List of Abstracts

Public relations people: cultural work and workers.

Paul Elmer, Leeds Metropolitan University

This research advances understanding of public relations work, the relationship between a particular type of labour and the human repertoires connected with it. Its scholarly intention, its contemporary setting, and its methodological focus offer a unique contribution to knowledge and the resulting analysis is used to develop new learning, indivisible from research but rooted firmly in the complexity of contemporary work practices and labour markets.

Public relations work is an established feature of UK culture and economy, yet it remains under-researched. The development of the UK industry has been historicised (L'Etang, 2004) and its supposed influence both on society and democracy has subject to both popular and scholarly criticism (Dinan and Miller, 2007; Moloney, 2007) but there is a lack of information at the level of the working life, and a lack of precision and detail at the level of occupational practice. Existing studies largely fail to inform us about the type of work being done or the people doing it and only offer a further departure point. Public relations work is largely missing from accounts of cultural labour (such as Nixon, 2003; Pettinger, 2004); this research addresses that gap.

The contemporary nexus of commercial and public practices provides a contemporary setting for study. The Blair decade (1997 – 2007) is characterised as one in which government public relations assumed a more central position in political life and became a topic of public debate concerning the conduct of government. Under such scrutiny, media relations, the trustworthiness of ministers, the marketisation of politics, the exercise of unofficial, centralised and casualised power and the politicisation of the civil service were drawn together suddenly and not always critically, under the enduring but imprecise term 'spin'. This study considers the changing expectations, relationships and scripts of practice that emerge from this turbulent period. By drawing together the experiences of senior government practitioners and those working in the commercial

arena the study investigates the complexity of practices, relationships and repertoires of behaviour from a spectrum of public relations work and workers. Fieldwork was carried out through 2007; the majority of its subjects occupied senior public relations posts in central government throughout the previous decade. This lends the study a particular salience when discussing the interpenetration of public, commercial and political interests as part of an emerging picture of the public relations role. It is the first study to do so.

The methodology arose from a personal transition. I had worked in government public relations for a decade prior to becoming a university lecturer in 1999. As I began to develop this study, its focus and its setting, I freely acknowledged the departures from, and connections to, my own experiences of working life and brought those to account in a formal and structured way as an interpretive frame, using an auto-ethnographic mode of writing and analysis. The results establish a new direction for scholarly enquiry, and re-orientate both learning and theory-building as uniquely relevant to practice and the changing market for cultural labour.

The professional project and the ‘other’: voices from the PR front line.

Lee Edwards, Leeds Metropolitan University.

Bourdieu (2000) argues that professions are ultimately status projects, governed by rules that define appropriate membership in light of criteria defined by those at the top of the field. Similarly, professional success is measured in terms of apparently objective notions of ‘merit’, in practice underpinned by habitus and structural conditions of possibilities that dominant groups in societies more readily access than ‘Others’. These processes create barriers to entry and progression for the professional ‘Other’, who differs in terms of ethnicity, gender and other dimensions from the ‘normative’ professional (see, e.g. Munshi, 1999; Munshi, 2005).

As an emerging profession, public relations has been engaged in this kind of status project, in order to compete with other established professions (law, accountancy) for a place at the boardroom table. At the same time, the CIPR’s diversity policy clearly states an apparent desire to improve the level of diversity within the profession:

‘The CIPR is committed to promoting diversity and equality as an integral part of all its activity. In addition we aim to ensure that the PR Industry is aware that we all work in a richly diverse society, and that the profession can benefit from diversity. Ultimately our aim is to have diversity embedded in public relations activity and recognised as a core resource for the industry.’ (Chartered Institute of Public Relations, 2009).

These two objectives directly conflict. This paper presents research findings that illustrate the effects of this conflict in terms of the experiences of practitioners ‘othered’ by the industry. Practitioners’ own words are foregrounded in the analysis, in line with the narrative approach adopted by critical race theorists that gives voice to marginalised groups (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Bourdieu’s framework of fields, habitus and capital (Bourdieu, 1984) is used to understand their experiences in terms of the professional context.

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Continuous professional development and the discourse of professionalism in public relations practice.

Sarah Williams, University of Wolverhampton.

This phenomenological study addresses the issue of continuing professional development (CPD) in public relations practice. Through a series of twelve qualitative interviews, the author considers the views of practitioners currently engaged in CPD and asks whether informants' perceptions of their professionalism are influenced by their participation in CPD schemes.

Following detailed analysis of the significant statements contained in the interview data, several common themes emerged which raise interesting questions for the individual practice of CPD in public relations, and also for the way in which CPD is both promoted and managed by professional bodies. The paper also examines the relationship between individual practitioner and professional body discourses on CPD and professionalism.

While this small-scale study is not representative of the state of continuous professional development across the entire PR industry, it provides a useful overview of practitioner views and sets CPD in the context of current debates on professionalism in public relations. A number of areas for further research are also identified; these include issues relating to the position of professional body policy towards CPD and the role of mentoring to effective CPD practice.

Considering professionalisation discourses, the study further considers the role CPD might play in helping the public relations industry to professionalise, concluding that for this to happen, professional body policy must ensure that CPD assumes greater significance to practitioners.

Praxis? What practice? From 'cash value' to 'thought value'.

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Tyma (2008) recently argued that since the discipline's forming, practitioners and theorists of public relations have been aiming towards the ideal of PR as a *praxis*. Praxis, in contrast to practice, is the idea of practitioners being educated, socialized and qualified against the backdrop of "a theoretically and research-informed paradigm" which, then, underlies their everyday work-related decisions. The clearest examples of praxis we see nowadays are in the classic *professions*, of course: e.g. doctors of medicine.

Few would doubt nowadays that there is a *project of professionalization* going on in the domain of public relations, and one that is jointly pursued by practitioners and scholars. The question we wish to discuss, however, is whether the domain of public relations is really moving towards *praxis*. It might, on the very contrary, be moving towards *pseudo-praxis.* We wish to explore that thought along the following lines:

The cash value paradigm I: dynamics of delegitimization

One of the developments endangering public relation's progress towards practice, we argue, is the so-called *cash value paradigm*. (Toth 2002, 2006) The cash value paradigm hinges on the idea that the *raison d'être* of the academic discourse is to improve the practitioner's work, his *praxis*, much in the same way as medical research improves the doctor's work. What works in the natural sciences, does not necessarily work elsewhere, however (Byrne 1998). In the domain of public relations, we argue further, the cash value paradigm might lead to a *delegitimization* of both sides of the fence: It limits, narrows, even cripples pluralistic academic discourse about public relations on the one hand, and on the other it prevents the establishment of a genuinely *academic* public relations practice, a really theoretically and research driven *praxis.*

Transparency = Motivation X Activism^2 : Transparency as a Process rather than a Quality

Timothy Coombs & Sherry Holladay (not attending), University of Eastern Illinois, USA.

Transparency is perhaps the buzz word today. The term is used frequently but rarely defined. There seems to be an assumption that people know what “transparency” is. Transparency is frequently treated a property of an organization. Organizations can vary in their degree of transparency or openness. Transparency becomes a quality of disclosure about relevant information to constituents.

We believe that transparency as a quality of an organization is problematic. Transparency as a quality is a corporate-centric perspective. The organization decides its level of transparency and how to describe that quality. An organization can claim to be transparent and provide evidence to support this claim in the vast amount of information it discloses. How can that claim be substantiated? How do constituents know how open and organization is—what percentage of information is being disclose? How do constituents know even if all the relevant information for them is being disclosed?

We argue that transparency is a process driven by constituents. Constituents should define what information they want from organizations and judge transparency on the organization’s ability to meet their information demands. If an organization discloses a terabit of information but it is of no interest or use to constituents, the organization is not transparent. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) reporting serves as an example. CSR reports talk about actions, goals, and effects on the organization. What is rare are discussions about the effects of CSR efforts on the constituents they are designed to help. Literally, transparency is a process of looking within. Simple disclosure of information is not looking within but rather it is seeing what is given to you. Transparency as a process requires constituents to look inside the organization for information relevant to themselves. If they cannot “see” that information they must pressure the organization to make that information visible. True transparency is about critically looking inside the organization for relevant information.

As a process, transparency begins with what an organization discloses. Constituents evaluate that information to determine if it meets their needs. Clearly different constituencies will have different informational needs so managers will be operating on multiple transparency fronts. If relevant information is missing or seems incomplete, the constituents need to press for additional disclosure. The true transparency is how the organization responds to these demands for additional information. Transparency is a function of how well the organization fulfills these requests. In other words, transparency is about perceptions of responsiveness not perceptions of openness. It is about the quality of the information disclosed, not the quantity.

