pornography laws in Canada which are considered in teenage sexting, they are clearly misdirected toward any possible harmful or malicious behaviour that could take place rather than considering exceptions to the laws regarding consensual teenage sexting. Instead of taking time to understand practices, which for young people may not be a showcase of "bad" expressions of sexuality, police are activated in a panic and aim to quell their perception of behaviours not befitting their confines of the charmed circle.

Existing discourses in Sexting Campaigns

Despite the potential for teenage sexting to be positive for a teen's sexual exploration and the practice falling within the confines of legality when teens consensually engage and keep the practice between the intended participants, these ideas are regularly absent from existing sexting education material. While Irvine's (2008) conceptualization of sex panics as the political moments of sex, and Rubin's (1984) notation that the laws produced by the child porn panic are misdirected, these elements of social control become apparent in educational campaigns and views of "bad" sexting, as "anti-sexting campaigns decry the possibility of voluntary and 'safe sexting' let alone the affordances of adolescents' self-produced and consensually shared sexual imagery" (Karaian and Van Meyl, 2015, p.18). Although online predators and cyberbullies are enlisted as posing grave danger to those participating in sexting, it is the "unsuspecting and non-malicious teens who are the principal targets of sexting campaigns" (Angelides, 2013, p.676). For this audience, the messages portrayed in sexting education campaigns often focus on punitive measures and assume teenagers have no "genuine sexual agency and thus do not deserve the right to sexual expression" (Hasinoff, 2015, p.18). By disregarding the possible benefits of sexting and focusing on the law or other punitive measures and disregarding some of the most important actors in these situations, existing sexting education campaigns have primarily focused on advocating for abstinence of the practice altogether.

Current sexting education is set on reinforcing the panicked discourses that sexting is inherently risky, shameful and should be avoiding at all costs (Setty, 2019). Much like abstinence only sex education programs, abstinence only sex*ting* education programs are not effective (Hasinoff, 2012; Patchin and Hinduja, 2020). The alternative to these messages of abstinence would mirror that of safe sexting education (Patchin and Hinduja, 2020). This type of education "would involve teaching youth about the possible consequences of participating while equipping them with the knowledge to minimize harms that may result" (Patchin and Hinduja, 2020, p.141). This education would not advocate for sexting – as is the case in general sex education – but would instead equip young people with the knowledge of what to do in different scenarios, who to turn to, their responsibilities to others, etc., and generally allow them to make their own informed decision on if they want to engage in sexting at all.

The Gendered Dimensions of Sexting

Another element of existing sexting education campaigns has been effort to responsibilize young girls to prevent any harms (Karaian and Van Meyl, 2015). This component of sexting education comes on the back of the existing history of moral panics that surround girls' use of the internet, which in and of itself already decry any positive benefit to young women (Cassell and Cramer, 2008). The bodies of young girls face heightened scrutiny given their existence being

"explicitly eroticized" and as such, adults are motivated to protect girls from their own sexuality, deeming the behavior as risky and inherently wrong (Cassell and Cramer, 2008; Ringrose et al., 2013). In comparison, boys' consumption and creation of sexual content is often perceived to be a normal step in self-discovery (Hasinoff, 2012, p.454). The existing scrutiny placed on young girls is further emphasized when a young girl sends a sext as their shame "can also 'travel' or affectively spread to him for engaging with the image" (Ringrose, et al., 2013, p.317). Thus, not only are girls facing the responsibility to protect themselves, but they are also facing repercussions for the boys engaging in sexting, effectively leaving boys with little to no blame in these scenarios.

Nevertheless, much like the existing debates we have explored about the harms and benefits to young people when it comes to sexting, research has highlighted important considerations to make for young girls finding their place on the internet. Digital communication has offered young girls important advantages in navigating their relationships and identities with sex suggesting that girls may be more assertive online than in person, enable pathways to respond to "objectifying media portrays of women", and "re-write some of the gender norms that ask girls to be passive" in their relationships (Hasinoff, 2012, p.455-456). Highlighting these advantages of identity exploration, though extremely important for young girls, is important for all young people to learn.

Mediated Practices of Sexual Self-Representation

Sexting campaigns continue to blur the lines between objective hazards and normative judgments (Hunt, 2003, in Karalan and Van Meyl, 2015, p.26), focusing on sexting as a judgement of "bad" behaviour. Although sexting is not always between two consenting young people and will never be free from coercion (Hasinoff, 2012, p.457), the reliance on exclusively the negative effects of engaging with sexting can instill ideas in a young person that they are being deemed troubled, or in physical or emotional danger, because they have engaged with these "low-bar" sexual practices. As Ringrose et al. (2013) explain, associations such as this reliance on negativity "run the risk of their bodies and sexualities being marked as shameful" (p.319) despite seeing ways in which sexting has provided the possibility to aid young people with the navigation of sexual interests and boundaries.

All in all, young people who are choosing to sext understand that the practice is dangerous, and in turn, the messages compelling young people to stop sexting altogether are likely to be ineffective (Hasinoff, 2012). The widespread implementation of technology has resulted in "mediated practices of self-representation" that have allowed young people to facilitate their own sexual expression both for themselves and those they choose to express themselves to (Hasinoff, 2012; Karaian and Brady, 2018).Yet interventions are focusing on "trampl[ing] on the subtle negotiations of rights, pleasures and pressures of adolescent sexual exploration within a technologically mediated […] context" (Ringrose, et al., 2013, p.307). Rather than providing an understanding for young peoples' exploration and allowance for them to work towards representing themselves in their desired ways, young people are facing interventions that look down on these instances of expression.

The exploration of existing literature that foregrounds this research project concludes with a quote from Amy Hasinoff:

Viewing sexting as a form of media production helps make it possible to consider the creativity and ingenuity of teens who consensually produce their own sexual images. If researchers saw sexting in this way, they might investigate whether consensual sexting could facilitate personal exploration or critical reflection on gender and sexual representations in mass media. (Hasinoff, 2012, p.457)

Having presented the existing discourses and history of sexting from a Canadian context, this thesis project has aimed to extend Hasinoff's ideas for investigation. By exploring the sexting education at play in Quebec, this project contributes to existing literature on teenage sexting, understanding the effects that sexting education may have on young people, and how these messages can be expanded upon as education campaigns continue to enter circulation.

Methodology

This project analyzed a range of material being disseminated through the Sexto and Sexting is Porn campaigns which include websites, social media posts, videos, posters, and flyers. The analysis of the campaign material was conducted through situational analysis as described by Clarke, Friese, and Washburn (2017) in *Situation Analysis: Grounded Theory* After *the Interpretive Turn*. The creation of situational analysis (hereafter referred to as SA) is geared "toward generating understanding of precisely what constitutes what else in a given situation – analyzing the relationalities involved and their ecologies" (Clarke, Friese, and Washburn, 2017, p.17). With reliance on said relationalities, SA is heavily focused on all elements at play during a situation, as a situation is rarely devoid of relational categories such as history, politics, or alternative actors that exist in or around said situation of inquiry (Clarke, et al., 2017). Through conducting SA "the researcher attempts to empirically specify key elements in a given situation and understand them as coconstitutive – as shaping and coconstituting each other through their interactive relations" (Clarke, et al., 2017, p.46). As this project focused on understanding sexting education throughout Quebec, situational analysis provided analytic measures to study the situation of sexting education which included the interactive relations between actors such as the government, school board, educational policy creators, municipal police departments, and the teenagers themselves, while also lending focus to the textual and visual material from which the interactions derive.

As noted above, materials collected to frame the sexting education situation included websites, social media posts, videos, posters, and flyers – also known as discourse materials. Discourse material and resulting analysis is an important area of study for the purpose of this project as "language does not merely reflect the world, but is constitutive of how people see and understand the world around them and act on their understandings" (Clarke, et al., 2017, p.220). To analyse the state of education regarding sexting, the chosen corpus of discourse material of sexting campaigns reflects how stakeholders understand what the practice of sexting is and consequently how they believe teens are meant to create (or not create) such sexual content.

Methodologic procedure

Prior to the data collection of campaign material, the first step in this research was to collect federal and provincial guidelines for sex education. This procedure was done specifically for chapter one where the history of sex education in Quebec is explored. Given that the goal of this chapter was to provide specific histories for both what was/is taught and who was/is responsible for providing the education, the material provided directly from the government was prioritized

and little outside sources were considered. The Quebec's Ministry of Education is at the forefront of these resources, and the first result when searching for "Sex education in Quebec". To stay within the confines of government resources, the collected material snowballed from the Ministry of Education site where they have several documents on how to provide sex education and what information should be provided to young people. In order to compare Quebec's sex education to any federal guidelines, "Sex education in Canada" defined another search parameter. Similarly, this search provided a document from SIECCAN (the Sex Information & Education Council of Canada). Still aiming to keep the perspectives of the governments at the front of this research, the SIECCAN website and documented guidelines directed the research to additional Canadian guidelines, including documents from the Public Health agency of Canada.

Moving forward, to collect the data for this specific project, the collection process began at host websites for the Sexto[1] and Sexting is Porn[2] campaigns. Next the campaigns' titles were searched via Google, to investigate additional online campaign references. Sexto returned minimal results, leaving the original website as the primary interface for campaign material. Conversely, the Sexting is Porn campaign website held little information, with dissemination primarily located across Facebook. Considering the organizations and schools connected to the Sexting is Porn campaign and presented on the website, the institutions were searched on Facebook and posts were collected for review until no new material surfaced. To track information, memos detailed where and when the data was found, clear examples of messages or actors present in the collected data were recorded (later becoming coded examples), as were patterns in the messages that continued to arise.

Memoing, an analytic form of note taking, tracks the information the researcher sees when looking through material alongside "analytic ideas and thoughts, and possible theoretical, methodological, or data collection directions to take next" (Clarke, et al., 2017, p.106). Memos are additionally used as a method of keeping track of data as Clarke, Friese, and Washburn (2017) explain that memos should be saved with proper titles and key words that can later aid the researcher in searching for specificities throughout their analysis process (p.106). Memoing was employed during the earlier stages of data collection in this project, to organize where each piece of campaign material was found and later to consider questions regarding the collected coded material (see Appendix A) or to formulate connections between all coded material (see Appendix B). To initiate the groundwork of defining the situation in question for this project, a situational map was the first visual element to be created.

Firstly, situational maps "lay out major human, nonhuman, discursive, historical, symbolic, cultural, political, and other elements in the research situation of concern" (Clarke, et al., 2017, p.17). A situational map is an initial starting point to define the boundaries of the situation under study, which aids the researcher in determining what data is to be collected as the research process continues (Clarke, et al., 2017). Using the situational mapping process as outlined by Clarke et al. (2017) to define the situation, codes were established to keep track of the type of information and the institutions involved in the campaign situation. Five codes were named and applied to all collected data:

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[1] https://pasobligedetoutpartager.info/en/
[2] https://ville.chateauguay.qc.ca/en/police-service/services-and-advice/programs-community-and-prevention/sexting-is-porn/

1. **Non-human elements/communication technologies**: To highlight elements of the campaign that made its dissemination possible (such as host website, Facebook account, campaign graphics…).
2. **Discursive constructions of human actors:** To highlight any occurrence where campaigns referred to how a person should act.
3. **Discursive constructions of non-human actors:** To highlight references to the law or how technology should be used.
4. **Government affiliations:** To highlight government actors involved in the campaign creation and dissemination, also used to highlight how these institutions are presented in campaign material (such as the display of a logo).
5. **Non-government affiliations:** To highlight any institutions involved in any campaign elements not funded by government institutions.

Following the coding of all collected campaign data, a situational map was drawn to showcase the above elements for each campaign simultaneously, effectively creating the boundaries for the remainder of this research process (see Appendix C[3]). Once the situational map was complete, the social worlds/arenas and positional maps were created to map specific details with additional clarity and set the foundation for individual chapter analysis and discussion. While not appearing within chapter 2 or 3, the situational map played a very crucial role in understanding how the two campaigns in questions related to each other. Additionally, as the large map covered all coded material in one place and was color coded, it also began laying the groundwork to visually piece together commonalities between campaign information.

In chapter two, social worlds/arenas maps "lay out all of the collective actors and the arena(s) of commitment within which they are engaged in ongoing discourse and negotiations" (Clarke, et al., 2017, p.18). Social world maps are used to identify all the organizations, institutions, and additional actors, including their breadth of size, that are collectively acting within the situation (Clarke, et al., 2017, p.104). To offer such a collection of actors at work in the situation under analysis, these maps focused on piecing together all material which was coded under government and non-government affiliations.

Finally, in chapter three, positional maps "lay out the major positions taken and not taken in the discursive data found in the situation vis-à-vis particular axes of concern and controversy" (Clarke, et al., 2017, p.18). Clarke, Friese, and Washburn (2017) note that an important element of positional maps is that the researcher is made aware of the positions that are not present (p.172). To first identify messages that are present within the campaign material, the positional maps highlight the presented positions through coding of both human and non-human discursive elements. After identifying the position(s) the campaigns have taken regarding teenager sexting, this chapter then discusses absent discourses using the literature of scholars such as Hasinoff, Karaian, and others who have studied potential benefits and considerations that ought to be taken in instances of teenage sexting.

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[3] See also the entirety of the situational map here:
https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVOFnFjfs=/?share_link_id=813524405838

Altogether, these three mapping categories answer the questions:

> Where and when in the world is this project going on? What and who are involved in this situation? What is going on in this situation? What is at stake in the situation for the different entities involved? What conditions of possibility are offered by this situation? What is rendered essentially impossible? What and who are rendered invisible or marginalized (implicated actors)? Why and how do these conditions matter? To whom? (Clarke, et al., 2017, p.104)

It will be through the SA mapping process that sexting education data will be collected. Using these mapping processes, this research project will benefit from looking beyond solely the discourse material and language centered across campaign material and provide the ability to analyse the actors who are creating such material and the voices (positions) which may be overlooked throughout the corpus.

Chapter Breakdown

This research project and resulting methodological procedure as explained above, will be divided into three chapters. Chapter one, 'An overview of sex education and its implementation in Quebec', investigates the first research question: *How do police-run awareness campaigns in Quebec attempt to educate people eighteen years and younger regarding the practice of sexting, and how does this approach to education relate to existing sex education in the province?* This chapter explores the history of the Quebec government and ministry of education and the implementation of sex education in schools from the early 2000s to the 2021-2023 (at the current time of writing). The chapter introduces The Public Health Agency of Canada's definition of comprehensive sex education, alongside Quebec's muddied history of sex education reform.

Chapter two, 'Identifying stakeholders involved in the creation and implementation of SEXTO and SEXTing is Porn' focuses on the creators of the sexting campaigns, answering: *How are stakeholders, such as police, government officials, school officials, etc., represented in campaign material?* Clarke et al. (2017) explain that the goal of social word/arena mapping "is to locate the research project in its broader situation vis-à-vis organizational and institutional actors active in the situation" (p.154). This chapter organizes all stakeholders implicated in the campaigns' material and implementation into 5 categories: provincial government, federal government, educational institutions, government funded charitable organizations, and non-governmental organizations. Despite inclusion of the final category, this chapter uncovers how all stakeholders involved in the campaigns have some tie to the government and how that affects the education presented in the campaigns.

Finally, chapter three 'Analysis of SEXTing is Porn and SEXTO Campaign Messages' returns to the final research question: *What information, themes, and topics of focus are included in the campaign materials and how do these relate more broadly to societal understandings of young people's negotiations of technology and sexuality?* This chapter uses positional mapping to graph dominant ideas that the campaign material has broadcast. First discussing the most dominant messages in each campaign, the chapter then discusses the main positions of criminality, gender, and how they affect what was presented in each campaign. This chapter concludes with the absent positions from the campaigns, using literature first presented in the introduction that discusses

potential benefits for consensual teenage sexting and considerations that should be made in the education.

Lasty, the conclusion identifies that the messages explored in Sexto and Sexting is Porn are not uncommon across Canada. Within the past decade there have been several other campaigns that explore the same messages that sexting is dangerous and should be entirely avoided. The conclusion highlights other campaigns from Germany and Australia that take a different approach to education about sexting. Though the German and Australian campaigns do introduce legal considerations, they offer additional details about sexting rather than an exclusive focus on abolition due to criminality. As a final note, the conclusion briefly explores the consideration to digital literacy that is absent in the campaigns. It is unrealistic to expect that young people will not participate in sexting, rather than telling young people what they are doing is wrong teaching them digital literacy and safety online can be more beneficial.

Chapter One:

An overview of sex education and its implementation in Quebec

Introduction

In January of 2021, Jenifer Legault, spokesperson for ÉduSex, a coalition focused on the implementation of quality sex education for young people in Quebec (ÉduSex, Our Demands), declared Quebec's current sex education "worse than ever" (Fahmy and Rowe, 2021, para.3). Following a 2005 education reform that eliminated mandatory sex education throughout the province, Quebec youth have spent over a decade in schools without standardized curriculum and time to learn about sex. The 2015-2016 school year brought a surge of optimism, when a new pilot program for sex education was conducted in schools across the province. Despite this presumed reform to sex education in the province, Quebec still faces barriers when it comes to the proper implementation of this new sex education curriculum.

This chapter examines the history of sex education in the province of Quebec from the early 2000s, to the current state of education at the time of writing in 2021-2023. Through this exploration into the state of sex education in Quebec, this chapter answers the following questions:

1) What topics and learning outcomes are addressed in Quebec's sex education curriculum throughout the 2000s?
2) Has the Quebec sex education curriculum evolved throughout the 2000s?
3) Who are the stakeholders tasked with the delivery and implementation of sex education in Quebec?

The questions addressed in this chapter contribute to the overarching analysis of police-run sexting education campaigns present in Quebec, to determine which topics within sex education youth are presently receiving. By identifying the topics that sex education in the province has addressed throughout existing curriculum and who is responsible for delivering these topics, the research can discern the obligation that sexting education campaigns have taken on, given their existence is separate from standard curriculum.

Canadian Standards of Sex Education

The Public Health Agency of Canada (2008) explains that comprehensive and effective sexual health education "addresses diverse sexual health promotion and illness prevention objectives and provides information, motivational inputs and skill acquisition opportunities to achieve these objectives" of which all parents, schools, health care systems, governments, and all community members are tasked with its delivery (p.21). In addition to acquiring knowledge of illness prevention and skills, sexual health includes acknowledging how sexual well-being influences a person's physical, mental, and emotional state (SIECCAN, 2019, p.12). Consequently, sex education is in the hands of a multitude of stakeholders, who are obliged to instruct on both the physical and mental components of sex.

Comprehensive sex education is intended to provide individuals with confidence in their ability to experience positive sexual health outcomes, which includes the ability to communicate their sexual health needs with (potential) partners and access sexual health services/treatment

(Public Health Agency of Canada, 2008, p.17). These notions of comprehensive sexual health education are greatly important in the lives of young people. In addition to the confidence and skill building elements that comprehensive sex education provides for all individuals in their negotiation for their own sexual health, sexual health education for young people should include:

> an understanding of developmental changes (e.g., puberty), rewarding interpersonal relations, developing communication skills, setting of personal limits, developing media literacy, challenging of stereotypes, prevention of STI/HIV, effective contraception methods, information of sexual assault/coercion, sexual orientation and gender identity and a critical examination of evolving gender-roles and expectations (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2008, p.22)

Providing young people with comprehensive sex education promotes a person's ability to speak about their needs and sexual health outcomes. Receiving sex education at this point in their adolescence enables young people to develop their critical thinking abilities around sex, encouraging a positive sense of responsibility and judgement (Duquet, 2003, p.7). Discussing sexuality with young people is additionally encouraging as they are at a crucial point in their development and are experiencing sexual development, interest, and questions in real time.

While the Public Health Agency of Canada outlines the definition and purpose of comprehensive sex education, Canada has no official common curriculum for sex education (Actions Canada, 2020, p.13). As a result, the country has no way to ensure that all young people are receiving the same standard of education and exposure to the themes of sexual health that connotate a "comprehensive" knowledge that is being outlined by the federal government. In their 2020 report on the state of sex education in Canada, Actions Canada for Sexual Health & Rights additionally uncovered that the majority of the sex education that young people are receiving focuses on the negative aspects of sex (Actions Canada, 2020, p.30-31). The report found that material that is being presented to young people focuses aspects of sex which include how to prevent STIs and pregnancy (Actions Canada, 2020, p.31). A negative approach to sex education can leave young people unprepared to face the realities of sex and diminished possibility to experience pleasurable and safe sexual experiences (Actions Canada, 2020, p.31; SIECCAN, 2019, p.12). Regardless of the recommendations for comprehensive sex education that Canada has put forward, without a common curriculum or consistent method of evaluation for what young people are being taught, there is no way to ensure these recommendations are being implemented.

Despite the numerous stakeholders (parents, governments, schools, health care systems, etc.) the Public Health Agency of Canada tasks with the implementation of comprehensive sex education, the Sex Information & Education Council of Canada (SIECCAN) explains that schools hold additional responsibilities when it comes to providing young people with sex education. SIECCAN (2019) explains that the school setting provides a unique opportunity to provide young people with comprehensive sex education information that promotes sexual health and well-being throughout their lives as the institution is one place that has consistent and mandatory contact with all young people (SIECCAN, 2019, p.73). Through this sustained contact with youth, schools can have consistent conversations about sex and sexual health.

Although the Public Health Agency of Canada can provide us with a formula for addressing topics within sex education, they note issues with the idea of "sexual health". Given history with the field of medicine, the words "health" and "healthy" can carry norms of approval and disapproval for certain behaviours "under the guise of 'medical truth'" (Public Health Agency of

Canada, 2008, p.7). As this may be the case, the Public Health Agency of Canada notes that education programs should avoid direct references of the term "sexual health" as it "may result in the transmission of powerful messages indicating what is to be considered 'proper' or 'normal' sexuality or sexual behaviour" (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2008, p.7). While the Public Health Agency of Canada does note this fragile relationship with the term "healthy" in their own writing of sexuality and sex education, the same document continues to use the term "sexual health" throughout.

Quebec's 2005 Sex Education Reform

The first official sex education program in Quebec schools began in 1986, taught as a component of the Personal and Social Development (PSD) course (Actions Canada, 2020, p.20; Descheneaux et al., 2018, p.8; Parker and McGray, 2015, p.148). However, in a period of education reform spanning from 2001 to 2005, the Quebec Ministère de l'Éducation eliminated the Personal and Social Development course, effectively eliminating all mandatory sex education taught in schools throughout the province (Actions Canada, 2020, p.20; Parker and McGray, 2015, p.148). Following the elimination of the Personal and Social Development course, the Ministère de l'Éducation aimed to develop a new range of competencies for sex education. The gradual retirement of the PSD course in the early 2000s was replaced with a cross-curricular education approach that tasked all teaching personnel with teaching sex education (Actions Canada, 2020, p.20; Parker and McGray, 2015, p.148; Descheneaux et al., 2018, p.8; Duquet, 2003, p.5). Digressing from the mandatory curriculum and scheduling which initially existed within a dedicated course, the new approach from the Ministère de l'Éducation attempted to socialize all students with sex education on a consistent basis as it asked all teachers to seamlessly integrate elements of sex education into their existing courses.

Following the 2005 curriculum reform, topics outside of the biology of sexuality were "included under the broad umbrella of Health and Well-Being, and there is no longer a specific space for broadly-based sexual health education in the mandatory curriculum" (Garcia, 2015, p.197). Across early childhood (age 5), childhood (ages 6-11), and adolescence (ages 12-17), the Ministère de l'Éducation says that 7 topics of sex education should be addressed: 1) the human body, 2) the scope of human sexuality, 3) roles, sexual stereotypes, and social norms, 4) body image and sexual growth (puberty), 5) emotional and romantic relationships, 6) sexual exploitation and violence, and 7) sexual health (Duquet, 2003). These 7 topics outlined for the sex education curriculum encompassed age-appropriate conversations about sexual anatomy, changes to the body, expressing feelings of love, sexual orientation, safety and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, contraception, and understanding events that can negatively affect a person's sex life (such as STD's, AIDS, unwanted pregnancy…) (Duquet, 2003). Meeting these conversations and learning outcomes fell into the hands of teachers to integrate into their existing classes.

Given the discontinuation of a specific space for sex education and the Ministère de l'Éducation's requirement for all teachers to integrate sex education into their courses, teachers began struggling with this additional facet of education. Actions Canada (2020) points out that sex education is greatly different from other subjects, requiring a certain "finesse", requiring not only the knowledge but also how to speak to young people about more sensitive topics, to teach effectively (p.57). With this required finesse in mind, the teachers who were now tasked to teach sex education were not provided with the proper training to do so (Garcia, 2015, p.199; Parker and

McGray, 2015, p.148). While there were instances where sex education training was accessible, there was no enforcement for teachers to attend.

During this time, Parker and McGray (2015) note that teachers were already overburdened with their existing workloads, oversized classes, and extracurriculars (p.153). As a result, professional development training meant not only devoting precious time that teachers were already short on, but "there are many other subjects that teachers may also wish to inform themselves on first, starting with their core subject areas" (Parker and McGray, 2015, p.153). Relegating the responsibility of sex education to all teachers within their core subjects diminished accountability that all teachers may have felt to add sex education into their classrooms. The direction of the Ministère de l'Éducation left teachers underequipped to take on this new responsibility. With all school officials left to take on the responsibility of educating young people, teachers and administration in schools could also assume that others were upholding this responsibility (MELS-MSSS, 2008, p.8, Actions Canada, 2020, p.20). With the lack of assigned responsibility and training came unequal access and quality of sex education for young people across the province (Descheneaux et al., 2018, p.8). Overall, the sex education reform left teachers burdened with conversations they were not inherently equipped to have and little insight of what young people were learning about sex in school.

Frustrated with the state of sex education in schools, 2010 saw people questioning the validity and purpose of the cross-curricular approach to sex education. Two petitions circulated in 2010 and another in 2014. These petitions called for the reinstatement of a dedicated sex education course (Actions Canada, 2020, p.20). As a result, in 2012, when the Quebec Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport (MELS) conducted an internal survey, it was "revealed that 80% of schools were only partially providing sexuality education" (Actions Canada, 2020, p.20). The 2010 petitions were created by La Commission de la Culture et de l'Éducation, who formulated 2 recommendations: 1) to continue the Ministry of Education's work concerning the development of specific learning content in sexuality education, and 2) that all students in training to become elementary and secondary school teachers take a sex education class (Descheneaux et al., 2018, p.9). By following these recommendations, the Commission was hopeful that teachers who were beginning their careers in schools would be able to address the lack of knowledge concerning sex that teachers were so evidently displaying. This would mean students would be provided a more wholistic sex education and that teachers were not tasked with learning new content in the midst of advancing their core-subject knowledge and already full schedules.

Quebec's 2015-2016 Pilot Project and Current State of Sex Education

Following the outcry for sex education years earlier, in a period between 2017-2018, the Ministère de l'Éducation began to address public concerns and implemented the first compulsory sex education program in Quebec since the early 2000s. The announcement came following a 2015-2016 pilot project where 15 elementary and secondary schools implemented the new curriculum (Garcia, 2015, p.197; Descheneaux et al., 2018, p.6). The Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur (MEES) announced that the sexuality education would cover a variety of topics that include knowledge of the body, body image and stereotypes, romance, and more (MEES, 2018, p.4). These learning outcomes would stem across both elementary and secondary age students in age-appropriate contexts.

Through this curriculum, the MEES (2018) explain that elementary school aged children will "gradually learn to understand themselves and become comfortable with their body and their identity," while secondary students will be exposed to different sources of sexual information while they "consolidate their identity, become aware of their sexual orientation and have their first romantic relationships" (p.4). Similar to the pre-existing sex education topics of the 2005 reform, MEES (2018) sought to address 7 topics: 1) sexual growth and body image, 2) identity, gender stereotypes and roles, and social norms, 3) emotional and romantic life, 4) sexual assault and sexual violence, 5) sexual behaviour, 6) pregnancy and birth, and 7) sexual transmissible and blood-borne infections (STBBIs) (MEES, 2018). Covering aspects of sex such as the "ability to apply safety rules in various context of risk," "develop the ability to engage in emotional relationships where everyone is respected," and "become aware that identity and expression develops beyond stereotypes (emerging in individual preference, personality, and competency)" (MEES, 2018), this recent iteration of sex education curriculum mirrors the learning outcomes from the 2005 curriculum. To recall, the 2005 curriculum sought to focus on the human body, human sexuality, norms, puberty, romantic relationships, sexual violence, and sexual health.

Although the 2015 pilot project and announcement to reintroduce mandatory sex education for all elementary and secondary students is a positive step to address concerns about young people's lack of exposure to sex, existing problems have yet to be addressed. The reform continues to rely on all teachers to bring elements of sex education into their classrooms, as they "stand in the forefront of any implementation of sex education in the schools as they are well positioned to make connections among the situations they witness in the classroom" (Duquet, 2013, p.34). Despite testing the new curriculum throughout 2015 and 2016, there were no methods in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the project and how the students responded (Descheneaux et al., 2018, p.11; Parker and McGray, 2015, p.153). Alongside the lack of evaluation, Descheneaux et al. (2018) note that as of their research in 2018, there is no specific funding that is going toward implementing the new curriculum and training the teachers that are tasked with educating students on the subject (p.11). The pilot project and education goals do seem promising and a step above the cross-curricular approach that students have been experiencing across Quebec for over a decade, however the provincial organizations who oversee this program have yet to address the concerns that were detrimental to sex education across Quebec in previous years. Without standard evaluation of the sex education goals, it becomes impossible to know that the new curriculum is benefiting students, or if it is being integrated at all.

Police in School and in Sex

To recall, the Public Health Agency of Canada outlined important themes that should be included in sexual health meant for young people. These themes are: 1) understanding developmental changes, 2) rewarding relationships, 3) setting personal limits, 4) developing media literacy, 5) prevention of STI/HIV, 6) contraception knowledge, 7) information about sexual assault, 8) sexual orientation and gender identity and examination of gender roles (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2008, p.22). Notably, both the sex education goals of the 2005 reform and of the 2015 pilot project, include these themes. However, themes of technology and sex, and specifically the practice of sexting, are entirely absent in the curriculum.

With the uprise of teenagers participating in the practice of sexting throughout the province (Beaumont, et al., 2018, p.10), there is an emerging need to teach young people about said practice.

To address this missing component of sex education in Quebec, some police forces have created educational programs to provide young people an addition to their sex education curriculum in their schools. Police presence in the school setting is not new; rather, a 2002 survey of all police departments across Quebec, conducted by the Ministry of Public Security, showed that "almost one third of the police forces had a regular presence in targeted secondary schools and some in primary schools" (Shaw, 2004, p.4). When entering a school setting, police officers can take on a variety of challenges such as student delinquency, respect for the law, bullying, drug abuse, education of citizen responsibility, and crime prevention (Wright and Peglar, 1981, p.106; Shaw, 2004, p.5).