Transparency as a process places responsibility squarely on the constituents. If constituents fail to request the necessary information, the transparency process fails. Constituents must be motivated to press for the relevant or needed information as well as the skill to pressure the organization. Quiescent constituents fall victim to transparency as a quality. They accept what is given to them with no concern for whether or not that is the information they need or how complete the disclosure might be. Constituents must be critical consumers of organizational disclosure. Only by questioning the type and amount of disclosure can real transparency be achieved. This paper develops the concept of transparency as a process and provides a preliminary discussion of the factors that shape transparency as a process.

Trust management through discourse: power & persuasion in financial services.
Clea Bourne, Leeds Business School.

Trust management through discourse: Power and persuasion in financial services

The globe's corporate power elites view trust as indispensable to economic growth (Tyler and Stanley, 2007; DeVita, 2007; Korcynski, 2000). They also view the loss of trust as a cost or 'tax' to business (Murphy, 2003; Rendtorff, 2008; Khodyakov, 2007). Consequently, corporate elites use their capitalist power to socialise trust (Kincaid, 2006) in order to increase profits. Corporate elites acquire power through specialised knowledge that ordinary consumers find difficult or impossible to fathom. Elites then leverage their knowledge/power by taking on more and more risk on behalf of consumers (Rendtorff, 2008), and packaging that risk in products and services. In response, consumers employ trust as a way to reduce uncertainty and complexity when purchasing those products and services. Hence consumers accept the power of corporate elites and other authorities in global capital systems (Rendtorff, 2008).

In public relations' ongoing quest for professionalisation, it has taken advantage of the inextricable link between professional authority and trust (Gilbert, 2004). The move to position public relations as managers of trust began in earnest during the ethical debate that followed the collapse of Enron in 2001. In 2003, a US group calling itself the 'PR Coalition' lobbied for a consistent methodology to measure public trust in organisations in order to "assess the success or failure of efforts to improve or enhance relationships with key constituents" (Murphy, 2003; 9). The PR Coalition's report on *'Restoring Trust in Business'* asserted that "the measurement of trust can demonstrate success that equates to the bottom line" (Murphy, 2003; 10). Edelman, the world's largest independent public relations firm (Edelman, 2007) took up the Coalition's challenge, producing a global methodology for measuring trust. The Edelman Trust Barometer of global opinion leaders has now become a widely-cited annual survey measuring trust in private and public sector organisations as well as NGOs.

Edelman's ninth and latest Trust Barometer found that, while business held virtually the same trust levels over its previous annual survey, product quality and company trust and identity have become increasingly inseparable in the global marketplace (Edelman, 2007). Technology emerged as by far the most trusted sector in every region of the world, while companies in the media sector and the insurance sector emerged the least trusted overall. Edelman launched the 2008 edition of its Trust Barometer at the World Economic Forum in Davos, the 'annual general meeting and health check' for globalisation (Edelman, 2007). The very site and scope of the launch of the Trust Barometer suggests an intent to forge a link between public relations and trust management in the minds of corporate power elites who purchase public relations services.

Critical approaches to public relations are centrally concerned with issues of power (Motion and Weaver, 2005). The task for critical public relations scholars is to investigate how public relations practice uses particular discursive strategies to advance hegemonic power of particular groups and to examine how these groups attempt to gain public consent (Motion and Weaver, 2005), that is to say, how these groups persuade. In recent years, public relations scholars and practitioners have concentrated on fostering public relations' professional authority in respect of trust in a series of simultaneous activities. A global alliance came together to declare a protocol on ethics standards for public relations (Valin et al, 2002). Debate focused on locating public relations at the ethical core or 'conscience' of organisations (L'Etang, 2003). At least one national public relations coalition called for a methodology to measure trust on behalf of organisations followed by the production of the Edelman Trust Barometer. However, neither scholars nor practitioners have examined the inextricable link between trust and power, particularly in global capital systems.

The post-structuralist Foucauldian view is that power is always a discursive relation rather than something that people or groups wield or bear (Foucault, 2002; Weaver et al, 2006). Foucault argued that power and knowledge are inter-related and therefore every human relationship is a struggle and negotiation of power. He theorised that discourse is a medium for power which produces speaking subjects (Strega, 2005; Motion and Leitch, 2007). Discursive rules are strongly linked to the exercise of power because the effect of discursive practices is to make it virtually impossible to think outside them; to be outside them is to be irrational or 'mad' (Hook, 2001). Trust is associated with power and therefore produced through discourse.

Public relations scholars – Motion, Leitch and Weaver – are among those constructing a discursive theory of public relations. Motion and Leitch (1996) found that while discourses may be contested, resisted or transformed by any discourse actor, this work often falls to public relations practitioners. A Foucauldian view suggests that public relations practitioners play an integral role in the discursive process as discourse technologists, inviting and sustaining trust. Practitioners therefore play a vital role in helping global corporate elites remain powerful (Motion and Leitch, 1996). As discourse technologists, public relations practitioners produce and distribute or 'deploy' texts, advocating particular meanings and understandings by separating out from among all the statements that are possible, those that will be acceptable (Motion, 2005). Organisational routines that produce press releases and other public documents are discursive practices (Weaver et al, 2006).

A discursive hegemonic conceptualisation of public relations makes it difficult to separate public relations activity from persuasion or propaganda (Weaver et al, 2006). Practitioners deploy discourse to determine and reconfigure complex groups of power relations, so the use of public relations is never disinterested. Public relations gains hegemonic advantage for organisations engaged in discursive struggles by ensuring that certain ideas and practices become established and understood over others (Weaver et al, 2006). For any one discourse to dominate over others requires that it be sanctioned as 'the truth'. However, Weaver et al (2006) argue that discursive theory holds additional value because it allows for the possibility that public relations discursive struggles might fail. This paper will deconstruct just such a failed discursive struggle leading to the collapse of Equitable Life, the world's oldest mutual life insurer.

Although critical scholars have argued that discourse theory provides valuable insights into public relations practice, Motion and Weaver (2005) found that prior to their own study, no one had actually demonstrated how that practice can be deconstructed through critical research. The collapse of Equitable Life in 2000 involved a complex discursive struggle of trust surrounding opaque and risky products. Equitable Life's discursive struggle aimed at persuading stakeholders that it was more scientific in its product design and, as a mutual society, more committed to its customers. Since Equitable Life was the fourth largest life insurer in the UK, consumers, at least, were persuaded (O'Brien, 2006). But once the company's performance weakened, consumers and other actors began to lose trust, questioning the science behind Equitable Life's product design and ultimately bringing the insurer to its knees. Equitable Life's public relations activity set out to persuade customers to support its case as various actors in the trust discourse adopted positions of resistance. This paper will deconstruct selected texts to explore resistance to Equitable Life's persuasive efforts; identify alternative sources of power in the discourse and seek out three trust discourse practices set out by Gilbert (2005): acting reflexively, anticipating change and identifying risk.

Public relations practitioners and scholars alike have identified the management of trust as a feasible route to professionalisation. It has been established here that trust is associated with power, hence produced through discourse. It has also been established that public relations practitioners play an integral role in the discursive process and that they engage in persuasion by producing and deploying texts. This paper will add to public relations' current understanding of trust by examining public relations' discursive strategies to advance Equitable Life's hegemonic power through trust. The paper will deconstruct the discursive struggle that resulted in a loss of trust between this highly-regarded Victorian firm and its stakeholders. The selected case involves public relations practice within the insurance sector, identified as one of the least trusted sectors in the 2008 Edelman Trust Barometer. An analysis of public relations practice within a discourse of trust will build public relations expertise and professional authority on one of the most critical factors in an organisation's reputation.

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Spinning the credit crunch:
The role of public relations in financial services firms under pressure.

Gareth Thompson, London Metropolitan University.

The purpose of this paper is to explore the effect of the 2008 credit crunch and bank failures on public relations practice in the financial services sector. In particular, it seeks to examine any distortions or changes that occurred in the way public relations professionals behaved in the stress-tested banks that failed over the 2008-2009 period and the role reputation has played in their downfall.

Data was collected initially by reviewing contemporary media reports on the failure of three financial institutions, Babcock and Brown, Bear Sterns and Lehman Brothers. In particular, inductive analysis was undertaken on the text of interviews with senior executives and commentary by public relations executives.

Based on this initial inductive review of published material, a questionnaire was designed as the basis for face-to-face or telephone interviews with three executives from the institutions above. The result is a blended narrative of three explanatory case studies within the overall context of the credit crunch

The interview evidence confirms that in benign economic times of the 1990s, there was a degree of comfort among public relations practitioners on their new professional status and satisfaction in the raised involvement of public relations in corporate life.