Recently with the popularity of the internet in the lives of young people, police have faced different challenges, including protecting young people from pornography, sexual abuse, and exploitation (Shaw, 2004, p.6). Concerned with these new issues "the police are beginning to take on a preventative role in terms of programmes which attempt to limit the harmful exposure of students to images or messages through the internet" (Shaw, 2004, p.6). To address the missing gaps in sex education and step into the preventative roll of internet exposure for teens, police departments throughout the province have begun implementing campaigns addressing sexting in schools.

With considerations of the internet at the forefront of this education, police officers in schools are seeing that they have become increasingly responsible to intervene in instances of cyberbullying. In interviews with school bases police officers, Broll and Huey (2015), spoke with officers who spoke of having to teach tech students appropriate ways to use technology (p.168). That said, the officers also "indicated that they felt like well-paid babysitters when they respond to cyberbullying incidents that could be better dealt with by parents or the school" (p.164). Seeing police step into the role of educator in the example of cyberbullying showcases similar trouble that has been explored for sex education in Quebec. A specific response does not exist for police to take, and there is little oversight in how police are responding, meaning that young people are likely to face varying responses to the same issues depending on the officer's personal beliefs' or how an office feels one day.

Recalling Rubin's (1984) conceptualization of the Charmed Circle, we see the existence of what is good and what is bad when it comes to sexual practices. These "bad" sexual endeavours encompass anything outside the lines of heteronormativity, monogamy, sex for procreation, and more (Rubin, 1984, p.281). From this idea, pornography and exposure and/or production of sex practices online can be relegated as "bad sex". With police now taking a preventative role with these behaviours, young people may be provided with sex education that focuses on preventing the negative rather than education that also lists the positive elements of this behaviour (Actions Canada, 2020, p.30). Actions Canada (2020) explains the existence of a flaw in Canadian sex education: the tendency to equate sex with problems and transgressions (Actions Canada, 2020, p.31). These preventative teaching strategies can leave "young people unequipped to navigate sexual encounters once they become sexually active and fuels shame and stigma around sex, desire, and sexuality more generally" (Actions Canada, 2020, p.33). By taking on this preventative lens, police officers begin drawing lines of good and bad behaviour rather than a complete picture of sex to equip young people for real life experiences, with or without pressure to engage in these practices.

Increased presence of police officers in schools can lead to the criminalization of minor offences and create a hostile environment for students. With police officers filling in as pseudo sex

educators given the complicated history of Quebec's sex education, this opens a conversation of police responsibility when in the school setting. Police presence in schools cannot be discussed without addressing the racism and racial biases that people of color face at the hands of police. As Samuels-Wortley (2021) explains, "many Black and Indigenous youth expressed feelings of racial bias in their encounters, unequal protection in comparison to White neighborhoods, lack of attention to issues within their racialized neighborhoods, and finally fear in the presence of police" (p.1147). Police in schools has the possibility to create a problematic environment for young people. It is crucial to address these issues to ensure that all students feel safe and included in the learning environment.

Conclusion

Sex education across Quebec has experienced two major reforms that mandate sex education in schools in slightly different ways. It is clear when looking at the goals presented by the Quebec government in the early 2000s following the education reform that eliminated mandatory sex education, and the goals for education presented in 2018 for the purpose of the pilot project and current implementation, the themes being covered and the vocabulary being used has evolved. Despite steps being made to provide young Quebec students with a more comprehensive sex education, there are still systematic barriers in place that make implementation difficult for students to receive the education. As teachers become tasked with delivering sex education in conjunction with their existing responsibility of meeting course-specific curriculum, sex education may experience lower prioritization in the classroom.

In recent years, with the heavy weight of technology being integrated into the lives of young people, a new form of sexual behaviour has emerged. Rather than task already overburdened teachers with another learning objective, police officers have taken on the challenge of educating young people about the practices of sex in the online environment. While this may address the increase to teacher workload, campaigns such as Sexto and Sexting is Porn, may not fully encompass the range of information there is to learn about sexting and the online sexual environment.

Chapter Two:

Identifying stakeholders involved in the creation and implementation of SEXTO and Sexting is Porn

Introduction

The Sexto and Sexting is Porn campaigns have been produced and executed by the St-Jérôme and Chateauguay police departments respectively. The two police departments have claimed, through various press releases and campaign material, the positive impact their campaigns have had in the community and in the lives of young teenagers. The Chateauguay police department concluded that implementing the Sexting is Porn campaign provided them "an opportunity to highlight that producing, possessing, and distributing juvenile pornography and publishing intimate images without consent are criminal offences" (Service de police de Chateauguay, 2021). Similarly, the "Police Forces" page of the Sexto campaign website details how the campaign has created a partnership between police forces, schools, and the Director of Criminal and Penal Prosecutions (DCPP), allowing them to "provide a quick and effective response to incidents of sexting" (Sexto, 2020, Police Forces). The role of the two police departments is made clear not only in the stated textual components detailed above, but additionally alongside visual components of the studied campaign material. For example, the St-Jérôme and Chateauguay police department logos appear across numerous campaign posters and webpages, in addition to uniformed police officers appearing in promotional/social media material.

The combination of visual and textual elements presented across campaign material make it apparent that police departments are at the heart of the two campaigns, centering themselves as creators and as the first point of contact when a teenager encounters a situation of sexting. However, there are several additional institutions that have been crucial in the development, funding, and implementation of the campaigns. This chapter explores all stakeholders who have made the two campaigns possible, be it through funding or providing information shared in the campaign material. For the purpose of this project, stakeholder is defined according to the Cambridge dictionary definition: "a person such as an employee, customer, or citizen, who is involved with an organization, society, etc. and therefore has responsibilities towards it and an interest in its success" (Cambridge University Press). This definition is used to encompass a larger range of individuals who may act in the interest of the campaign, rather than defining a stakeholder as those who specifically own a share in businesses. As such, this chapter answers the question: *How are stakeholders, such as police, government officials, school officials, etc., represented in campaign material? And how are their commitments to the topic of teenage sexting presented in the material?*

To identify the stakeholders responsible for developing the messages of the Sexto and Sexting is Porn campaigns, this chapter uses the social world and arena mapping component of situational analysis. Clarke, Friese, and Washburn (2017) explain that social world and arena mapping focus on "commitments to collective action" (p.150). In each arena, social worlds are made up of actors who are committed to act towards an issue (Clarke, et al., 2017, p.148). To identify these commitments to action, two questions stood out when conducting the mapping process: "who cares about which issues?" and "what do they want to do about them?" (Clarke, et al., 2017, p.148). Social worlds and arena mapping are therefore especially useful in their analysis of "the different perspectives and positions of different worlds on key issues and seeing power in

action in arenas" (Clarke, et al., 2017, p.148). By electing to frame each campaign as the arena under study, this chapter is thereby positioning teenage sexting as the dominant issue at play for all social worlds and their resulting organizations. The analysis is then broadened, by considering how each of these stakeholders is being presented in campaign material and in turn how their commitments to action, and for certain organizations their power, is communicated in campaign material.

Overview of Findings

Recalling the process of data collection, the second step of the chosen research method was to apply codes to each piece of campaign material. There was a total of 5 codes applied:

1. Non-human elements or Communication technology
2. Discursive constructions of human actors
3. Discursive constructions of non-human behaviour
4. *Government affiliation*
5. *Non-government affiliations*

To identify the stakeholders presented throughout the campaigns, a social world/arena map for each individual campaign was created by pulling the governmental and non-governmental affiliations codes from all collected data. The elements of campaign material which were coded in these two categories show the stakeholders who are present in the material. Working from the stakeholders presented, these organizations were grouped into five social worlds in which their power and commitment to action towards teenage sexting is being pursued. The five social worlds present in both campaigns are: *federal government, provincial government, non-governmental institutions, government funded charitable organizations, and educational institutions.*

Given the purpose of this research project and its focus on the communication component of how campaigns are presenting information to their audiences, the maps have one additional element of exploration. For each identified stakeholder, the map explains how the stakeholder is presented in the campaign material. For instance, if their logo is presented on campaign images or website, if their name is used as a citation for information, or if they are on a list of financial supporters.

Serving as the template for the Social World/Arena Maps created for the Sexto and Sexting is Porn campaigns, Figure 1 details the five social worlds under which the stakeholders are categorized and the legend of the mapping.

Figure 2

Overview of Social World/Arena Mapping
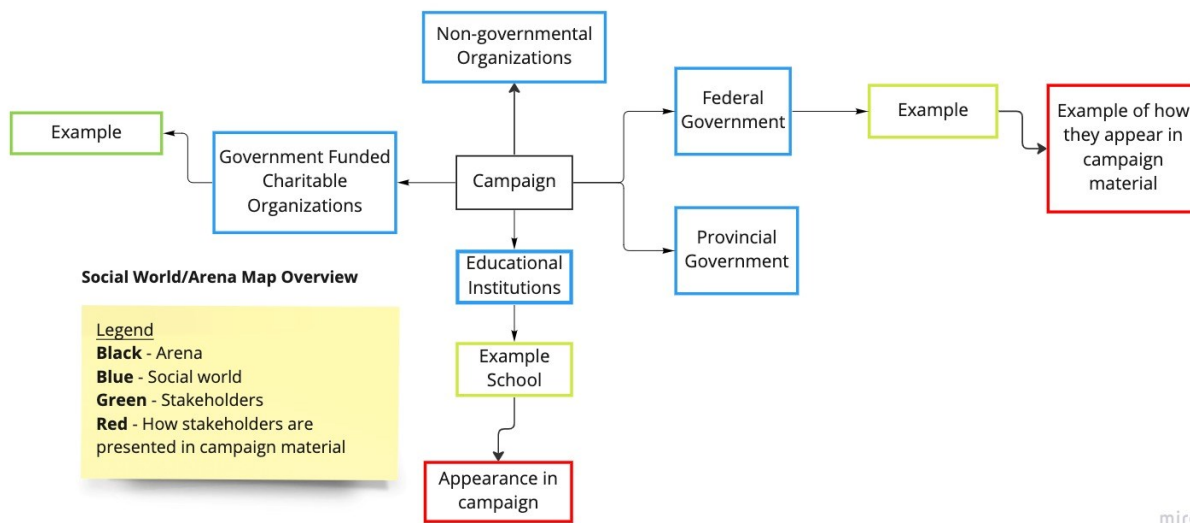
Using this mapping template, this chapter first provides an overview of the two campaigns as the arena under study. In the following sections, the maps are used to highlight which social worlds have the most prominent actors. This is identified by looking at how many stakeholders are presented in each social world, and how the stakeholder appears in the campaign material. This analysis recognizes that despite a social world having numerous stakeholders in the campaign material, this does not definitively mean the said social world provides the greatest commitment to action. By looking at how the stakeholders are identified in the campaigns, this component is equally, if not more, crucial to the commitment of action for the stakeholder's role in the campaign information and dissemination.

Following this initial inquiry of the arenas, the chapter progresses into more detailed findings where stakeholders are discussed as to their history of sexting education, and how their participation to pursue their own agendas contributes to existing sex panics and reinforces stigmas.

Sexto as Arena under study

When analysing the Sexto campaign's social worlds and stakeholders, it became clear the campaign is heavily reliant on government institutions to fund, provide information, and resources for the campaign. As shown in figure 2, there were no non-government affiliated stakeholders.

Notably, the primary actors in this arena appearing on the homepage of the Sexto campaign website (the principal method of dissemination of campaign material), are the St-Jérôme police department and the Director of Criminal and Penal Prosecutions (DCPP). On this landing page, the Sexto campaign is described as "a partnership between schools, police forces and the Director of Criminal and Penal Prosecutions (DCPP) to promote prevention and raise awareness […] regard[ing] the growing phenomenon of sexting" (Sexto, 2020, The Sexto project).

Figure 3
Sexto Social World/Arena Map
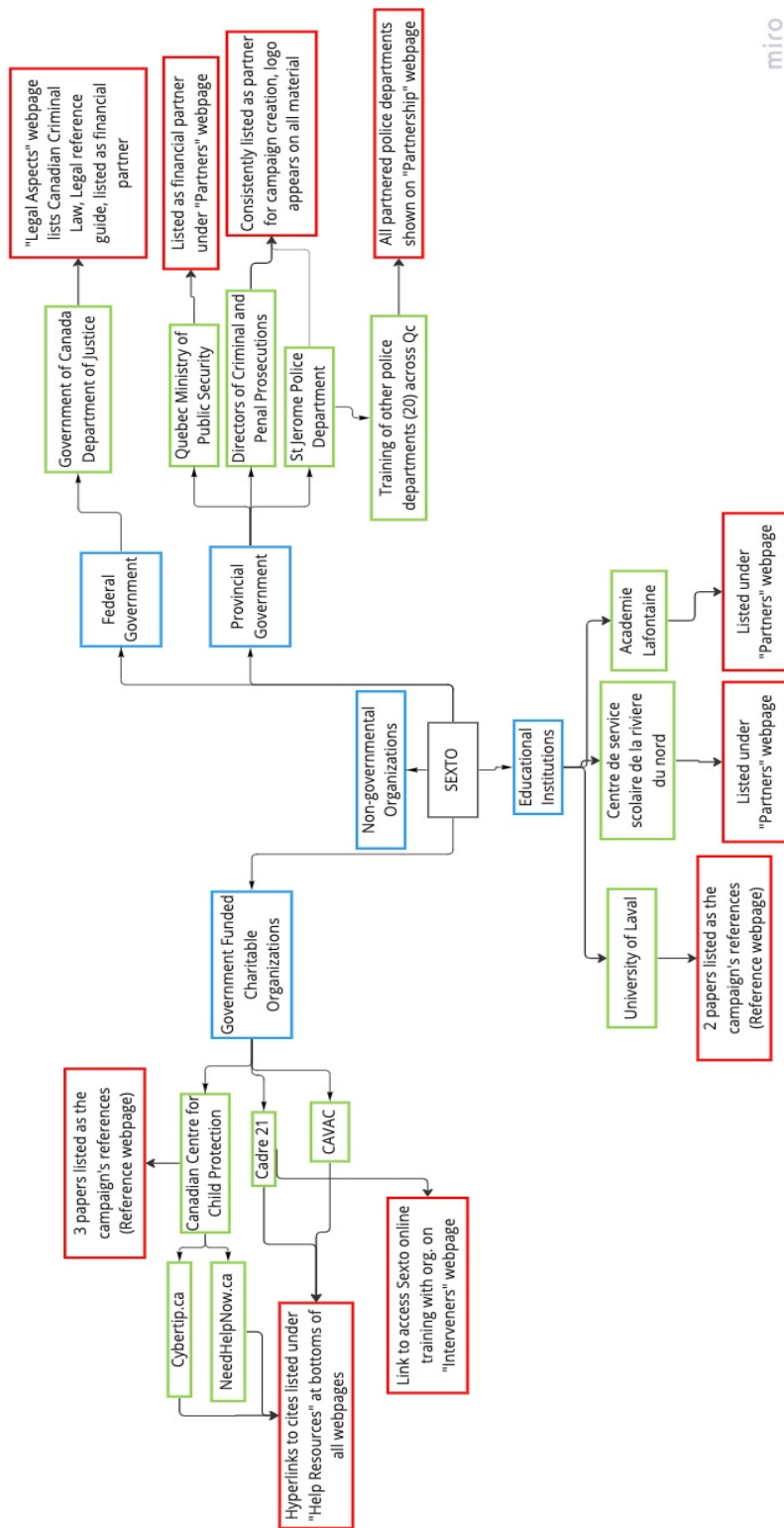
Having described the campaign as this extensive partnership between multiple organizations, the provincial government is highly expanded as the campaign identifies that it has trained 20 police departments across Quebec with the toolkit on how to approach teenage sexting in their municipalities. However, these police departments do not appear in any area of the campaign material, other than on the "Partnership" webpage where each of their logos are posted. These logos link to the websites for each department illustrate how far reaching the campaign's information is throughout the province.

Looking to the descriptions of how the stakeholders are presented in campaign material, the campaign does not have many instances where stakeholders are directly referenced within the information about sexting as presented throughout the different webpages (for example, the "Teenagers" and "Parents" pages). Instead, stakeholders appear in lists of partners, financial supporters, or at the end-card of the website as helpful resources linked to the stakeholder's webpage(s) without direct mention of the Sexto campaign.

Sexting is Porn as Arena under study

In contrast to Sexto's dominant federal and provincial government social worlds and large number of stakeholders, figure 3 shows the numerous stakeholders within the government funded charitable organizations and educational institutions social worlds that are presented in the Sexting is Porn campaign. However, while these worlds are larger than the others, it is important to note how they appear in the campaign material.

Figure 4

Sexting is Porn Social World/Arena Map
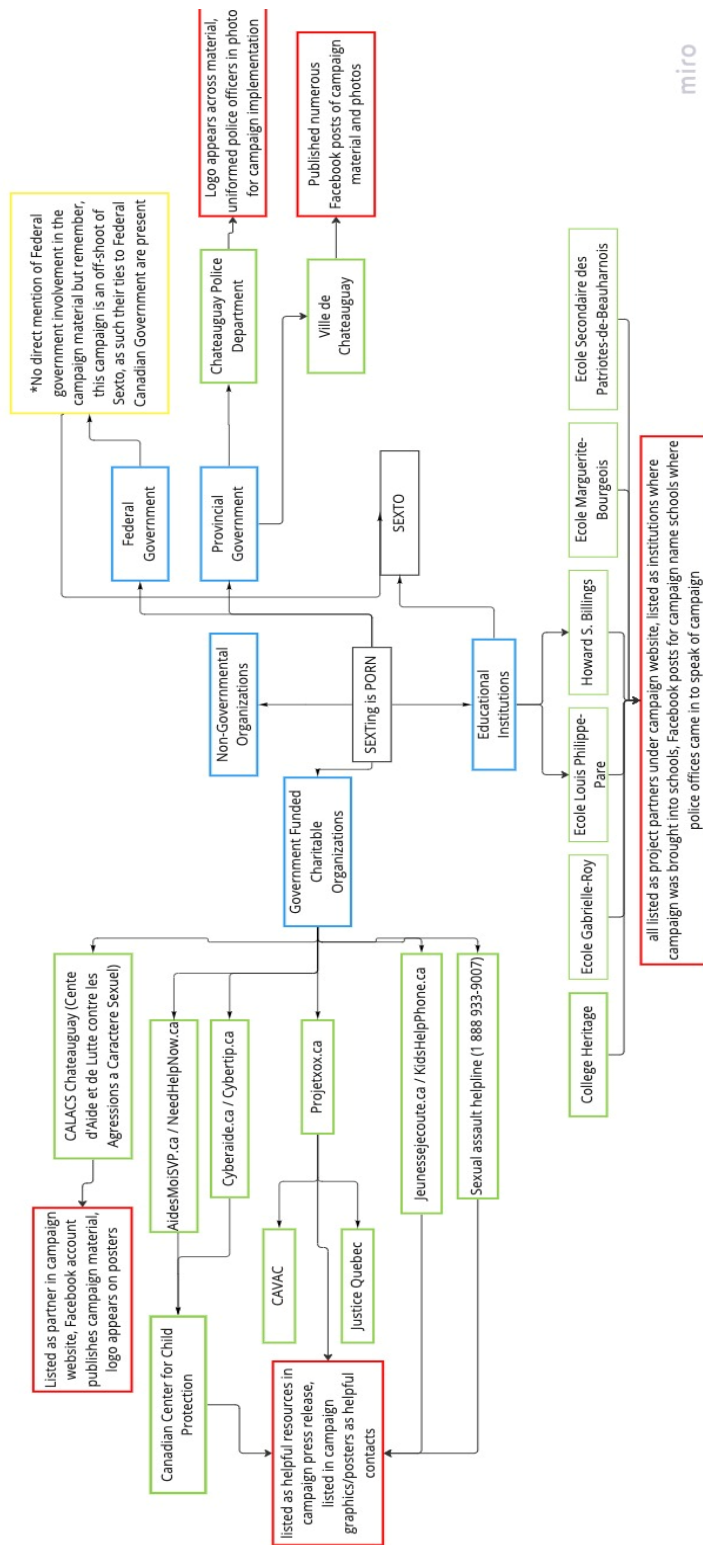
Notably, throughout the campaign material there is a lack of organizations presented for the Federal and Provincial justice worlds. While these worlds were clearly present in Sexto material, Sexting is Porn showcases almost exclusively the Chateauguay Police Department logo and the logo for CALACS Chateauguay (Le Centre d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel) as the two stakeholders in both of these worlds combined. Although the press release and minimal Sexting is Porn campaign website detail the link between the two campaigns, the most prominent facing material of Sexting is Porn does not showcase the connection. As a result, the Sexting is Porn campaign appears to stand alone in the information provided. Despite the minimal notation of how Sexting is Porn was developed with the help of Sexto and their toolkit to handle teenage sexting, this connection is important. While Sexting is Porn makes very little mention of the federal and provincial justice worlds, they are directly connected to Sexto. Hence, their information and campaign material are created in reference to these organizations which have informed the Sexto campaign.

Detailed Findings

As presumed given their role as creators of the campaign, the St-Jérôme and Chateauguay police departments are respectively highlighted in the material of each campaign. Both campaigns showcase the police logos throughout campaign materials, with Sexto's placement at the end of all of their webpages and Sexting is Porn's placement in the corner of their published campaign images posted across their social media posts and physical posters. Although the campaigns make note of the police affiliation, there are only a few occasions where the police are directly referred to as creators of the campaign. For Sexto this occurs on the introductory webpage as "*partnership between schools, police forces, and the Director of Criminal and Penal Prosecutions (DCPP)*" (Sexto, 2020, What is the Sexto Project?). While Sexting is Porn makes note of its creators in the May 20, 2021 press release stating that the Chateauguay police department and CALACS is "proud to continue their association as part of the 4th edition of the "SEXTing is PORN!" awareness campaign" (Service de police de Châteauguay, 2021). Despite the police logos appearing consistently in material, the direct reference to police as creators is minimally addressed.

Although the police departments are undoubtably responsible for the campaign, the actual material varies between campaigns. As Sexto is in part a toolkit aiming to train other police departments and adults on how to respond to cases of teenage sexting, their provincial government social world expands largely as they detail all affiliated departments who are bringing the Sexto response into their communities. In contrast, Sexting is Porn have far fewer stakeholders in the federal and provincial government world. They have a stronger police presence, as uniformed police are entering schools to spread the messages of the campaign.

In the initial development of codes, identification of non-government stakeholders presented in campaigns which were so governmentally situated seemed crucial, given the police department creators of the campaigns. In applying the codes throughout material, non-government affiliated stakeholders did seem to appear, albeit uncommonly. However, when looking at these stakeholders' official websites, there were no truly non-governmental organizations working independently of the government. For example, the Canadian Center for Child Protection was founded in part and continually supported by the Government of Canada, and the Crime Victims Assistant Center (CAVAC) is financed by Justice Quebec. Despite the absence of stakeholders in the non-governmental organizations social worlds for each campaign, showcasing such an absence is imperative to highlight the agendas being pursued through the campaign information.

Both the Sexto and Sexting is Porn campaigns identify charitable organizations as "helpful resources" and resources to contact if a teenager is in trouble due to sexting. As shown in Figure 5 Sexto highlights government organizations under the "help resources" section at the end of all webpages, with the additional box of "sites for advice and help" at the top of the figure on their webpage curated for "Teenagers" and "Parents" as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 5
Sexto Government Funded Organizations Example
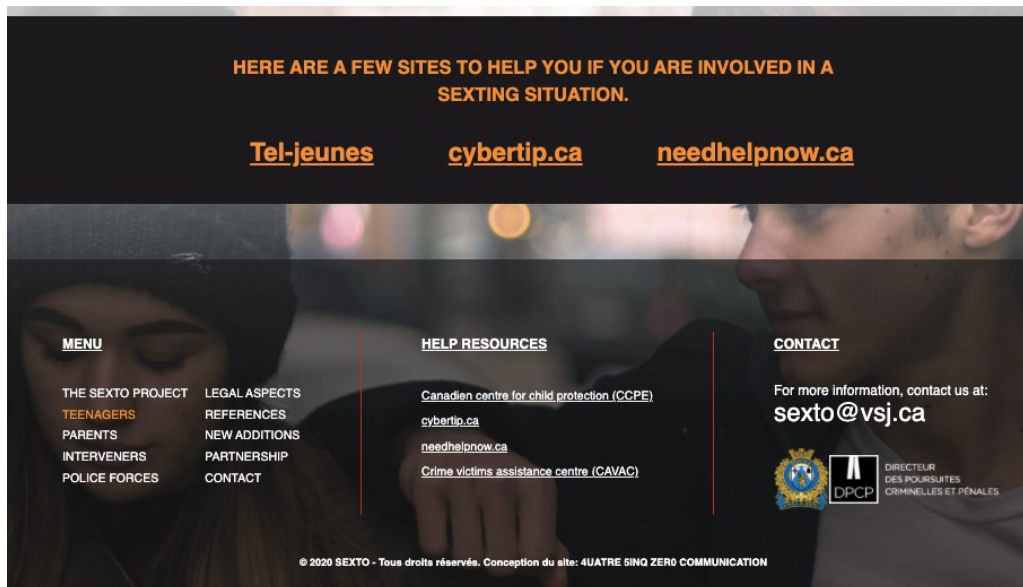
Note: From Sexto. (2020). Teenagers (https://pasobligedetoutpartager.info/en/adolescents/)

For example, as shown above in Figure 4, Sexto lists organizations:
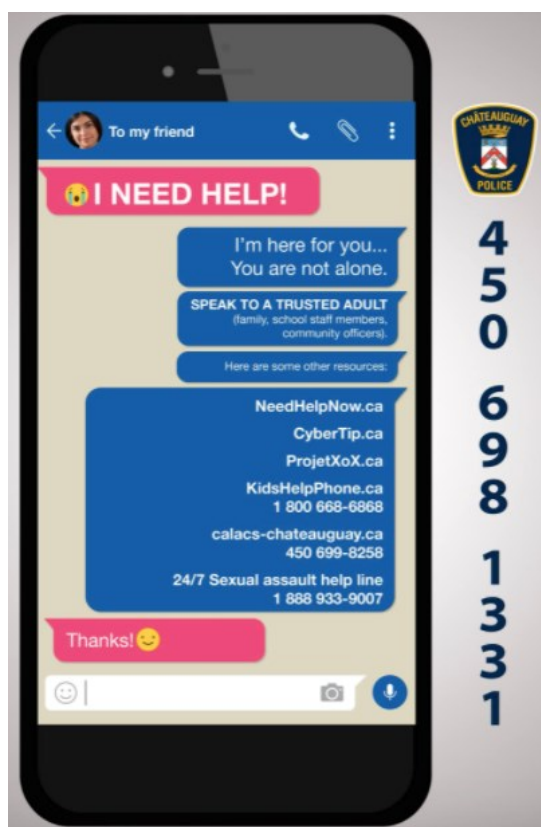
- Cybertip.ca: "Canada's tipline for reporting the online sexual abuse and exploitation of children" who refers tips to law enforcement and provides resources to keep people safe while using the internet, operated by the Canadian center for child protection (Cybertip, 2023, About).
- Needhelpnow.ca: Who aims to provide guidance to teens to "stop the spread of sexual pictures or videos". Their website details resources for removing photos, emotional support, resources for parents, laws, and reporting. They are operated by the Canadian center for child protection (Needhelpnow, n.d., index).
- Teljeunes.com: A service where people under the age of 20 can reach professional counselors to discuss topics of love, drugs and alcohol, friends and family, and sex (Teljeunes, 2022, About).
- Canadian Center for Child Protection: A national charity aiming to reduce the sexual abuse and exploitation of children, who aims to reduce instances of exploitation and educate children, parents, educators, law enforcement (Canadian Center for Child Protection, 2023, About us). Founded in part by the Government of Canada, still listed as current ally (Canadian Center for Child Protection, 2023, About us).

- Crime victims assistant center (CAVAC): "work in collaboration with experts from the legal community, health and social services networks" to any victim or witnesses to crimes, financed by Justice Quebec (CAVAC, 2023, About CAVAC).

Similarly, Sexting is Porn showcases the government funded stakeholders in the campaign graphic printed to posters when the campaign is brought into schools with police officers, and it is the main campaign image shared across virtually all social media posts. Figure 6 shows the Sexting is Porn campaign image which portrays the stakeholders as trusted adults working as "community officers" a teenager can reach out to.

Figure 6

Sexting is Porn Government Funded Organizations Example

Note: From Ville de Chateauguay Facebook post
(https://www.facebook.com/Chateauguay/photos/a.1663579713704001/1663579920370647/)

The campaign graphic for Sexting is Porn includes overlap in organizations with NeedHelpNow.ca and CyberTip.ca. Uniquely, Sexting is Porn introduces:

- ProjetXoX.ca: Whose goal is "to educate, better equip, and to prevent violence in a romantic relationship" (ProjectXoX, 2017, The Project). ProjectXoX has partnered with several police departments as well as Justice Quebec (ProjectXoX, 2017, The Project).

- KidsHelpPhone.ca: An e-support organization who offers support to young people regarding mental health, crisis support, and professional counselling (KidsHelpPhone, 2023, About us). KidsHelpPhone receives government funding from the Govenrment of Canada as well as the government of 7 Provinces (KidsHelpPhone, 2023, Our Impact & Supporters).
- Calacs-Chateauguay.ca: Who aims to raise public awareness and take preventive action for sexual violence and to defend the rights of victims of sexual assault (Calacs, n.d., Our Mission)
- As well as a 24/7 Sexual assault support phone line

Despite the respective police departments making themselves available as a resource for young people to contact in cases of sexting, with Sexting is Porn providing the police phone number alongside the campaign graphic (figure 6) quite visibly, both campaigns rely on these secondary resources. Noted in the brief examples of each organization above, these organizations respond to serious instances of sexting. The mission statements of these organizations frame sexting alongside sexual violence and abuse. Referencing the "about" statements above, these organizations use vocabulary such as "sexual abuse and exploitation", aiding "victim or witnesses to crimes", to "prevent violence", and "defend victims of sexual assault", and where teens can receive "emotion support", "professional counselling", and "crisis support".

The discussion of this vocabulary is not to discredit the serious work that these organizations do for people who do experience violence and require the assistance that the organizations provide. As these organizations do not exclusively focus on teenage sexting, these mission statements likely provide great care in instances when this type of response is needed. However, as Sexto and Sexting is Porn provide these resources as the next point of contact in sexting experiencing, they take the position that all teenagers who are sexting are victims to/of crimes.