In 2008, when the banking sector was stress-tested, interviewees reported that elements of normalised, professional PR practice broke down. In particular, while lawyers, corporate brokers and finance professionals were part of the decision-making group advising the board-level executives, the communications professionals were often not included. Rather, they were the receivers of decisions who were tasked with communicating to the external audiences (principally investors, investment professionals and media).

Moreover, some public relations professionals reported that their view of journalists had changed as a result of the negative coverage they had to endure. Respondents reported becoming more cautious or distant from the media as a result of having tried to manage reputation in the "unmanageable" situation they found themselves in.

The author's intention is to build on this working paper through further narrative analysis in order explore linkages and commonalities between the experience of different practitioners.

Public relations and the discourse of strategic value.
Nilam Ashra

Public relations and the discourse of strategic value

Notions of emphasising the strategic value of public relations are not new to the communications discipline. The discourse of strategic value has been gaining momentum over the last three decades, largely through the adoption of key academic debates. As a result of this momentum, the discourse of strategic value is now embedded within industry and academic rhetoric, indicating an unquestioning need on the part of the practitioner to "prove their worth."

This working paper questions the dominant position that this discourse occupies within the normative research agenda. In particular, it compares the prevalence of this discourse, to other discourses revealed in the oral and written narratives of 17 communication practitioners. It concludes by examining whether the discourse of strategic value truly acts as a benchmark for practitioners in their work setting, or whether it is a red herring in the modern communication environment.

Public relations anthropology.

Jacquie L'Etang, SMRI.

This paper explores the connections between anthropology and public relations with a view to opening up a new research trajectory for the field. This ambitious move bears some similarities to work carried out in the fields of marketing and media studies, although I aim to go beyond the application of anthropological constructs to public relations practice to tackle broader themes, such as modernism, the politics of public relations scholarship, and the implications of public relations anthropology for theory and education.

Can there be a psychology of the professions?

Johanna Fawkes, Leeds Metropolitan University

The sociology of the professions was established by Larson and Friedson, (Larson 1977, Friedson 1970, Abbott and Meerabeau 1998) building on Weber's (1964) analysis that professions embody ideological attitudes and contain preferred readings or constructed meanings which are intended to promote the profession and its institutions.

There is also a literature on the psychology of organisations which looks at both the psychology of the individual and groups in workplaces and at organisational characteristics or personality as a whole (Haslam 2004; De Vries 1991 for example). And of course aspects of corporate communication, identity and branding build on the concept of the organisational personality.

Yet there is no study, so far as I can tell, that considers the *profession* as a unit of psychological study. This may be for good reason, such as the difficulty of analysing a body as ephemeral as a profession, but surely one worth investigating. There may even be a stronger aspect to studying professions than organisations, as a profession is a longer-term definition for practitioners than employment. In the case of public relations, for example, the skills are transferred from employer to employer while the professional identity remains constant.

The paper argues that the psychological development of a profession can be described in terms similar to those found in individuals – the need to build a distinct personality, to absorb and reject external images of the profession (socialisation) and finally to develop characteristics that rely more on internally generated values and guidance (individuation). While following the precepts of different psychologists, such as Freud, Lacan or Klein would yield different insights, I have chosen to follow a Jungian approach because the process of individuation (by recognising and integrating shadow or rejected elements of the psyche) seems to offer challenges and opportunities to the development of public relations as a profession.

There is some work looking at Jungian approaches to group and organisational psychology (Henderson, 1990; Singer and Kimbles, 2004) but not at professional psychology. The paper will explore the tensions implicit in breaking down barriers with the Other for psychological development and the need for a profession to define itself again the Other. This tension can be seen as mirroring the mid-life crisis that so fascinated Jung.

Finally, the paper draws (briefly) on recent work for my PhD applying Jungian approaches to the profession of public relations, looking at Excellence as the Persona and propaganda as a possible Shadow for the collective psyche of public relations.

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Everywhere and nowhere: Public relations in postwar British fiction.

Philip Young, University of Sunderland.

Commentators and critics frequently claim that 'PR is everywhere', that its shaped messages pervade all forms of media. But at the same time it is readily acknowledged that most 'ordinary' people will struggle to name a PR practitioner or provide a definition of the discipline that could be readily accepted by its professional.

This tension routinely exercises those who seek to drive forward the professionalisation project. Many suggest that such development is made more difficult by media representations of PR. As in documentary, so in literature; although manipulation or distortion of message and truth is a mainstay of novels across many genres, there are relatively few developed characters in British fiction who are located within the practice of culture of Public Relations.

This paper suggests that the framings of fiction help us to identify and interrogate iconic and consensual constructions of public relations. Most novelists will strive to create of images and behaviours that resonate with public expectations; (usually) for a character or a plot device to succeed, the writer must have respect for parameters that are acceptable to the reader.

Often, a work environment or work role provides a vehicle for narrative expression and direction; certainly it can act as code or shorthand which both reflects and illuminates popular perceptions of that discipline or function. If the novelist is successful, fictional creations will reflect what is held to be an 'accurate', certainly a plausible portrayal of the function and, in some cases. reinforce and amplify compliant descriptions to iconic status (an example might be Dixon of Dock Green, which became an accepted if unrealistic portrayal of a golden era of policing).

This paper draws on concepts developed in a similar study of journalism in fiction to examine at representations of Public Relations in a range of UK novels published since

1945, taking in genres ranging from crime and thrillers, popular and literary fiction, to fantasy and science fiction. Key texts include Christopher (*The Death of Grass*, 1956), Bedford (*Exit, Orange & Red,* 1997) and Kelly (*Crusaders*, 2008) but it is often passing references to incidental characters in novels with little structural connection with Public Relations which offer the most resonate associations.

It gathers together these appearances under a variety of themes, some amusing, some trivial, which give an insight into how the public relations is held to operate, and how this is seen to impact on our society. This in turn encourages critical reflection on the perceived worth of public relations and, in particular, its relationship with public interest.

Social media in the PR curriculum.

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Helena Makhotiova, Dinamo;
Gareth Thompson, London Metropolitan University;
Philip Young, University of Sunderland.

One British university is offering a new MA in Social Media; another is building a social media focus into its forthcoming MA in Public Relations. Yet given that many public relations degree programmes have never emphasised traditional media relations, what is the justification for this focus on social media?

In this paper we review the literature on pedagogy and discuss the logic of 'digital immigrant' teachers providing lessons in social media to 'digital native' students. We publish research into the present state of social media teaching on UK PR degree programmes and employer expectations of the desired social media expertise and knowledge of PR graduates. We then outline the key ideas and concepts that could form the basis for teaching social media within public relations programmes (at degree and masters level).

Twitter and public relations research: Fad, frippery or feast?

Paul Willis, Leeds Business School.

The research question that will be explored in the paper is the extent to which micro-blogs are - or might be - a useful tool for public relations research. The study is timely and coincides with an upsurge in interest and participation in micro-blogging sites by the practitioner community. The utility of the technology is, however, dividing opinion (*'Industry advised to get behind Twitter phenomenon*,' PR Week, 27 February, 2009 and *'Twitter is full of egocentric bores…'* letter to the editor, PR Week, 6 March 2006).

A content analysis is proposed as well as the use of non-participant, unstructured observation techniques to gain further insight of the practices and norms of public relations professionals using the micro-blogging platform, *Twitter*. The aim of the research will be to determine the specific content being discussed on-line - as well as patterns and systems of behaviour - that may be of interest to academic researchers. The initial focus of the study will be the content generated by the most active United Kingdom public relations consultancies on *Twitter* as identified by research conducted by public relations consultancy Porter Novelli in conjunction with PR Week (*'Twitter has suddenly exploded'*, PR Week, 27 February, 2009): Hotwire, Porter Novelli, Consolidated, Edelman, Lexis/Octane, Berkeley PR, Rainier PR, Cow PR, Kaizo, Ruder Finn, Spark Communications, Racepoint Group, Wildfire PR, Wolfstar and Diffusion.

The content generated on *Twitter* between April and July 2009 by these users will be noted down and categorised as it emerges. It is also expected that this core group of consultancies will be a conduit to other practitioners who are active on *Twitter* and it is intended that these users will be studied as they are identified. The specific aim of the content analysis will be to determine what issues of public relations practice are being discussed on *Twitter* and this may also allow the consideration of questions such as:

- what are the strengths and weaknesses of *Twitter* as an on-line networking tool that allows academics to establish and maintain dialogue with practitioners?
- could the technology be used as a 'zeitgeist' tool to track emerging trends?
- does it have the potential to be used for research recruitment?
- can *Twitter* be used to promote new academic research within the practitioner community or to test the interest in, or the validity of, new research ideas?

In summary, the aim of the research is to consider whether *Twitter* and other micro-blogging sites have the necessary attributes to promote and enhance engagement between public relations researchers and practitioners.