Showcasing these stakeholders as trusted resources teenagers can reach out to when in need is important, and clearly communicating these options can be very helpful for teens to find their most comfortable avenue toward support. However, while these stakeholders may be helpful they all have some aspect of government affiliation and/or funding, suggesting teenagers can still find themselves at the mercy of the government perspective of teenage sexting. With the Sexto and Sexting is Porn campaigns sharing these resources, they are participating in the collective action aiming to stop teenage sexting. Though teenagers and parents can reach out to these resources, the commitments in the arena reinforce the idea that teenage sexting is negative and dangerous, just as the campaigns themselves are showcasing.

Discussion

To recall, the goal of the social worlds and arena mapping was used in this chapter to identify which stakeholders are present in the campaign material and how the shared perspective of these stakeholders each act within the arena of the campaigns. As Clarke, et al. (2017) explain "these perspectives also undergird the commitments of that social world to collective action in the arenas in which it is involved. Social worlds usually participate in arenas in which their agendas are pursued" (p.148). As detailed above, both the Sexto and Sexting is Porn campaigns showcase a highly government-affiliated agenda that is being pursued. These collective actions on behalf of

government stakeholders participating in these anti-sexting campaigns are a prime example of perpetuating a sex panic.

Sex panics have important government ties as they "aptly captured the hostile political climate during the late-twentieth-century controversies [including] censorship, and sex education" (Irvine, 2008, p.2). Many of these notions we have seen in the campaign material, focusing on censoring any positive aspect of teenage sexting, relegates sexting education to panic discourses around the practice. Due to the hostile climate that is enacted in a sex panic, the heightened public emotions can put pressure on stakeholders such as politicians and police to respond (Irvine, 2008, p.2). Resulting from these pressures "laws and policies that restrict sexual rights may be hastily enacted yet exert a pernicious influence for decades" (Irvine, 2008, p.2). Despite the exceptions that exist in consensual teenage sexting explored in the introduction to this study, the campaigns are still seeing institutions enact policies to curb the behaviour. Police presence woven through these campaigns showcases an out-of-date position in response to the panic about sexting, as a result of a sex panic that began long ago. These hastily enacted ideals are still holding strong in these more current campaigns, still aiming to restrict sexual behaviours.

Rubin (1984) details that certain sexual behaviours fall lower on the scale and the people who practice these behaviours face "extreme and punitive stigma maintain[ing] some sexual behaviours as low status and is an effective sanction against those who engage in them" (p. 279). With strong government ties presented in each campaign and the censorship these stakeholders are taking on in the panic about what teenager sexting is doing to young people, they are reinforcing stigmas. These stigmas surrounding sexual behaviours are making their way into teenager sexting and there is heavy discussion in the campaign material about the punitive measures that can be enacted on teenagers, when engaging in the practice. This is more concerning when the stigmas are being reinforced by police officers and the government organizations listed in the campaign material who believe they are protecting young people. Instead, this political world becomes increasingly hostile toward teenage sexters and agendas against these practices are being highly published, leaving teens with very little outside information that may offer a different commitment to the issue.

One of the common charitable organizations that both Sexto and Sexting is Porn identify in campaign material is Cybertip.ca, Canada's national tipline for reporting the online sexual exploitation of children, operated by the Canadian Centre for Child Protection (CCCP). Cybertip.ca is included in both campaigns as a "helpful resource" as shown in figures 5 and 6. Interestingly, Cybertip and the CCCP have a history of involvement in sexting education campaigns.

Karaian (2014) writes that in 2005 Cybertip.ca, and as a result the CCCP, "issued a public alert about 'the growing trend of young girls posing nude for webcams and the distribution of the resulting photos and videos on the internet'" (p.283; Karaian and Van Meyl, 2015). Having sounded this alarm about sexting in the early 2000s, Cybertip established their first public education campaign (Karaian, 2014). By issuing this public alert and the resulting campaign, Cybertip showcased its history in the world of anti-sexting campaigns. Cybertip is framed as a resource for parents and teenagers to contact for more information about sexting or for additional help, yet they are contributors in "the development of numerous anti-sexting campaigns by police and child protection agencies which decry the very possibility of consensual and 'safe sexting'" (Karaian and Van Meyl, 2015, p.20). Cybertip and the CCCP, are thus direct examples of panicked discourses around sexting where they contribute to the collective action of stopping teenage

sexting that is presented in the two campaigns under study for this project. Rather than highlighting resources with alternative perspectives, "child advocates such as the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, federal and provincial policing agencies, and future courts need to be made aware of [the developments in teenage sexting and child pornography laws] so that they can avoid infringing on youths' constitutional rights" (Karaian and Brady, 2018, p.347). However, as in the case of sex panics, there has been little evolution in the positions being discussed. The institutions that have presented themselves in these two campaigns have continued to rely on past ideas confounded by sex panics, rather than understanding a youth perspective.

Absent Voices

Overall, there is little balance in the stakeholders that are highlighted throughout campaign material. The voices of police and government institutions drown out the voices of teenagers, as well as parents and other adults in the school system. Though teenagers, parents and school officials are addressed in campaign material, specifically in Sexto, they are not regarded as stakeholders. Rather teens are portrayed as victims and parents or teachers as the first point of contact to direct teens to the police or other organizations that are addressed. It is important for teenagers, parents, and teachers to be highlighted as more than just victims or bystanders, and rather as stakeholders with their own agency and perspectives. This can facilitate an area for such stakeholders to engage in meaningful ways to co-create knowledge and responses that reflect their needs and concerns.

Entirely absent from Sexting is Porn, and minimally considered in Sexto parents are not thought of to play a valuable role throughout these campaigns. While Sexto provides brief details for parents to respond to sexting such as to "never look at the photos", "trust your child", and "don't make judgements about your child's behaviour" (Sexto, 2020, Parents), they are not viewed as stakeholders that can properly respond to sexting. Yet, parents are often educating their children about healthy relationships and sexuality. These stakeholders should be recognized as valued resources and co-creators of knowledge, rather than just passive recipients. It is important that campaigns such as Sexto and Sexting is Porn to engage with all stakeholders including parents and young people rather than treating them as passive recipients or victims. By recognizing the agency and perspectives of all stakeholders, educational campaigns such as these can create more effective and inclusive responses that reflect the diverse needs and concerns of people affected by said campaigns.

Conclusion of chapter

This chapter has seen how police and other government-affiliated organizations have taken their stance on teenage sexting. Presenting police logos or links to other organizations who share their perspective is a consistent collective to action that takes place in the Sexto and Sexting is Porn campaigns. By sharing only government resources that are working under the same ideologies of teenage sexting, teenagers and parents viewing the Sexto and Sexting is Porn campaigns experience the stigma that teenage sexting needs to be stopped. Not only do these ideas gain traction through the creators and affiliates of the campaign, but also through their presence in the educational material of the campaigns themselves.

Chapter Three:

Positions of Discourse and Expected Behaviours - Analysis of Sexting is Porn and Sexto Campaign Messages

Introduction

Having observed the significant role that police officers are playing in the creation and dissemination of the Sexto and Sexting is Porn campaigns, alongside each of their government affiliations, it comes as no surprise that each campaign takes a strong stance on the legal considerations of teenage sexting. Sexto may take the ever-so-slightly more subtle approach than Sexting is Porn, who broadcasts its position in the campaign name itself, yet the first webpage of Sexto includes a graphic of an Apple notification which reads "**Do you really want to send that picture** [?] Once sent, that picture could destroy your future" with the options of "send" or "cancel". In looking specifically at the messages about sexting presented across the two campaigns, this chapter unpacks the final research question: *What information, themes, and topics of focus are included in the campaign materials and how do these relate more broadly to societal understandings of young people's negotiations of technology and sexuality?*

To showcase the breadth of messages across the campaigns, a positional map for each campaign was developed. Clarke et al. (2017) explain that the goal of positional maps "is to lay out the major positions taken on issues in the situation – topics of focus, concern, and often but not always contestation" (p.165). Also explained by Clarke et al. (2017), one of the most important elements of positional maps "is that they push the researcher to see the positions not taken in the data, positions that remain unarticulated. Positional maps allow silences to be made to 'speak'" (p.172). In what follows, this chapter will explore the positions of teenage sexting that are presented in the campaign material, providing examples of the more dominant messages the audience receives when viewing the material. Following the positions that *have* been taken in the material, the discussion section of this chapter will re-introduce scholars such as Hasinoff and Karaian, who will speak for the silenced perspectives, highlighting where the campaign has fallen short in their sexting education.

With chapter two focusing on the *Government affiliations* and *non-government affiliations* coding of campaign material, chapter three highlights the elements of campaign material coded with the *Discursive constructions of human actors* and *Discursive constructions of non-human behaviour* codes. These discursive construction codes were used when coding the collected data to identify instances where the campaigns have referred to how a person should act, how technology should be used (or not used), and any references to the law or criminal implications. Once each of these code groups were isolated across campaign material, positional maps were then created to identify the dominant messages that appear in each campaign, and how each campaign's messages compare with the other. To map the ideas from the campaigns, each position has been plotted against an x and y axis.

For the creation of the maps, the x axis mapped positions of sexting on the scale of "good" and "bad" sexting that Slane (2013) had identified. To recall, "bad" sexting, the conceptualization of the practice which tends to dominate the discourse, perceived sexting as risky due to concerns of sexual harassment, exposure to pornography, exploitation of minors (primarily by adults), cyberbullying from peers, and long-term repercussions from redistribution of a private image (Karaian and Van Meyl, 2015; Ringrose, et al., 2013; Setty, 2019; Slane, 2013). The idea of sexting

as good or bad is already a position, and for the purpose of this study, it feels that this value system to categorize sexting is a useful starting point to classify the positions the campaign has taken on regarding the practice of teenage sexting.

Utilizing another theory, the y axis plots information from through Irvine's (2008) writings about sex panics. Irvine notes that sex panics utilize public emotions to enforce sexual hierarchies, "establishing some sexualities as normal and others as disgusting or unspeakable. Affective conventions of sexuality—in particular, sexual shame, stigma, fear, disgust" which reinforces a regulatory system surrounding sex (2008, p.3). Through creating these value systems, sex panics similarly note that a sexual practice may be good or bad, as we see in the x axis with Slane's conceptualization. However, Irvine introduces sex panics in relation to how institutions such as police are involved in mitigating the root of the panic (Irvine, 2008, p.2). Irvine's (2008) conceptualization of sex panics highlight the affective intensity of institutional judgements towards sexual behaviours which reflects in the degree of panic and other strong emotions related to the topic. By using Irvine to plot campaign positions on the y axis, this takes into consideration how much involvement is perceived as required to mitigate the behaviour.

Positions in Sexto

Sexto, differing from the teenage audience of Sexting is Porn, focuses its positions of sexting in the context of teenagers, parents, and other adult interveners. As a result, the campaign material includes positions on the y axis with slightly less emotional affect, though still veering in the middle to right on the x axis for considerations of "bad" sexting. Because the campaign includes public facing material for the adults present in the lives of teens that may be sexting, there is a positional focus on teens requiring assistance and adults having to step up and put a stop to these teens' "bad" behaviour.
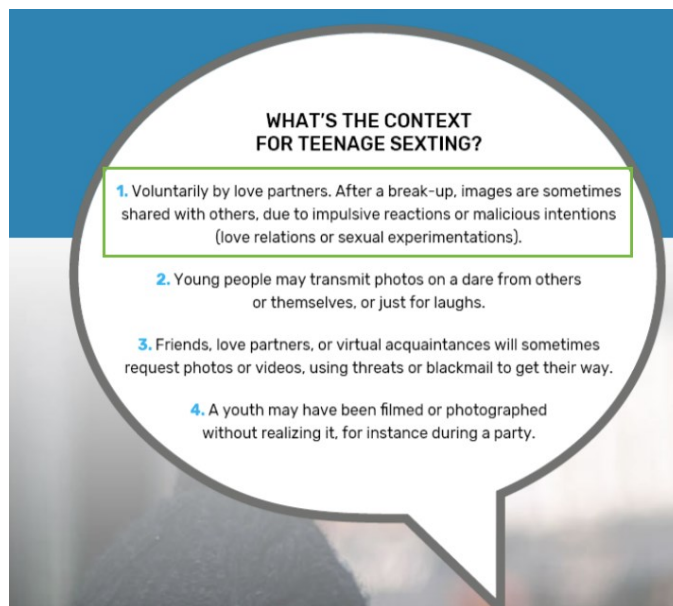
Figure 7

Sexto Positional Map
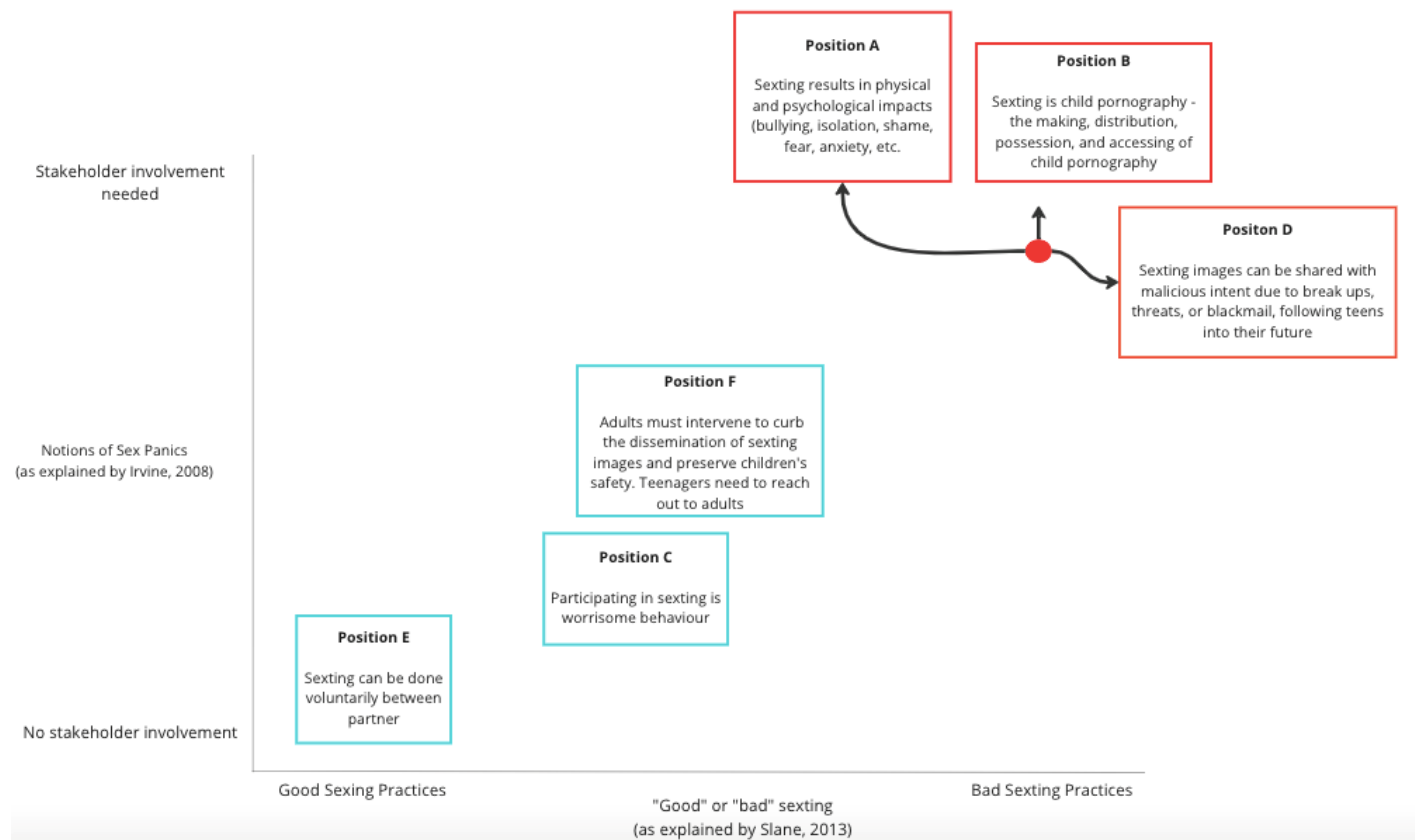
As shown above, **Position A, B, and D** each stem from a point that has been plotted on the map. This plot point is used to signify that each of these positions are considered equally negative and involving panic. Within the constraints of the graph these positions cannot be plotted on top of one another. Child pornography laws, harsh psychological and physical impacts, and malicious sexting should each be considered equally as "bad" consequences of sexting and face heightened public emotion – or more panic regarding the behaviour.

Serving as the one outlier to the negative and dangerous discourses presented throughout the campaign material, **Position E** does note that teenage sexting can be done "voluntarily by love partners" (See Figure 8).

Figure 8

Sexto, What's the context for teenage sexting?

WHAT'S THE CONTEXT
FOR TEENAGE SEXTING?

1. Voluntarily by love partners. After a break-up, images are sometimes shared with others, due to impulsive reactions or malicious intentions (love relations or sexual experimentations).

2. Young people may transmit photos on a dare from others or themselves, or just for laughs.

3. Friends, love partners, or virtual acquaintances will sometimes request photos or videos, using threats or blackmail to get their way.

4. A youth may have been filmed or photographed without realizing it, for instance during a party.

Note: From Sexto. (2020). The Sexto Project (https://pasobligedetoutpartager.info/en/projet-sexto/)

This position does vary quite significantly from others plotted on the map, however there is no development on the position. Instead, this position is noted and the next line of text in the same bullet point is "After a break-up, images are sometimes shared with others, due to impulsive reactions or malicious intentions" (Sexto, 2020, The Sexto Project). For a brief moment, the campaign notes that teenage sexting can be done without coercion (i.e., danger) and within the context of a trusted person (i.e. erring on the side of good), however, that position is immediately revoked as the campaign explains that negative reactions and malicious intent are always around the corner, making it known that it is never safe to send a sext. Having discussed that sexting would fall outside of Rubin's (1989) charmed circle, the vocabulary used in Figure 8 does provide a slight deviation towards inclusion into the charmed circle. This reference to sexting being done "voluntarily by love partners" identifies that sexting can take place within a monogamous, long-term relationship rather than being linked exclusively with promiscuity and pornography that fall into the outer limit of the circle and face extreme repercussions (p.279). This shift in focus can imply that the campaign can recognize instances of consensual, less dangerous, practices of teenage sexting. Yet as the campaign moves quickly to implications of voluntary sexting after a break-up causing harm, they position sexting directly outside of anything that could be considered "good" or "safe" (Rubin, 1984, p.281) once more.

Positions in Sexting is Porn

As mentioned in the introduction, Sexting is Porn makes their stance on the practice of sexting clear. The name of the campaign makes direct mention of their position: that sexting is PORN[ography]. In opposition to the Sexto campaign, Sexting is Porn has drastically less material being presented to their audience in which their positions are detailed. However, their message is still clear. As will be highlighted in the next section of this chapter, Position A details that sexting

is juvenile pornography and therefore means young people can face serious consequences, being the main idea presented throughout all campaign material.

Figure 9

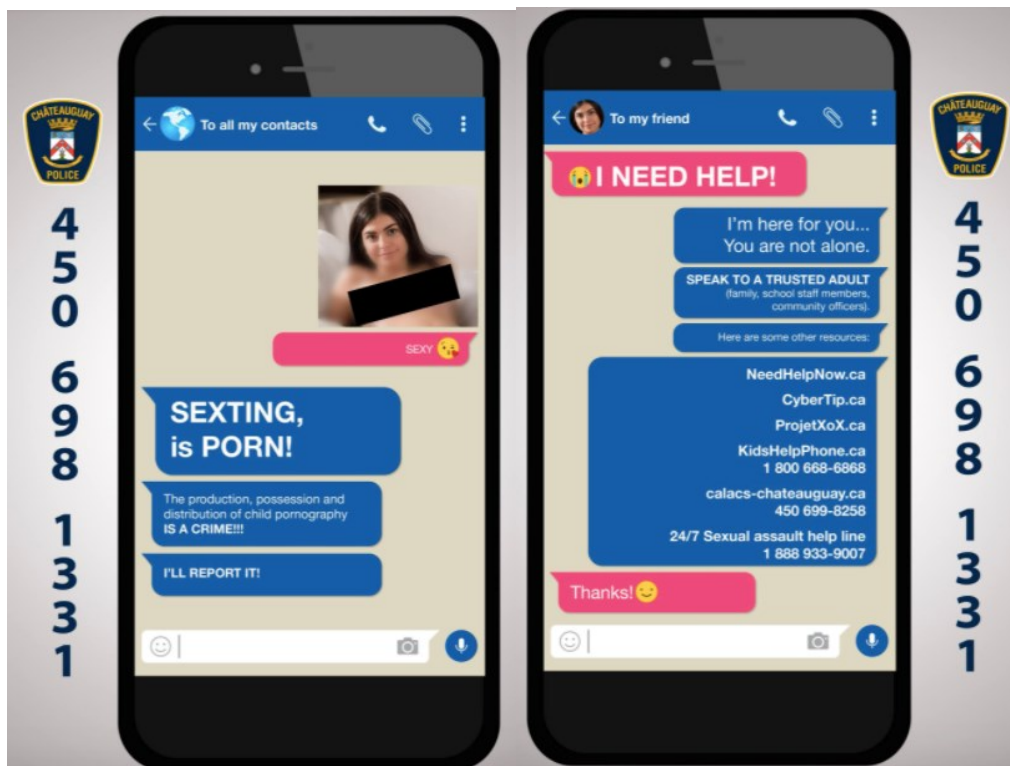*Sexting is Porn Positional Map*
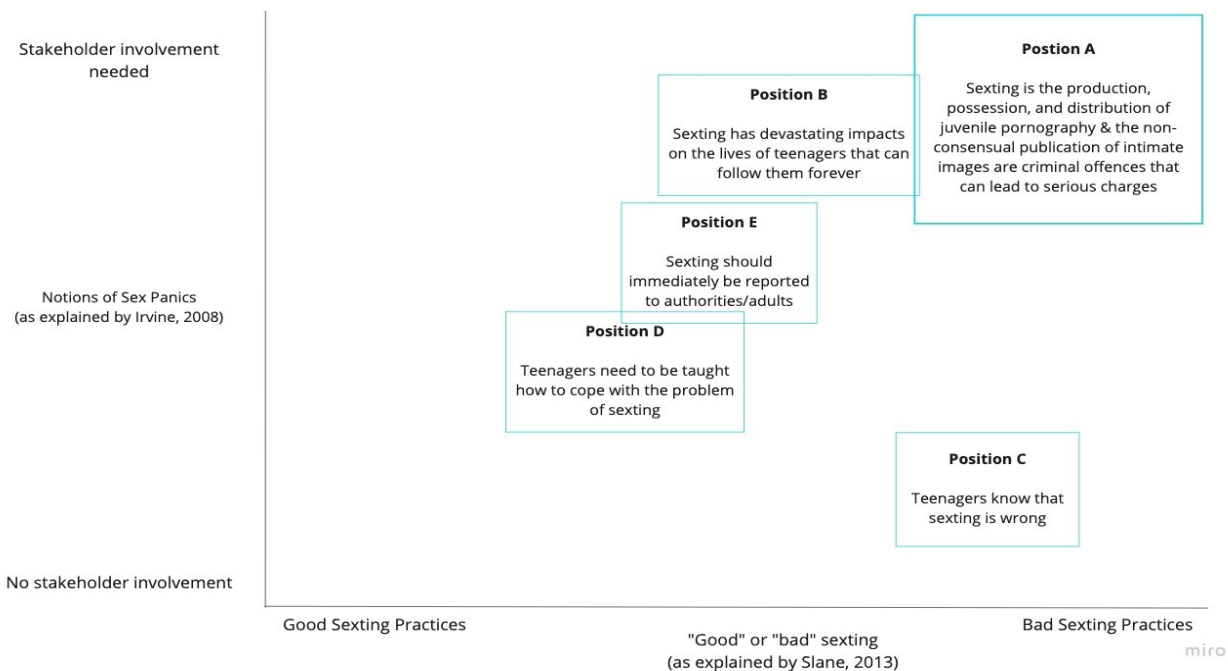
Chapter two noted that the Sexting is Porn campaign highlights various resources teenagers can reach out to when in need, despite all of them having some aspect of government affiliation and/or funding, meaning teens are still at the mercy of shared government perspective which frowns upon sexting. This is aptly portrayed in campaign messages as the limited material focuses on legal aspects of sexting, as well as the need for teenagers to have adult intervention so they stop sexting altogether.

While chapter two has already introduced the campaign poster in the analysis of how stakeholders are presented in the campaign, this chapter will reintroduce the poster to examine its messaging.

Figure 10

Sexting is Porn full campaign image

Note: From Ville de Chateauguay Facebook post
(https://www.facebook.com/Chateauguay/photos/a.1663579713704001/1663579843703988/ and
https://www.facebook.com/Chateauguay/photos/a.1663579713704001/1663579920370647)

As the Sexting is Porn campaign has much less material where positions have been presented, the campaign poster is the primary piece of material used to showcase the positions of the campaign. The campaign has been widely shared across Facebook, which continually posts the campaign poster image along with a caption. Given the campaign exists physically with police going into schools, the above campaign image is passed out on cards to students and large posters are installed behind police officers. In the discussion that follows, rather than continuing to attach the campaign image for each example, Figure 10 will be recalled.

Having now introduced the grouped positions from the material of both campaigns, the campaigns share much overlap in the education being provided, despite their drastic difference in the size of campaign material. As shown in the two maps, each campaign positions sexting within the legal context, a practice that will have serious implications on a teen's future, and behaviour that commands adults to assist. This chapter will discuss the main positions of both campaigns, while interweaving the campaign material with discussion of how the positions relate to existing scholarly literature and theory.

Teenage Sexting as Illegal Behaviour

Not surprisingly, due to the police creation of two campaigns and that Sexto and Sexting is Porn follow in the footsteps of their anti-sexting campaign predecessors, the most apparent common perspective shared between campaigns is that teenage sexting is a criminal offence. Nevertheless, not all cases of teenage sexting are in fact illegal and punishable by the law. To recall, "the Sharpe Court held that sexual images made and kept privately and consensually within legal sexual relationships should not be deemed child pornography" (Slane, 2013, p.119). This is additionally compounded with the two safeguards in place for young people to navigate past punitive implications of teenager sexting: "that both the sexual activity and the recording be consensual and the requirement that subsequent possession and use of the recording be limited to the intimate partners for their mutual pleasure (or by the child in the case of self-photography)" (Slane, 2010, 568). Despite these exceptions clearly existing in the legal considerations of teenage sexting, there is no mention of these ideas throughout the campaign. For example, Sexto notes that "by adopting this behaviour [sexting], teenagers may be committing a number of criminal offenses" as shown in Figure 11.

Figure 11
Sexto refers to the Criminal Code

Note: From Sexto, 2020, Legal Aspects
(https://pasobligedetoutpartager.info/en/juridique/)

Similarly, in Sexting is Porn's campaign website, specifically the section targeted at teens, the message is that it is "important to remember that the production, possession and distribution of juvenile pornography and non-consensual publication of intimate images are criminal offences that could lead to serious charges" which is shown in Figure 12, directly under the large image of a police vehicle.

Figure 12

Sexting is Porn conseqences of sexting

Note: From Service de police to Chateaugay, SEXTing is PORN (Website no longer accessible)

Sexto and Sexting is Porn have become additional examples of the "unfortunate consequences" of sexting interventions by law enforcement who "often trample on the subtle negotiations of rights, pleasures and pressures of adolescent sexual exploration within a technologically mediated and often ambiguous peer context" (Ringrose, et al., 2013, p.307). Rather than discuss potential risks that incidentally stem from sexting, the campaign material relies on fear tactics of the law. Lee and Darcy (2020) "argue that child pornography laws disproportionately regulate youth sexting behaviours – namely that child pornography laws are irrationally severe, misguided in orientation, and unreasonably coarse" (p.563-564). With a disproportionate influx of references to child pornography laws presented in the campaigns, despite the fact that consensual teenage sexting will likely not be applicable to these laws, the campaigns lean in on the fear of prosecution for teens rather than teaching them practices for protecting themselves against non-consensual cases of sexting. Though teenagers may face repercussions of any non-consensual sharing of intimate images, this is more likely to be considered through Bill C-13 under the cyberbullying laws of the country. Under cyberbullying laws teens are likely to face less extreme measures yes this is not considered in campaign material.

In conjunction with the consistent and continual reference to the illegal behaviour of sexting, the need for teens to reach out to adults to help them or for adults to step in to stop this behaviour, is also frequently presented. In Sexto's home webpage, the text explains that they "believe that a coordinated and concerted problem-solving approach makes it possible to establish a strategic intervention plan to quell this scourge" where intervention is done by police, school officials, and families (Sexto, 2020, The Sexto Project). Exaggerated language such as by referring to sexting as a "scourge" also frames it as beyond teenagers' control, justifying this intervention by authorities and prosecutors. In the figure above, Sexting is Porn explains that the campaign works so "teens are better equipped not to suffer this kind of situation alone" (Sexting is Porn, Youth section). The insistence that adults need to be contacted or need to intervene in a teenager's life when it comes to sexting, strips young people of their agency and right to make their own decisions when it comes to sexting. Although adults should make themselves available to a teenager if they want to seek them out, the position of adults needing to intervene again highlights the idea that teens should not be allowed to make decisions regarding their own sex life.

Gender in Campaign Messaging

In opposition to the clear message that teenage sexting is illegal behaviour which both campaigns have produced, neither campaign makes a direct statement that a particular gender[4] is more at risk of consequences when participating in sexting. Despite the lack of textual elements relating to gender, both campaigns highlight that young girls are more at risk for victimization while young boys are perpetrators, sharing photos beyond themselves as the recipient thus violating consent. This position is not present in either of the maps as there is no direct mention of gender in either campaign, although their unspoken ideas, represented solely in visual material, is equally as important to note.

On Sexto's home webpage, there is a 2 minute and 40 second video embedded under the question "What is THE SEXTO PROJECT?". The video shows a teenage girl exchanging text messages with a teenage boy who asked her to send a picture. The girl notes that this makes her nervous, the boy insists that it is alright, and the girl closes the bathroom door and holds up her phone camera – presumably taking photos of her exposed breasts. Immediately after receiving the photo, the boy shows his friends (figure 13) and the girl is then shamed and bullied with derogatory post-it notes on her locker and is the subject of whispers and looks as she passes down the hall (figure 14).