Demarcation disputes in the digital age: Professional competition and cooperation between advertising and public relations

Margalit Toledano. University of Waikato, New Zealand.

In his still influential 1988 book, *The Systems of Professions*, Abbott identifies interprofessional competition as a major factor in the process of developing a profession. Abbott's (1988) concept of "the Claim of Jurisdiction," whereby "professions compete by taking over each other's tasks" (p. 33) can be seen as a risk or opportunity to a profession. In effect, he observes that, when a task is not being fulfilled by an existing profession, an evolving jurisdiction often takes its place. This paper examines issues of competition and cooperation between advertising and public relations. It argues that, if public relations fails to compete successfully, it runs the risk of core business being taken over by competing professions.

Abbott uses journalism as an example, and argues that journalists' professional identity emerged from their competition with early public relations practice: "The clearest force driving reporters towards a formal conception of their jurisdiction was in fact competition with hired publicity agents" (Abbott, 1988, pp. 225-226). In a mirror reflection, public relations scholars – especially those conditioned by the U.S. experience – often describe the emergence of public relations as a consequence of its divorce from journalism. Other scholars found the origins of public relations not in its relationships with journalism but rather with advertising. L'Etang (2004), for example, traced the origins of Britain's public relations consultancy in advertising agencies in the post World War II era: "there is no doubt that advertising agencies financed the growth of some public relations consultancies". (p. 105)

This paper, inspired by Abbott's analysis of professional development, explores competition and cooperation between public relations and advertising. It relates to the components of these relationships which included issues such as bitter rivalry over tasks, budgets, and status (both internally, within the organisational hierarchy, and externally, within the professional industry and the community).

According to Abbott (1988), the process by which an occupation gains, and maintains, an exclusive jurisdiction over particular tasks is subject to social changes that create new spaces for evolving jurisdictions. In the light of more contemporary social changes, which, in that earlier time, Abbott mentioned as crucial for the survival of professional jurisdictions, this paper looks at current demarcation disputes. It considers ongoing struggles between public relations and advertising over resources and recognition in the digital area: Who is responsible for new tasks such as designing and maintaining the websites context? Who takes charge over the organisation's participation in the blogosphere discourse? Are public relations and advertising able to coordinate better and manage "integrated marketing" approach thanks to new technology? Or does the new technology exacerbate or intensify the competition between the professions?

In order to contextualise, and evaluate, what is going on in these important issues for the professionalisation process of public relations, this paper will gather evidence from online documents online, publications, and primary research involving public relations practitioners in New Zealand.

Encroachment of specialist disciplines on emerging PR tactics

Lucy Laville, Leeds Metropolitan University.

Purpose: this paper will address the growing trend in social media as an increasingly powerful and important media relations tool. People are meeting, connecting, organising, sharing and collaborating in unprecedented fashion (Armano 2008). However many PR practitioners' fear of technology has led to an encroachment into this emerging tactic that is seeing PR practitioners losing out to search marketing agencies and search engine optimisation SEO agencies. A Future Foundation report of 2009 suggests that it should be possible to create communications with high impact on targets, with little waste and a relatively low cost. So why are PR practitioners slow to take advantage of this technology?

Design/Methodology/approach: This paper will explore the growing trend in Search Marketing Agencies, SEOs and specialist agencies that allow their clients to engage with stakeholders via social media forums. These specialist agencies are winning clients, that traditionally PR agencies have won, to promote and maintain reputation and build greater brand awareness. Interviews with a number of specialist agencies as well PR practitioners, will analyse the skills gaps between traditional PR practitioners and a 'new kind of practitioner' who is required to have the technology as well as the writing skills for effective communication via social media.

Findings: It is anticipated that the findings will point to the need for PR practitioners to engage with technology, and educate their clients, by engaging in online communication and maximising their clients opportunities to communicate with stakeholder groups using strategic approaches to social media.

Limitations: the evolving and emerging trends in online communication are developing at a pace that is challenging to study and apply to existing theory therefore this paper will attempt to address a contemporary environment with traditional theory.

Value/originality: this paper attempts to identify a skills gap between traditional PR tactics and the essential skills for effective PR in a social media environment.

Professional public relations academics and practitioners: Demystifying the perceived occupational functionality differences.

Harvey Igben

The professional public relations academics and practitioners are extraction of common educational roots. While at school they are both exposed to common curriculum of studies, assessment and ultimately awarded certificates of the same broad value and categorisation. In practice, while academic professionals concentrate on research, learning, teaching and development, the practitioner is committed to activities that represent direct application of the theories and models the academic has inculcated. However within the profession, intra-professional stigmatization and prejudice outline the way the practitioner perceives the academic even when in reality the academic has secured the requisite academic fulfilment for the assignment. The perception is re-examine and the conclusion is that the academic can do what the practitioner does as obtainable in other professions like the Engineering, Law, Medicine and Accounting, thereby justifying the increasing irrelevance of such age long intra-professional prejudice especially in the British professional setting.

Public relations as dialogical expertise?

Magda Pieczka, Queen Margaret University.

The concept of dialogue has been at the centre of public relations theory development and debates about practice since 1980s. Other academic fields, such as political science, management and organizational communication, have experienced a similar upsurge of interest in *dialogue* (Anderson et al 2004). This paper will bring together these parallel developments to chart, what we term, the dialogic turn spanning both the public and corporate spheres over the last two decades. We argue that public relations as a communicative practice and a discipline rooted equally strongly in the discourses of the public sphere and (corporate) strategy offers a good space for re-examining from the European perspective the range of conceptual and practical dilemmas surrounding *dialogue*.

The discussion will pursue *dialogue* in public relations theory by following critiques of concepts of excellence and symmetry (see L'Etang 2008, pp. 251-253; McKie and Munshi, 2007) and the responses these critiques engendered, such as elaboration of the four models (Grunig 2001) and development of relationship management theory (Ledingham and Bruning, 2000). One of the critical strands identified in this discussion, the tension between the normative stance taken by definitions of dialogue and the fragility of dialogical practice created by the pervasive presence of power, will subsequently be followed in the work dealing with citizen participation and public policy making (Gastil and Levine, 2005). The second strand, the strategic incorporation of dialogical communication, will be examined through an analysis of a number of management fashions and their efforts to balance the contradictory demands of the need for participation and openness, and for control.

The paper thus aims to bring new insights to the reflection on the extent to which public relations profession can define itself as expert practice of dialogical communication.

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The double-edged sword of legitimacy in public relations.

Henrik Merkelson, Institute for International Kultur, Copenhagen Business School

Taking its point of departure in Weber's description of the relationship between power and legitimacy this paper argues that the position chosen by public relations as an intermediary between corporations and the public is destined to cause unsolvable problems regarding the profession's own legitimacy. The paper further argues that these problems cannot be solved by professionalism as professionalism itself is at the very core of the problem. As a case in point the transformation of the humanitarian sector (Barnett 2005) and subsequently professionalization of pr and marketing activities (Merkelsen & Jonasen) will illustrate some of the conflicts of professionalism.

Legitimacy has always been a major concern in public relations; first and foremost in the profession's attempt to help corporations resolve issues concerning their legitimacy when perceived by the public as "soulless" (Marchand 2001: 6ff.). But the profession itself has a pr problem in more than one concern: Achieving a legitimate status in the public (Callison 2001) as well as in the management in corporations (Fairchild 2002; Laborde og Pompper 2006). One could add a third problem regarding the legitimacy of pr: Its status in academia.

These issues about the legitimacy of public relations are very diverse, each concerning a specific relation: client-public, profession-client, profession-public, and profession-academia. Despite the multiplicity of these problems, professionalization is often suggested as a universal cure (Broom og Dozier 1983; Hon 1998). Better ethical standards and professional certifications are suggested (Pieczka og l'Etang 2001) as well as better *Guidelines and Standards for Measuring and Evaluating PR Effectiveness* (Lindemann 1997).

But as Weber argues power always has to legitimize itself (Weber 1954: 335) and when public relations through increased professionalism becomes more successful in empowering corporations in their interactions with the public (and provide evidence for the results) this achievement will affect the legitimacy of public relations in the public.

The paper concludes by suggesting that in order to advance theory building in public relations the different aspects of legitimacy must be dealt with separately although this might threaten the notion of symmetry in public relations as well as its (self) perceived position as an intermediary.

Do I look good in this? Monitoring trends in communications. Findings from a longitudinal survey on communication management in 37 European countries.

Ralph Tench, Leeds Business School.