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[4] For the purpose of this study, the gendered considerations will be discussed using "boy" and "girl". This does not mean to discredit non-binary folks who are also participating in sexting.

Figure 13 and 14

Sexto campaign video
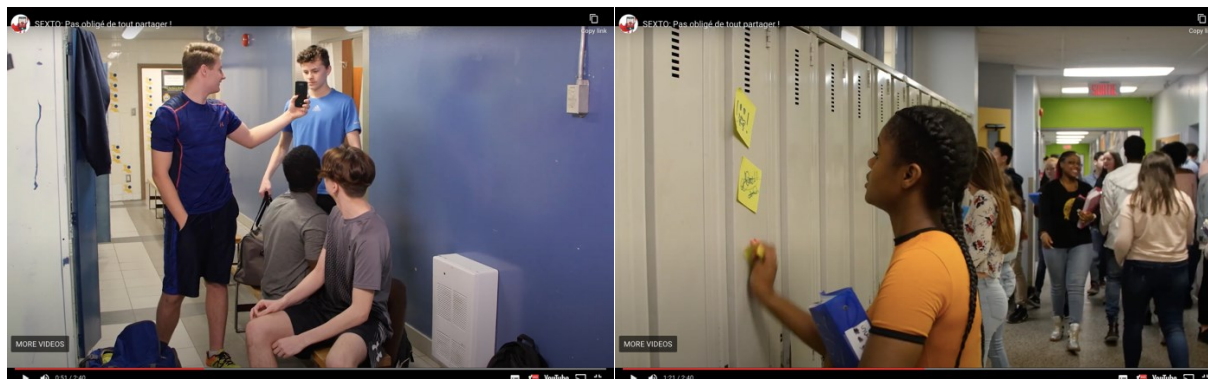
Note: From Sexto. (2020). What is the Sexto Project (https://pasobligedetoutpartager.info/en/)

Sexting is Porn has a different, and even more subtle approach to identifying gender within the campaign material. In figure 12 the campaign website identifies that the purpose of the campaign is to show "the possible impact of sexting, for people of any gender" (Sexting is Porn, Youth section). However, the campaign uses photos of a topless girl (see figure 10) in the campaign poster that is shared consistently across social media and in person.

Drawing further attention to the details of the Sexting is Porn campaign images (figure 10), it is also crucial to point out how exaggerated the practice of sexting is represented in the campaign image. Depicting a text conversation, the top left corner of the first campaign images shows that the person is sexting the nude image "to all my contacts" which is not a clear representation of how teenagers are sexting. In the image on the right of figure 10, we also see that the friend that the person sexting has reached out for help after sending their nude to all her contacts, the contact image is the face of the person sexting from the nude image. Overall, these details indicate a disconnection from young people's sexting practices and an assumption that youth do not exercise any degree of privacy protection when sexting. Given these exaggerations, it also poses young girls as unresponsible and uneducated when engaging in sexting, showcasing that they are never sexting safely and the panic surrounding young girls online is justified.

Interestingly, this is not the only iteration of the campaign poster. In another poster with the same text message information, the subject in the photo is a male with his genitals blurred out. While the creators of the campaign have made strides to be more gender inclusive, of the thirteen Facebook posts that were collected from the CALACS Chateauguay and Ville de Chateauguay accounts where the campaign was disseminated, the male version of the poster is shared once, while the female version makes up all other posts.

Although both campaigns make no direct note that girls are the target audience of the campaign or that they are more likely in danger, they each (maybe coincidently) visually showcase girls as the victims making bad decisions. Despite the campaigns showcasing girls in a particular light, "quantitative studies carried out among adolescents found no evidence for a gender difference with regard to likelihood to sext" (Abeele, et al., 2014, p.8). Cassell and Cramer (2008) additionally explain that "fearful talk among adults can sound gender-inclusive on the surface. However, our argument is, on the one hand, that girls, significantly more than boys, bear the effects

of being the target of the moral panic" (p. 64). While girls are no more likely than boys to be in danger of sexting, they face harsher critique about their actions when said action could provide them benefits.

Young girls are being relegated to harsher critique and panics about their identity in the space of technology as throughout history when young girls enter spaces independently of adults "an alarm is sounded" (Cassell and Cramer, 2008, p.69). However, Hasinoff (2012) writes that "digital communication offers important advantages for women and girls navigating sexual relationships […] girls might be more assertive when communicating through texting than speaking face-to-face" (p.455). The relationship between digital media and sexuality for girls provides girls a pathway to express their sexual needs and desires (Hasinoff, 2012, p.455-456) outside of having to find these things out in person where they may face additional pressures. Though the campaigns view girls as in need of protection, consensual sexting can offer them benefits to explore themselves independently of the panics that surround their access to technology and their sexual identities.

The Consequences

Included throughout both campaigns are the ideas of what will happen to teenagers if they are involved in sexting. Not only do the consequences of sexting refer to legal trouble that a young person can be in, but further make note that young people are facing long-term, serious, consequences that damage their reputation, impact all their relationships, and impact their mental health. For example, in the "Teenagers" section of the Sexto website, they list many consequences to sexting (See Figure 15).

Figure 15

Sexto, The consequences of sexting

During adolescence, you may be confronted with the phenomenon of sexting for various reasons. Whether you indulge in sexting to please a friend, to seduce somebody, or to play a prank, you should be aware that sending sexual images of yourself or another young person, in addition to being illegal, can have significant repercussions on the people involved and their friends and family.

THE CONSEQUENCES

PHYSICAL
- Exhaustion
- Weight loss or gain
- Loss of sleep
- Loss of appetite
- Other

SOCIAL
- Teasing
- Insults
- Isolation
- Loss of privacy
- Loss of interest for school or for other social activities
- Damage to reputation
- Other

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL
- Shame
- Fear
- Loss of self-esteem
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Aggressivity
- Distrust
- Suicidal thoughts
- Other

LEGAL
- Legal proceedings
- Seizure of electronic devices
- Criminal record
- Taking of genetic samples (DNA)
- Other

If you are asked to send one or more sexting messages, be on the safe side and talk to your parents or a trusted adult instead.
WE CAN HELP!

Note: From Sexto. (2020). Teenagers (https://pasobligedetoutpartager.info/en/adolescents/)

Sexto shows that, when sexting, teenagers open themselves up to physical changes, serious bullying from peers and damage to their reputation, as well as anxiety, depression, shame, suicidal thoughts, and of course the legal consequences as discussed above. Though less present, Sexting is Porn includes a message of "I need help" (See Figure 9) noting that immediately after sending a sext, a teen is already facing consequences such as harm or shame.

The messages presented in the two campaigns effectively show that sexting is the "enemy" which "is crucial in moral protests such as sex panics, in part because this strategy triggers strong feelings of hatred that may temporarily bind together activists in opposition" (Irvine, 2008, p.10). Sexto and Sexting is Porn each tell teenagers who participate in sexting that there is something wrong with their behaviour. As campaigns spread this message, there is an inherent "we" that is hoping to be formulated through collective action of disengaging from sexting (Ahmed, 2014, p.2). Foregrounding the educational material created concerning sexting with the narratives that the public need to be worried about young people, creates a semblance of community all working towards this common goal of protection.

A dominant message portrayed in what Irvine (2008) calls the "affective conventions of sexuality" (p.3) is the idea of disgust. Ahmed (2014) explains that;

> Disgust reads the objects that are felt to be disgusting: it is not just about bad objects that we are afraid to incorporate, but the very designation of 'badness' as a quality we assume is inherent in those objects. (p.82)

In the case of the creation of a nude image, the body itself becomes the object of disgust. Ahmed (2014) explains that the lower region of the body, that of which is associated with sexuality, can become an object of disgust as it becomes equated with power relations and vulnerability (p.89). This position mirrors Rubin's (1984) charmed circle as these behaviours move away from private, monogamous, non-pornographic ideas of "good" and "normal" sexual experiences. The showcasing of a person's most intimate, and predominately most sexualized, body parts, opens the body up to being affected by others in ways which are traditionally meant only to be experienced during an intimate setting.

The connections made here between disgust and vulnerability in relation to the body are not to say that a person's body is inherently perceived as disgusting. However, sexting campaigns and the negative discourses that surround the taking and sharing of a nude image perceive the nude image in itself as an object of disgust in the way that said image can be shared beyond an intended recipient and rob the person in the photo of their innocence (Slane, 2013, p.120). The inherent quality of "badness" in the capturing of a person's nude body in a photo, is the course of action that can be taken with that photo that likely sees it being circulated and used for means beyond what the producer intended (Slane, 2013, p.121). The disgust that becomes intrinsically linked to this object sees the "quality of 'badness'" (Ahmed, 2014, p.82) as the enactment of bad behaviour in taking such a photo in the first place, ultimately opening oneself up to the harms that can manifest.

Bringing together these notions of panic and disgust, the consistent spread of anti-sexting messages that encapsulate these negative qualities towards the practice, aim to have an influence on how young people become attuned to their way of living and their sexual practices. Sexting campaigns continue to blur the lines between objective hazards and normative judgments (Hunt, 2003, in Karalan and Van Meyl, 2015, p.26) as, at least in the two examples referenced in this study, they focus on sexting as a judgement of "bad" behaviour. Although the campaigns do address certain objective hazards that may result from sexting, the reliance on exclusively the negative effects of engaging with sexting can instill ideas in a young person that they are being deemed unworthy, or of lower hierarchy, because they have engaged in these "low-bar" sexual practices.

As the "sex panic scripts" become "sticky", they accumulate affective value (Ahmed, 2014, in Irvine, 2008, p.19). As noted early on in this paper, the messages of negativity, fear, disgust, and primarily abstinence, toward sexting are not coming uniquely from the Chateauguay police department or Ville de St-Jérôme. These sex panic scripts are continuously at work in the lives of young people. Both campaigns are highlighting suggestions that something is going to go extremely wrong for a young person who participates in sexting/sharing a (semi)nude image of themselves. As encounters with such messages of the negative affective value, or demonization, of sexting are continuously making their way into the lives of young people, the message of "wrongness" continuously becomes "stickier" over time. The more these encounters find themselves integrated into the lives of young people, the more a young person's experience with sex is becoming integrated with the sex panic discourses devoid of "good" sexting (Slane, 2013, p.117) that promotes sexual well-being and sexual agency.

Absent Positions

It is evident that the position of good sexting, and relatively safe sexting, is nearly absent from the campaign discourses (with the exception of referring to sexting between "love partners"

in Figure 8). In a CTV news article reporting on the Sexting is Porn campaign, the reporter clarifies that "many teens admit they know [sexting] is wrong" (CTV News, 2018, February 3), a claim that Hasinoff has also explained in her writing. Hasinoff (2012) further develops the idea that with young people already being familiar with the potential dangers of sexting, "these sexting abstinence messages are likely to be as ineffective as abstinence-only sex education programs" (p.458). If we are to take "regular" sex education into consideration, we must recall Public Health Agency of Canada's (2008) proclamation of comprehensive sex education - intended to provide individuals with confidence in their ability to experience positive sexual health outcomes, which includes the ability to communicate their sexual health needs with (potential) partners (p.17) – that was introduced in chapter one.

Sexting education should be considered just as comprehensive, where "'safe sexting' education would involve teaching youth about the possible consequences of participating while equipping them with the knowledge to minimize harms that may result" (Patchin and Hinduja, 2020, p.141). Participating in sexting can never be completely free of harm, instead the solution here is to "[empower] youth with strategies to reduce possible resultant harm" (Patchin and Hinduja, 2020, p.142). Rather than conflating sexting (both consensual and non-consensual) with the negative risks "that purportedly outweigh the value and benefits of the practice" (Karaian and Van Meyl, 2015, p.18). By targeting the malicious actors in sexting scenarios, we leave teens in fear of potential harms, which may stop some individuals from participating, but leave others entirely unequipped to know how to protect themselves from harm when they consensually decide to participate in sexting.

Conclusion to chapter

To conclude, this chapter does not seek to decide what is the "right" or "wrong" way to talk about sex and the practice of sexting. As Berlant (2009) notes, sex and sexuality are greatly complex, as such, each individual will have their own experiences that they will embark on. However, sexting campaigns such as "SEXTO" and "SEXTing is PORN" and many similar campaigns even far beyond Quebec, are continuously working to normalize these messages of disgust for young people's sexual expression. Working in the name of "education", the campaigns seeking to educate teenagers about the practice of sexting are providing an extremely one-sided approach to this discussion. Focused on a narrative that young people should not be provided the sexual agency to produce nude images, these messages shape how young peoples' sexual expression is being attuned to the world. Entrenched in panicked notions of sexting as wrong, the scripts presented in sexting campaigns can have serious effects on how young people view themselves and their sexual experiences, as these conversations continuously become involved in the hierarchies of power that see stakeholders policing sexual experiences for some perceived protection that young people so desperately need.

Conclusion

To recall, three main research questions have guided this research project, explored through the three chapters above:

- How do police-run awareness campaigns in Quebec attempt to educate people eighteen years and younger regarding the practice of sexting, and how does this approach to education relate to existing approaches to sex education in the province?
- How are stakeholders such as police, government officials, school officials, etc., represented in campaign material?
- What information, themes, and topics-of-focus are included in the campaign materials, and how do these relate more broadly to societal understandings of young people's negotiations of technology and sexuality?

Chapter one provided a comprehensive overview of the history of sex education in Quebec, highlighting the inconsistencies and challenges faced by government policy makers and educators in providing comprehensive sex education to young people. Despite the introduction of the pilot project in 2015-1016 which aimed to provide such comprehensive sex education to all young people, there has been little research done to assess its effectiveness, and little follow-up conducted to implement this program to reach many more students.

The abolishment of the curriculum and the absence of a specific person or group to provide young people with sex education created a void which police offices stepped into. This highlights a need for continued research and assessment of sex education policies and programs in Quebec to ensure sex education is present and more importantly meeting the needs of these young individuals.

In chapter two, the research focused on understanding who was responsible for the Sexto and Sexting is Porn campaigns under study. With each campaign highlighting the responsible police logos, the police presence was easily discernible. Additionally, both campaigns provided the young audience alternative organizations they can turn to for more information. Though these alternative resources, with their own ties to the federal or provincial government, reinforced the existing ideas and legal concerns of child pornography that young people have already confronted within the existing campaign material. Notably, the voices of teenagers and parents are not considered as stakeholders in the confines of these campaigns, meaning their ideas and considerations are left on the sidelines in favour of government positions.

Chapter three focused on the messaging of the Sexto and Sexting is Porn campaigns, highlighting their consistent emphasis on the criminality of teenage sexting and the negative consequences that this behaviour can have on young people. This messaging reinforces the heavy-handed approach taken by the campaigns, which fail to consider the diverse perspectives and needs of young people in their engagement in sexting. This chapter highlights several examples of the campaigns' consistent assertion that teenage sexting is illegal. Focusing on the effect that the messages can have on young people, especially at a time where they are navigating very intimate parts of themselves, this chapter considered the consequences that the consistent claims of illegality and wrongness can have on young people navigating their sexual identities.

The findings from the three research questions discussed in these chapters collectively demonstrate the limitations and shortcoming of the Sexto and Sexting is Porn campaigns. By

emphasizing the criminality of sexting and failing to provide a more comprehensive and supportive approach to sexting education, these campaigns risk further stigmatizing and marginalizing young people who engage in this digitally mediated sexual practice.