We have limited empirical research on the future development of communication management in Europe. For the past three years a major research project has been supported by the European Public Relations Education and Research Association (EUPRERA) with the goal of obtaining clearer and deeper understanding of communications practice in Europe. The European Communication Monitor (Zerfass et al., 2008) identifies current challenges and future developments of public relations on a transnational level. It builds on earlier initiatives in Europe that researched the structures of the profession on a country-to-country basis (Van Ruler & Verčič, 2004) and complements insights from the United States (Swerling et al, 2008) and China (Wang, 2008).

The European Communication Monitor was initiated in 2007 and repeated in 2008 and 2009. This paper discusses and presents the findings of the latest on-line survey consisting of fourteen items. Four items refer to the development and status of the profession; three consider the instruments and channels of communication management; six focus on the more relevant current issues and the last one explores the socio-demographic profile of participants. The survey was delivered via e-mail, together with a personal invitation to 20,000+ European professionals. Additional invitations to participate were sent via national branch associations and networks. For consistency only fully completed replies from professionals working in the field were evaluated.

The final sample was 1,524 communication professionals (55% female and 45% male) with an average age of 39 years. The findings lay a solid foundation for identifying major developments in the field because the participants are senior professionals working in 37 different European countries; with almost every second respondent having more than ten years experience. Results were analysed with methods of empirical research, and where applicable results have been statistically affirmed by ANNOVA tests. A summary of the key findings which the paper will present and explore are that:

Communication has entered the core of businesses, so communicators are businesspeople. It will not be enough to "like working with people" to enter communication management – as a managerial profession (as finance, operations or R&D) its occupants have to be members of the corporate managerial community, understand its concepts and talk its language.

Communication is about social responsibilities of organisations and sustainability is the key. People worldwide are becoming concerned that the way companies are conducting their business is endangering their natural and social environments. Without a steady perspective both on shareholders and stakeholders, there can be no vision and no mission for companies to perform.

People are moving online and so will corporate and marketing communication. New generations have migrated into a virtual world, which has become their primary reality. We live in a dual world that is interplaying online and offline into a third-level reality, something completely new. As online is adding interactivity, continuity and moving

images to this process, it is taking the primacy. Public relations will move from offline to online, from print to video, from mass information to one-to-one communication rapidly. *Building and maintaining trust is the essence for sustainability of any business*. If people lose trust in business (Trust Barometer, 2009), business collapses. 2008 and 2009 demonstrated that vividly. If growth is to be restored and sustained, trust needs to be restored and sustained. Credibility of businesspeople is essential if they want to stay in business.
Business will need to become more transparent and treat publics as partners. Governments are already required to be transparent and to treat their citizens as partners. Now it is obvious that private (including publicly traded) businesses need to do the same and become similarly transparent and also treat their publics and markets as their partners. By stimulating these relationships communication management will be able to help gain competitive advantage in the Europe of tomorrow.

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The evolving role of the internal communications practitioner: from technician to strategic partner? Sally Chalmers, Queen Margaret University.

Over the years the role of the internal communications practitioner has changed and evolved. Rather than controlling and directing employees through providing information, practitioners now need to focus on involving and engaging employees and helping them to be flexible and deal with constant change and innovation effectively (Keenan and Hazelton, 2006). Internal communications is no longer just about tactical approaches, but now focuses on the management of internal communication systems (Baines, Egan and Jefkins, 2004, p. 312) .

Today practitioners concentrate on engaging employees, involving them in business improvement (Tench and Yeomans, 2006), stimulating thinking, creating opportunities to participate, networking of know-how, provoking ideas generation and developing employees' sense of what is achievable (Tourish and Hargie, 1998).

Contributing to an understanding of the development of the Public Relations Professional Project, this paper explores the role of the internal communications practitioner today through investigation of contemporary public relations texts, presentation of data on competencies, skills, knowledge and ways of working demanded in internal communication job advertisements and discussion of these findings with senior practitioners and those recruiting to and working in internal communication roles.

Literature suggests a number of required key competency themes including: understanding people in organisations; strategic focus; planning and process management; change management; coaching and consultation; communications through technology; tactical skills; management competencies; sectoral knowledge and professional knowledge. Content analysis of internal communication job advertisement reveals the extent to which these themes are reflected in the competencies demanded by those recruiting into these posts and concludes that while senior internal communication personnel are indeed required to have strategic focus alongside tactical skills, at non-managerial level tactical skills remain key. The extent to which these requirements translate to the demands of the job at a practical level are elucidated through interviews with recruiters and practitioners.

This paper contributes to the mapping of the development of this public relations role, which has gained profile and faced new challenges and opportunities over recent years. It, therefore, offers an insight into this element of the public relations professional project.

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Crossing the disciplinary divide: integrating public relations and managerial perspectives of management in the public relations context.

Danny Moss, Manchester Metropolitan University Business School

Considerable scholarly and professional angst and energy has been expended over the years debating the issue of the professional standing and managerial credentials of public relations practitioners. Traditional arguments advanced by public relations scholars have sought to position public relations as a legitimate player within the dominant coalition or senior management team within organisations (Dozer, 1984; 1992; Dozer & Broom, 1995; Lauzen 1992). The realism of such aspirations has been questioned by a number of scholars (e.g. White & Dozier, 1992; Moss, Warnaby and Newman, 2000; Desanto and Moss 2004; Moss, Newman & Desanto, 2005), and perhaps more significantly, a review of the management literature (e.g. Hales 1986, 1991; Stewart, 1976, 1983; Mintzberg, 1973) reveals virtually no reference to a role for public relations within the senior management function. Moreover, the traditional conceptualization of the manager's role and of 'managerial' work in the public relations context has come under critical scrutiny (e.g. Leichty & Springston, 1996; Desanto & Moss, 2004). This paper takes an interdisciplinary perspective, integrating management and public relations theories to produce a more comprehensive frame and method for investigating and analyzing the main elements of 'managerial' responsibility and work performed by public relations professionals within organisations. The results of research conducted amongst practitioners working in the UK, USA and Singapore is presented which reveals an interesting pattern of core responsibilities and activities performed by senior practitioners working in these different organisational settings. The paper also offers some insights into the benefits and challenges of developing collaborative research programs across international boundaries.

Keywords: Management, practitioners' roles, integration of perspectives

Vote YES now for interactive technology in lectures: a study of the classroom response systems.

Isabella Crawford, Aberdeen Business School

A large number of staff and students find teaching large classes a disheartening experience and PR is no exception. Many of the disadvantages of the lecture method stem from the fact that students are normally completely passive, spending most of their time either listening or writing down notes. Pedagogical constructivist theory argues that effective learning involves an active process on the part of the learner whereby they construct meaning through interpersonal negotiation. It is therefore essential to incorporate a range of teaching methods into the curriculum that will facilitate opportunities for students to engage with the content. New technology offers a range of solutions to the continuing problem of lack of engagement in lectures. To this end an action research project within Aberdeen Business School examined the use of the interactive classroom response system (CRS) within a second year PR module. The findings revealed a high degree of interactivity within lectures, demonstrable retention of content and an enhanced overall experience for everyone concerned.

Replicating the agency – an approach to teaching PR at Edge Hill

Paula Keaveney, Edge Hill University.

Public Relations degrees in the UK have a variety of approaches to ensuring employability and the preparation of the student for the real world of work.

Many, including Edge Hill, have placement schemes, as well as maintaining industry contacts and making use of visiting lecturers. Many also require students to carry out projects for " real clients".

Real client projects in the classroom are a way of introducing students to a range of responsibilities, including client liaison, negotiation, team work and planning.

In 2007/8 the year three students at Edge Hill worked on a real project for a local charity. This was effective as far as it went but it did not really replicate the world of work because each student was effectively at the same skill and experience level as the others. In any PR agency there are both senior and junior staff and some have a responsibility to manage the others.

In 2008/9 the tutors at Edge Hill took the decision to combine all three year of the undergraduate degree on a project for another real client. Teaching involved one day a week which replicated as far as possible a working day in an agency. Year three students acted as managers and delegated tasks, supervising and encouraging the less experienced students. Team meetings were held each time to update on progress and make plans. Two named students took responsibility for account management, acting as liaison with the client.

Through the project, year two students came to understand the responsibilities they would be taking on the following year, and were able to see the level they would need to attain in skills. Year one students gained experience of working with others outside their immediate friendship circle.

The experiment demonstrated some issues. Firstly the year three students took some time to get used to managing and delegating, preferring instead to do the work themselves. It was initially difficult to get students to take minutes at team meetings and to keep good administrative records. (The stress on the use of this material in assessments helped improve this) There were some difficulties initially with the year one students, as they did not have the confidence or skills levels of the previous years.

The project has been successful with an excellent event taking place for the client charity and a brochure produced for their future use.

Edge Hill tutors are keen to continue the approach next year, although will probably amend the day slightly to provide some extra teaching for year one students separately to enable them to hold their own better in the bigger group.

This was effectively a new approach on the PR degree which has led to both some good learning outcomes and some issues.

PR education through journalism-based learning: a case study of teaching PR in the informational society.

Lluis Pastor Perez & Anna Clua (not attending), Open University of Catalonia, Spain
Jordi Xifra, Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spain.

This paper discloses the results from the first pilot test of a new teaching method called *journalism based learning* carried out on the Degree on Advertising and Public Relations of the Open University of Catalonia (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya: UOC), and more specifically on strategic public relations courses. Journalism based learning consists on working on university learning contents following a journalistic methodology. Thus, journalism based learning shows up a new application of the media, focusing on its teaching and entertaining function rather than its informative one. The UOC has started the first journalism based learning projects so as to provide its students with new learning contents. The application of the method developed by journalism to life-long learning reveals the radio as a key element, since it enables to keep the requirement of flexibility (in space, time and of appliance). In other words: mobility and portability. This paper explains the foundations of journalism based learning, shows with the first results of its application to a public relations course on strategic management of public relations, and concludes with the implications for public relations education

Public relations, communitarianism and CSR: (re)conceptualizing the role of PR in response to the ‘credit crunch’.

Emma Wood, Queen Margaret University.

In 2001, Leeper wrote, ‘Loss of trust in others and loss of a sense of community means that there is a loss of shared meaning that, in turn affects cultural standards, and political participation (Schlesinger, 1992;Wolfe,1989). Kruckenberg and Stark (1988) argued that it was this loss of shared meaning that that gave rise to the field of public relations, a profession whose purpose, they argued, is to “restore and maintain a sense of community” (p.xi). And it is the loss of a sense of trust and community that had lead to an increased interest in communitarian thought.’ (in Heath, 2001 p95).

The recent dramatic change in the global economic climate is a result of an era of financial liquidity or ‘easy money’ being replaced by the ‘credit crunch’ has led to an erosion of trust in financial institutions and indeed for some a questioning of the very foundations of capitalism. Consequently, this paper argues that it is apposite to reinvestigate communitarian conceptualizations of public relations (Leeper, 2001, Wilson, 2001, Kruckenberg and Stark 2001) an approach underpinned by stakeholder theory and often applied as corporate social responsibility.

There is no firm consensus on the meaning of stakeholder theory.[2] It has been described variously as being based on Keynesian economics (Hutton 1996), communitarianism (rights matched by responsibilities) (Burkitt and Ashton 1996) and the Kantian notion of duty (as opposed to utilitarianism) (Etzioni 1988 in Burkitt and Ashton 1996).

Public relations practitioners have been criticized for reducing this theory to an ‘almost exclusive analysis of stakeholders from the perspective of the organisation’ (Friedman and Miles 2002: 1), an approach which critics argue ‘hampers’ stakeholder theory:

The paper will argue that stakeholder theory is used by public relations practitioners to inform a pragmatic, strategic approach to practice, but that its implications are more far reaching. Stakeholding is ‘intimately connected to societal values and power relations and interactive with them. Culture, polity and society are conceptualised as inextricably connected with the economy, each being highly interactive with each other' (Burkitt and Ashton 1996: 5) and a re-conceptualisation of public relations should take this into account.

A short case study illustrates key points - focusing on shifts in the Bank of Scotland's CSR policy over eight years when, in light of criticism of poor social performance, instead of developing more committed approaches to CSR, the Bank withdrew from important elements of the principle with no apparently negative consequences.

It refers to consumer research which seems to support this reductionism of CSR policies positing that 'The elements of corporate reputation that seem to matter most to consumers in practice are perceptions of fairness toward consumers, and perceptions of corporate success and leadership, rather than public responsibility' (Page and Fearn 2005:306).

In light of the current credit crunch however, the paper concludes by asking whether this attitude behaviour gap will diminish , and whether the role of public relations will be to reinvigorate corporate social responsibility policies underpinned by a real adherence to stakeholder theory and the tenets of communitarianism.

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‘Yes Sir! Let’s grow oil’: deonotological ethics of CSR in Venezuela, an historical deconstruction and its modern consequences.

Jairo Lugo, SMRI.

This paper argues that not only CSR in Venezuela was developed as a consequence of political events that created hostility and antipathy against foreign oil corporations -especially from the US and the United Kingdom- but that in doing so they transferred knowledge and strategies from the military sector into the civilian companies. Indeed, by looking at Social Responsibility programmes developed by the oil industry in Venezuela in the 1950s and 1960s it is suggested that they tended to be inspired if not copy Psychological Operations Programmes (PSYOPS) put in place previously by the US Armed Forces across Latin America and in other parts of the world to win the ‘hearts and minds’ of the local populations in their asymmetrical confrontation against guerrilla groups. It is contended here that PR departments from the oil industry in Venezuela, who were the first to implement CSR programmes, translated PSYOPS strategies and tactics into the language and practices of private oil corporations and re-packaged them as community assistance programmes; now-a-days, often referred as CSR programmes. In light of this argumentation, the critical examination of the links and parallel developments between PSYOPS (also called Non-War Operations in military literature) and CSR programmes in Venezuela can offer a unique critical historical perspective in the context of the ethical framework of the industrial-military complex during the Cold War. This in itself allows a more comprehensive re-assessment of current CSR programmes in Latin American and can shed light on why so many left-wing governments and communities in the region are suspicious about these programmes in their own contexts.

Ethical subjectivity and CSR: a critical perspective.

Terryl O'Donovan.

Contemporary research in the area of ethics in PR and Communications, tends to focus on the role of the corporation and on "what PR practitioners should do" in holding corporations to account with respect to their ethical responsibilities to the community, stakeholders, employees, and society at large. Little consideration has been given to the subjective positioning of PR practitioners working within particular situated contexts of corporate social responsibility. From this perspective, power relations are often not fully taken into account, and the dilemmas and contradictions practitioners face as they mediate and negotiate corporate and public discourses in relation to their own personal moral and ethical commitments have not been considered fully in terms of practitioner professional identity-formation. Further, there is a dearth of literature that attends to these issues from the perspective of the CSR practitioner and in terms of 'what is' and 'is not possible' for practitioners to commit to on an ethical front within the context and prevailing ethos of the corporation. Drawing on my research project entitled, *The Ethical Subject and the 'discursive gap' ": a critical exploration of PR practitioner identity-construction in two accounts of Corporate Social Responsibility*, I will present an argument for the need to analyse more deeply issues of ethics and power, and of the conundrums CSR practitioners face, especially given the importance of these issues to the way in which CSR is practiced in situated contexts.

Public relations education in Malaysia: a critical assessment.

Jamilah Ahmad, Universiti Sains Malaysia and Deakin University, Australia

Public relations education worldwide has a distinct American bias. A recent study of undergraduate public relations education in Malaysia concluded that there is a dire need for change in the Malaysian public relations curriculum. By merely adopting the US curriculum, non-American countries are endangering the future of the public relations profession in their societies. There are undoubtedly some issues and misconceptions surrounding the public relations profession that are common to all countries. Other problems in public relations, however, must be understood against the background of each individual society's cultural, political and media spheres, in order to determine a more effective and relevant system for public relations education and practice. No matter how efficient the American public relations curriculum may be, the complexity of societal factors in each individual country is a barrier to fostering skilled and responsive public relations professionals. What is wrong with the US curriculum? Why does Malaysian need to look for changes or alternatives? Do these issues exist because of different political structures, government policy, the rapid changes of development in Malaysia, or simply the need and importance to uphold and preserve Malaysian values and culture? All of these issues will be discussed during the conference.

Spain is not so different: a comparative study of required public relations skills in the educational systems of the United States and Spain.

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Jordi Xifra, Pompeu Fabra University, Barcelona, Spain.

New Spanish degrees have emerged in this academic year 2008-09 as a result of the great effort required in adapting to the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) planned in the Bologna Declaration. The main consequence of that adaptation process (better known as the Bologna process) is that the new degrees had to be designed by identifying the students' required skills in order to progress efficiently, self-governmentally and flexibly in the professional context. This paper presents a comparative study of the skills related to the practice of public relations in two educational systems: the US system and the Spanish system, once the Bologna process has been implemented. In order to analyze these two contexts empirically, two reports were studied: *The Professional Bond – Public Relations Education and the Practice* drawn up by the Commission on Public Relations Education (2006), and the *White Paper: Undergraduate Degrees in Communication* (*Libro blanco: Títulos de grado en comunicación*) approved by the Spanish National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA, 2005). The conclusions of this research suggest the strong influence of the US model on the new Spanish model, albeit with exceptions in aspects such as teamwork, historical perspective or psychological emphasis.