Unfortunately, anti-sexting campaigns with harsh messages of danger and illegality that were presented in the Sexto and Sexting is Porn campaigns are not unique. A Google search of "Canadian sexting campaigns" results in news articles discussing **five** other anti-sexting campaigns within the first page of results (and one Government of Canada page defining sexting and sextortion with a video exploring these terms), with the oldest campaign dating back to 2013. The messages of abstinence from teenage sexting are the primary messages that young people are seeing related to this behaviour.

With the reliance on criminality and dangers that have been explored in this project and that are mirrored repeatedly in other campaigns, teenagers are being left unequipped to deal with challenges that they might face when sexting. Moving forward, it is important to adopt a more nuanced and inclusive approach to sexting education, engaging with all stakeholders, including young people, respectfully. This can involve providing young people with accurate and comprehensive information about sexting, offering them the resources and support they need to make informed and responsible choices. The goal of this project has never been to advocate that all teenagers should participate in sexting, but instead to consider that teenagers should be informed of the risks and how to properly protect themselves if they want to engage in sexting (for example, to take pictures where their face or any discernible characteristics are not present).

Although the harsh messaging around sexting dominates the current realm of sexting education, there are some strides that are being made in these spaces. One German campaign "Safer Sexting" includes discussions of the German Criminal Code (See Figure 16), however, the campaign does not exclusively rely on discussions of youth criminality and the bad things that can happen when a teenager chooses to send a sext or nude. Also shown in Figure 16, the campaign highlights that there is an exception towards the German Criminal Code, that young people can sext if both participants "want to take pictures of each other or see photos of each other [where they are being sent] only to you and to no one else" (Safe Sexting, Unser Ding).

Figure 16

German Campaign, Safer Sexting
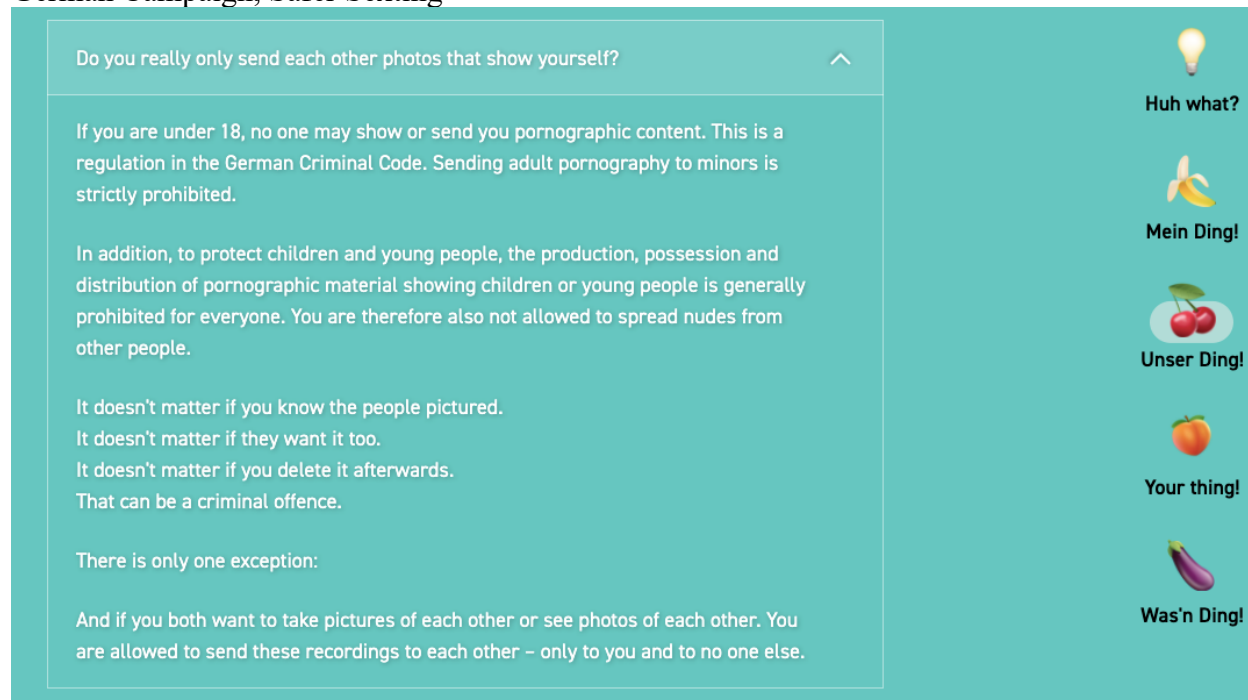
Note: From The Media Authority of North Rhine-Westphalia (n.d.), Safe Sexting, https://www.safer-sexting.de/

In another example, Australian based Umibot has been created by a team of feminist researchers from the Social and Global Studies Centre at RMIT University in Melbourne. Umibot, is a chat bot which provides the person chatting with different prompts which direct the user to further information based on if they are chatting for themselves, someone else, or general concerns. Umibot discusses the legal considerations at play in relation to the non-consensual sharing of nude images, however the vocabulary that is used in the chat conversations take a far less intense shameful approach than we have seen Sexto and Sexting is Porn use. For example, in Figure 17 we see Umibot thank the person for chatting to them and they are "here to help [the chatter] take the steps to minimise harm for others as well as [the chatter]". Moving away from the legal framework, Umibot also provides the chatter to choose if they want to hear about the legal considerations. As shown in Figure 17, the chatter can choose to hear general advice or specifics about Australian law.

Figure 17

Australian Site, Umibot
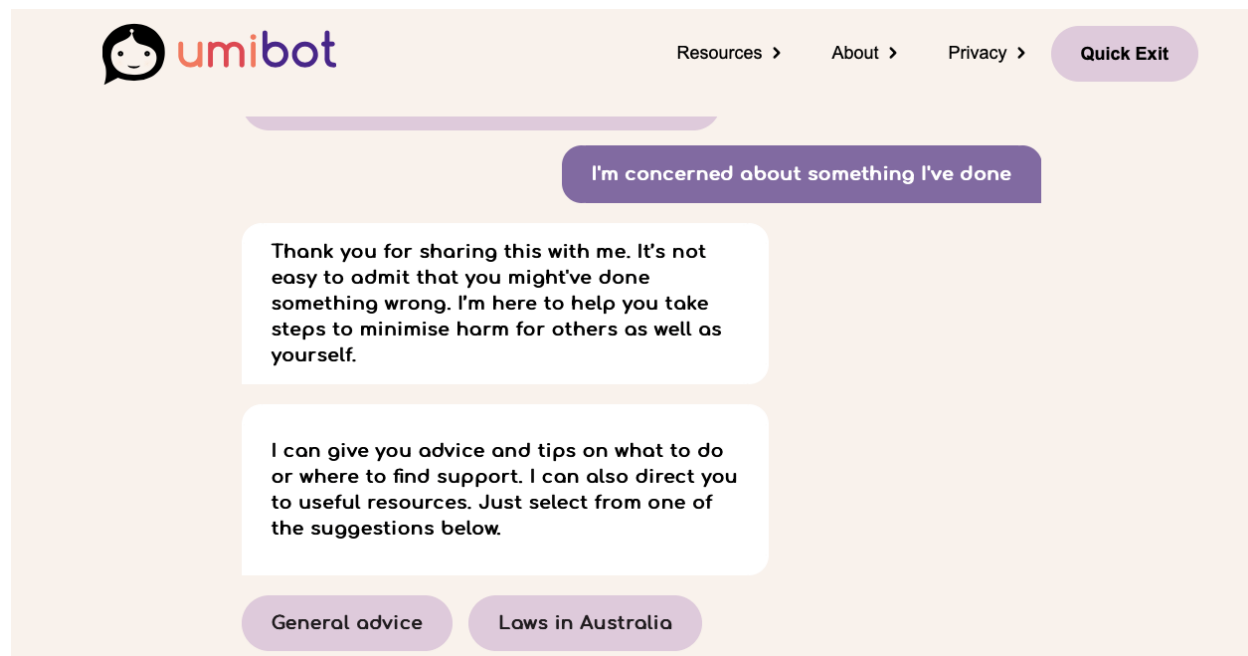
Note: From RMIT University (2021), Umibot, https://umi.rmit.edu.au/#hello

The Safer Sexting campaign and Umibot are moving towards a framework where teenage sexting can be discussed both in terms of legal considerations but also providing the young person agency in their actions while not blaming them immediately for sending an explicit image. However, one thing that these more comprehensive campaigns have in common with anti-sexting campaign messages is the lack of consideration for young people's familiarity with digital technologies and how they may be able to participate in sexting "safely".

Digital technologies are a part of everyday life for most people today, offering spaces to connect, digital media fosters "connections and relationships that are as effective, complex, messy, sustaining and problematic as those forged offline" (Scott et al., 2020, p.677). Young people are also considered "digital natives" as they have grown up in the world of digital media and may be better experienced in understanding these spaces versus adults who are providing them education on these subjects.

Ragonese, Bowman and Tolman (2017) explain that as digital natives, young people often have experience with understanding if what they see online is reliable. Yet this does not mean that "young people have an innate ability to critically analyze the media they consume. The ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media is known as media literacy, and it is a skill that must be taught, honed, and utilized" (p.304-305). Katzman (2010) echoes this idea, identifying that technology is always rapidly evolving and while young people continue to use technology "health care professionals and parents need to develop novel approaches to keeping children digitally safe and responsible while influencing positive behaviours and good judgement in their technologically savvy world" (p.42). When campaigns such as Sexto and Sexting is Porn and even campaigns such as Safer Sexting and Umibot do not consider the element of digital technology, they are still leaving young people unequipped to handle sexting and what may go wrong. Teenagers are going

to sext whether they see a campaign that completely decries the behaviour or a campaign that does better in providing them needed social and legal information. Appealing to their understanding of digital technologies and exploring how to be safe when engaging with these technologies is the way we can move forward with mitigating any harm that young people might face.

Having discussed the consequences of the messages that campaigns such as Sexto and Sexting is Porn instill in the lives of young people, this project only identified perceived feelings that young people my experience from the campaign messages. To build on the findings from this project, the youth perspective should be considered. The existing research explored in the literature guiding this project has, in some cases, included interviews with teenagers to understand the practice and their thoughts towards sexting. There seems to be little research done in the landscape of how anti-sexting campaigns directly affect the young audience they are targeting. Similarly, approaches to digital literacy and teenage sexting practices are important to explore further. As technology is ever changing and different media and applications are constantly put into the hands of young people, sexting as we currently define it may not exist for much longer.

Even so, this thesis provides the foundation for such future research with an understanding that sexting education needs to be presented to young people with a variety of ideas and resources, with their exploration of identity in mind. Stakeholder intervention in teenage sexting is presenting a limited view, with messages of abstinence and consequences of legal intervention at the forefront of sexting education. If sexting education continues to rely on messages of abstinence, we not only risk young people being hindered in their identity exploration, but we may also be leaving them sorely unprepared to know what to do if harm from sexting presents itself. By taking an approach that properly informs young people about how to make responsible choices online, campaigns and resources can help to promote more positive attitude toward teenage sexting, while also recognizing that engaging in sext is something that a young person needs to be informed of first. Ultimately, this can help empower young people to make choices about their bodies and relationships, promoting a more comprehensive and inclusive vision of sexting education.

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Appendix

Appendix A: Example of memo used to organize thoughts for Chapter two, questions taken from the Situational Analysis textbook

- What are their takes in that action?
    o Federal and provincial governments take on the actions of funding for the campaigns or are funding an organization that is used/collaborates with the campaign
        ▪ Campaigns also use federal and provincial laws and organizations that address the legal aspects of teenage sexting

- What is the work of this world? What are the commitments of this world?
    o Campaigns are meant to be used as awareness campaigns about teenage sexting
        ▪ designed to show the devastating impacts of sexting, how to come forward, what may happen if they sext, reduce processing time for sexting cases, educate teens on legal aspects of sexting
            • Involved the commitment to the law and specifically child pornography laws, and thus the police need to enforce these laws
- How do participants believe they should go about fulfilling them?
    o Police:
        ▪ Spread messages of campaign
        ▪ Be there for teens
        ▪ Tell teens that sexting is criminal
        ▪ Intervene to limit the spread of sexting messages/images
    o Schools:
        ▪ Intervene to limit the spread of sexting messages/images
        ▪ Work with police
        ▪ School personnel are front-line interveners to sexting
        ▪ Schools are those who keep "Sexto" successful
            • Sexto requires quick stakeholder response
        ▪ School workers should:
            • Not judge, reassure victims, ensure confidentiality, act rapidly
    o Parents:
        ▪ Parents should be sympathetic
        ▪ Parents should not judge teens' behaviour
        ▪ Parents/adults should find the child a confidant who they will open up to
        ▪ Parents shouldn't look at a child's phone
        ▪ Parents should trust their teen
- How does this world describe itself – present itself – in is discourse(s)?
    o Police, and in turn the justice systems that are linked to it for the campaign, are seen as the people that are helping teens. Without their help teens are in danger and don't have a proper understanding of what they are doing.
    o By creating these campaigns police are "saving" teens
    o Police, schools, and parents are the adults that are in charge. In turn, they are portrayed as the protectors. They are doing the right thing, they need to be trusted with what they are saying.
- How does it describe other worlds in the area?

Appendix B: Organizing codes to showcase similarities between campaign material, Sexto messages highlighted in teal, Sexting is Porn messages highlighted in grey

3. Discursive constructions of non-human behaviour (orange)
   - Child pornography defined by any written, visual, or audio material that shows a person who is under the age of 18, depicted in an explicit sexual activity, the depiction for a sexual purpose, or of their sexual organs
   - Sexting is defined as the sending of sexual, erotic, pornographic, or intimate images through communication technologies
   - Sexting means facing seizure of electronics
   - Sexting will (can) mean judicial proceedings
   - Sexting is a "CRIME"
   - Sexting is criminal
   - Sexting linked to distribution, production, possession, and access of child pornography
   - Remember that the production, possession, and distribution of juvenile pornography and can lead to charges
   - Campaign used to make sure teens know the serious legal implications of sexting
   - Sexto intervention is meant to increase a sense of security
   - Teens' 2nd offense leads to a criminal investigation
   - Sexto is meant to counter the surge of sexting (*apparently a surge of sexting is happening – cccn and cybertip report)
   - Sexting is a rising phenomenon among teens ages 12-17
   - Campaign claims that sexting is trivialized and becoming widespread
   - Sexting is illegal under the criminal code
   - Only a minority of young people in Quebec sext
   - Social workers help and say teens under 18 don't think nude photos are a "big deal"
   - Sexing/nudes are commonplace in society, people over 18 do it so teens think they can too
   - Sexto campaign can help!
   - Campaign claims to have a positive impact on teens
        i. A drop in 60% of child porn cases
   - Sexting images can last forever
   - Taking nudes means teens can continue to be revictimized
   - The goal of the Sexto campaign is to preserve the physical, psychological integrity of sexting victims
   - The object of the campaign is to allow schools and police to intervene to limit the spread of images and consequences for victims
   - Campaign aims to have students come forward if they are victims
        i. Make a greater impact and easier
   - Sexto protocol will limit spread of intimate images by being caring
   - The object of the campaign is to allow schools and police to intervene to limit the spread of images and consequences for victims
   - Sexto doesn't view images – protecting integrity
   - Sexto standardizes intervention in sexting cases

Appendix C: Situational Map – initial map created to organize the boundaries of the situation under study for this project, later used in the creation of Social world and Arena mapping and Positional mapping of all campaign material

Explore full map at: https://miro.com/app/board/uXjVOFnFjfs=/?share_link_id=928894746534