Keywords**:** Public relations education; Undergraduate education; Bologna process; European Higher Education Area.

The use of public relations content for political mobilization.

Harvey Igben.

Political key players have very often realised that credibility and good image are perceptively critical to the process of mobilising the electorates towards the realisation of desired political objectives. In the bid to secure political power, the political actors try to impress on the political actors in order to win their support. The process of political mobilisation depends largely on media contents which form the basis for the necessary interface between the various political key players in search of political loyalty, credibility and mutual understanding. One of the major contents that has been a source of actualising mutual interchange in the political setting is public relations contents. While public relations has sustained the philosophical stand for being the vanguard of needed vive for favourable mention of political actors in the public court, the process of achieving this goal calls for closer examination with the contemplation for establishing the extent to which professionalism has been brought to bear on the messages that have often stimulated the electorates into drawing conclusion as to who they should consider credible enough to serve as their representatives in governance. This paper therefore examines the role of public relations contents in political mobilisation with the determination to establish how these contents have either regarded or disregarded professionalism in the process of constructing realism, believability and dependability in the political circle.

Lobbying in the EU: the zero-sum game of enhanced transparency.

Public relations practitioners as organizers and practice builders.

Josef Pallas, Uppsala University.

The way media review, interpret and present business activities are issues that are no longer handled by specialized communication or PR-departments. On the contrary, successful corporate media work is embodied in activities at all organizational and inter-organizational levels and in a number of different contexts. Thus, dealing with the media in its various forms is rather a complex and multi-level process that includes both practical work with concrete issues and topics; as well as more institutional activities enacting the very conditions for a company's media relations such as the overall interpretative framework within which business activities of the company are evaluated and described. Based on 45 interviews with public relations professionals and six months long ethnographic study of corporate communications departments at two major Swedish corporations this paper shows that public relations practitioners are, alongside their everyday interactions with media, also highly involved in forming the media routines and strategies in - and between - different parts of their organizations. Moreover, due to the nature and complexity of their work, these practitioners also contributes to organizing and structuring of the totality of interactions between organizations and the media, that is to say - they are active in formation of field level practices

Professional and personal qualities of PR practitioners for managing crises.
Lucy Laville, Leeds Metropolitan University.

Purpose:
Expecting the unexpected is fundamental to crisis management; planning for the unexpected is the challenge for crisis management planning. Implementing an effective crisis communication strategy is based on experience, tacit common sense and good stakeholder relations.

This paper explores the benefits of crisis management planning as well as the benefits of employing instinct, gained through experience, for handling a crisis underpinned by public relations which is versatile and proactive.

Design/Methodology/approach: This paper will explore emerging data and lines for analysing the role of experience as well as strategic planning as fundamental to dealing effectively with crisis management. Pilot case studies as well as sociology theory and PR theory will be explored in detail to make recommendations for individual personal qualities that will attempt to minimise the risks, both short and long term, of a crisis.

Value/originality: this paper attempts to explore sociology theory as well as applied PR theory to recommend qualities and experiences that PR practitioners need in order to maximise damage limitation during a crisis.

Paper type: conceptual

Organizational personality as a strategic public relations concept.
Eric Koper IIATA.

Organizational Personality as a Strategic Public Relations Concept

Descriptive models often related to prescriptive action dominate public relations theory and practice. This is particular true when public relations practice aspires to be recognized as a strategic apex level management function. Although helpful in exploring and explaining what one does and should do given particular situations, they mostly fail to help analyzing the underlying more dynamic relational complexities and recommending alternative approaches that can be followed to reposition those relations.

This paper presents original dynamic strategic public relations concepts that introduce opportunities to surface those underlying complexities in organizational contexts. These dynamic concepts make a case to consider "organizational personality" as a new concept for strategic public relations that complements existing thinking on organizational image and identity. Piloting the organizational personality concept in a real life situation demonstrated its promise for theoretical and practical application especially when used in conjunction with the public relations catalyst model.

Doing the PR for snake oil: evaluating the case for a debate on the professional ethics of practitioners working to undermine science-based medicine.

Scott Davidson, de Montfort University.

This paper will seek to problematise through case studies and literature review the considerable time and resources deployed by a significant proportion of PR practitioners in promoting pseudoscience or developing strategies to undermine the dissemination of medical research. In some case studies agencies have received awards from the CIPR for implementing crisis communications plans that proudly "rebutted" Cochrane Reviews - the institutionalised publication of science-based medicine.

In the historical context of the adoption of PR strategies to undermine medical research into the effects of tobacco or the more recent campaigns to invalidate scientific evidence for climate change, this paper will argue that the widespread practice of working to undermine science-based medicine requires critical challenge, ethical scrutiny and reflective debate if PR is to ever succeed in gaining recognition as a profession where ethics are entrenched into practice.

The art and science of interpretation: public relations and hermeneutics.

Johanna Fawkes, Leeds Metropolitan University.

Hermeneutics is the philosophy of interpretation so it is surprising that there is not more research into public relations and hermeneutics, given the centrality of interpretation to PR practice. The practitioner is constantly interpreting the public to the organisation and vice versa, and is prized for skill in understanding the nuances and navigating the pitfalls of interpretation.

Bleicher (1980) summarises the development of traditional hermeneutic theory as a) technological understanding of language, vocabulary, grammar etc; b) exegesis of sacred texts, such as biblical study; and c) to guide jurisdiction. These approaches focus on methodological aspects of interpretation, as developed by Betti and Dilthey and extended by Shleiermacher. Hermeneutic philosophy, as developed by Heidegger, questioned deeper aspects of understanding, such as the impossibility of objectivity when subject and object are bound together in Being, or Dasein. The goal of hermeneutic investigation is understanding through interpretation, in which the subjective limitations and frameworks – historical and linguistic – are part of the process. It does not aim for scientific replication of interpretation – Heidegger called it 'extrascientific'' knowledge .

In recent decades hermenetuics has been developed by Gadamer and Riceour and extended by a philosopher very familiar to PR scholars, Jurgen Habermas.

Gadamer (1989) moved beyond personal interpretation and the relations between the subject-object to conceptualise understanding as a shared experience in which communicative dialogue leads to 'fusion of horizons'. This has been the approach shared by Habermas (1971), though he takes issue with what he terms the idealism of Gadamer's approach, pointing out that barriers to understanding can be ideological and resistant to sharing. Habermas thus develops critical hermeneutics, questioning the power structures in understanding and communication. From the 1960s Paul Riceour explored the linguistic aspects of hermeneutics and semiotics by investigating the meaning of signs and then developing a theory of interpretation which bridged some of the conflicts between the hermeneutical theory of Gadamer and critical hermeneutics.

Hermeneutics is not often cited in public relations literature, though one of its exponents, Habermas, is considered a leading theorist for the field, particularly regarding communication ethics (Pearson, 1989b). For example, Burkart (2007) does explore Habermas' theories of communicative understanding but does not place these theories in the hermeneutic tradition. This paper does not aim to redress this but rather to locate wider public relations practice and theory in this field of philosophy, first by exploring the nature of this approach, its background and contemporary debates; secondly by demonstrating the relevance of these ideas to public relations thinking. By considering the issues involved in interpretation, as understood by different hermeneutical approaches, it is hoped that insight will be gained into the challenges and opportunities of interpretation in every day public relations practice. Particular attention will be paid to the relationship between hermeneutics and ethics and the implications of this for public relations ethical theory.

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Resisting the cult of the professional: An acknowledgement of the primacy of amateurs, activists, and non-corporate practitioners as mainstream and as the innovation engine of progressive public relations

David McKie, University of Waikato, New Zealand

Advocates of the power of crowdsourcing and more democratic DIY media such as online citizen journalism have been criticised for promoting the cult of the amateur. This paper identifies and counters the cult of the professional in public relations. It also aligns with a growing international resistance to assertions of primacy of U.S. public relations, U.S. models, and U.S. theories as the prototypes for the rest of the world. It contributes to those resistance movements in a number of ways. Firstly, it challenges a tendency to assume that the largest body of practitioners work is in corporate communications and public relations. It contends that such an assumption rests on the belief that only paid public relations practitioners count (and does not contemplate attempting to count the huge number of amateurs). Once that is abandoned, then the assumption's legitimacy is extremely dubious even in the U.S. and is utterly untenable internationally across a globe where few nations host many native corporations and, in absolute numbers, cannot begin to match local and national government, social enterprise, and small to medium business employer communication workers. Secondly, the paper contends that much corporate and professional public relations exists to counter the work of activists and progressive consumer and social movements in ways that establish a sense of "professionalism" that might be called a cult in uniting to break the ethical sense of a profession as "an occupation where taking advantage of the customer is against the rules" (Christensen, 1994, p. 28). Finally, the paper takes two different temporal perspectives. It looks back to historical beginnings of public relations to trace how textbook convergences on the view that corporate public relations marks the field's proper origins is a distortion of history. The paper also looks to the present and forward to future to see how amateurs and activists – especially online – are becoming more visible (in ways akin to their offline predecessors), as the mainstream, the engine of innovation, and the source of ethical

proficiency of a public relations that is more socially desirable than the technical professionalism and status consciousness of professional bodies.

Corporate responsibility/marketplace rhetoric: A study of corporate communications.

Magnus Fredriksson, University of Gothenburg.

The aim of this study is to analyse what rhetoric of responsibility Swedish corporations presents and the structural determinants for such presentations.

Corporate identity is the managerial use of rhetoric and other symbolical means to (re)present the corporation's values, self-understanding and the interpretations made of the world.

A returning element in this rhetoric is the idea of responsibility, as in Corporate Social Responsibility. A number of corporations have chosen to explicitly or implicitly include normative aspects in their rhetoric of responsibility. In this study the analyses rests on theories on reflexive modernity and the structural transformation of social orders driven by the implosion of modernity's dualisms, the increasing threats to organizational operations caused by factual risks or the fear for assumed risks, the medialisation of politics and business, the globalisation of economy, politics and everyday life, the increasing competition and standardisation of products and services and the individualisation of opinions and values often expressed in the realm of subpolitics.

The empirical study includes all corporations listed on the Stockholm Stock Exchange 2004 and content analysis is used to categorise the voluntary sections of the annual reports and the sustainability report if available.

The results show that economy is the predominate area of responsibility included in corporate rhetoric. A smaller group consisting of large, well known corporations diverges from this by giving ethical aspects greater importance.

Two structural dimensions are of greater importance to understand the different strategies; visibility and risks. The more visible the corporation is and the more risks the corporation produces the more ethics it includes in its rhetoric. Based on the results the study also raises questions about the validity in corporations' statements on ethical responsibility

Exploring Relationships Within The Cocoa Industry: The Sustainable Tree Crops Program (STCP).

Julia Jahansoozi, SMRI

Kabindra Prasad Kandel, Tokyo University of Agriculture.

Organizations such as IITA (International Institute of Tropical Agriculture) are focused on applied research that can be linked to development outcomes. In order to have development outcomes these organizations are required to partner with numerous research partners, farmers, farmer organizations, local enterprises, national governments, NGOs, donor organizations, and global industries. IITA's Sustainable Tree Crops Program (STCP) provides an example related to the cocoa industry in sub-Saharan West Africa that illustrates its approach to research for development (R4D) by developing relationships with key publics within the cocoa sector with the end result of a development outcome. This paper explores the R4D approach using the STCP example. Interviews were conducted in both Nigeria and Ghana in order to explore the various relationships and partnerships with cocoa farmers, farmer cooperatives, cocoa processors, national research organizations, government officials, national regulatory boards, donor organizations, the World Cocoa Federation, as well as with the global chocolate industry. By engaging and developing relationships with key publics STCP has been able to implement agricultural research technologies that benefit cocoa farmers so they can both increase the amount of cocoa produced as well as its quality.

Key words: Organization-public relationships; public private partnerships.

Selling Crisis Counseling: A Critical Study of Danish PR Firms

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Public relations agencies play an important role when organizations are in need of crisis consulting. ”Use crisis management consultants (advice by objectivity of PR consultants is important)”, claims one of the many web sites promoting the expertise of a public relations agency. However, we are still without scientific and empirical investigations concerning the form and function of the crisis consulting ”products and services” delivered by the agencies.

The aim of this paper is to present the results of a critical study of the approaches and consulting skills of Danish public relations agencies within the field of crisis mangement and crisis communication. The questions we want to answer are:

- How do public relations agencies define and typologize organizational crises?
- What are the most widespread approaches to crisis management among consultants (within a prescriptive and/or emergent perspective)?
- What are the most widespread approaches to crisis communication among consultants (type of crisis response strategies, stakeholder relations approach, etc.)?
- What is the typical form and function of the crisis consulting ”services and products” delivered by the agencies (lists of good advices, procedures, models, etc.)?
- What is the role of crisis management consultants with regard to the organizations before, during and after a crisis?
- How do the public relations agencies communicate about their crisis consulting skills (using metaphors like ”crisis experts” and ”crisis commanders”)?
- To what degree do public relations agencies make use of scientific research findings in their crisis consulting? How do consultants view public relations theory within the field of crisis management and crisis communication?

The research design comprises three elements: 1) a quantitative survey consisting of a questionnaire sent to 39 Danish public relations agencies, 2) qualitative semi-structured interviews based on the findings of the survey with representatives of 10 Danish public relations agencies, and 3) discourse analysis focusing on how the public relations agencies present their approaches and crisis consulting skills on their corporate web sites and how the models and methods used and/or created by the agencies are described and promoted in specially designed documents.

The buy-in to corporate culture: creating internal emotional capital through work-placed volunteering schemes.

Ann Turner, Queen Margaret University.

Businesses often view employee volunteering schemes as charitable donations. In the current climate of recession, there is increased pressure on organisations to justify charitable expenditure in terms of bottom-line benefits. The benefits literature makes a strong case for integrating employee community involvement (ECI) into business strategy as there is a growing body of evidence highlighting the community, employee and organisational benefits.

Corporate citizenship can have a positive effect on a company's financial performance through its influence on external factors such as reputation, consumer confidence and loyalty, government relations, access to capital and risk management. (Zappala, 2004, pp.3-4) There is also evidence of internal benefits. Helping employees gratify needs, such as social inclusion, self esteem and self-actualisation, can bring rewards for the organisation such as raised levels of morale, motivation, commitment, loyalty, lower staff turnover and absenteeism. (Weiser & Zadek, 2000; Tuffrey, 1995 & 2003; Orlitzky et al, 2003)

Taking an employee perspective, this study looked at some of the more intangible benefits of employee volunteering schemes and explored the cognitive mechanisms underlying employee perceptions and attitudes. There was some evidence that participants felt more positive about the organisation and that ECI makes a limited contribution to intellectual capital through enhanced understanding of the corporate vision and goals. There was much stronger support for ECI encouraging an emotional attachment to the corporate persona and buy-in to the corporate culture. The stronger participants identified with the volunteering group, exhibiting social identity salience over personal identity, the stronger the emotional attachment to the organisation. With this comes the recognition of shared values between employees and the organisation, which aids the internalisation of corporate goals and culture.

Managing emotion in PR relationships: Emerging issues from a pilot study.

Liz Yeomans, Leeds Business School.

Public relations consultants manage relationships daily with colleagues, clients, suppliers and journalists. In doing s, they require a wide variety of knowledge and skills: one increasingly important skill is emotion management.

Hoschchild (1983) was concerned with the consequences of emotion management in the workplace (which she defined as 'emotional labour') where the 'real' self is pushed aside to meet the service expectations of management and customers. Recent analyses, however, suggest that people select jobs that conform to ideas of self-identity expression (e.g. Korczynski, 2003; Schweingruber and Berns, 2005). Bolton and Boyd's (2003) large-scale study of airline cabin crew provides complex theory of emotional labour: multiple selves that have multiple meanings are presented by multi-skilled actors within the workplace. The complexity of emotional labour and the nature of pubic relations work in managing a wide range of relationships suggests that PR consultants are similarly multi-skilled in presenting multiple selves within the workplace.

Drawing on the work of Hoschchild (1983), this paper reports on findings from a pilot study that aimed to discover how emotion management skills are practised and understood by PR consultants. The study involved 2 depth interviews each with 2 PR consultants. Participants were questioned about their career histories, career motivations, professional identities, and their feelings during the day-to-day management of relationships. Diaries provided descriptive accounts of their working lives. Transcripts were analysed using narrative analysis and conclusions drawn in the light of recent emotional labour theory.

Backs to the wall: How PR carries discomfort for organizations

Fiona Campbell, University of Hertfordshire

Public relations plays a sensitive role in dealing with the discomfort felt within organisations about the ethical implications of their operations. Organisational discomfort seems to be on the increase, and this may be as a result of demands for greater transparency. The purpose of public relations is to tell an organisation's side of the story. This role is mission critical, yet practitioners do not necessarily have the status to enable them to carry it out effectively. The practice appears to take on organisations' discomfort and deal with it by justifying decisions in which it has no part. Blatant attempts to mask the source of discomfort do not work, but they seem to be commonplace. Practitioners often seem to find themselves with their backs to the wall. Blaming the media may make them feel less uncomfortable. Practitioners seem to keep quiet about this aspect of their work, and it may be seen as valuable, especially when the discomfort is the leader's own. Practitioners seem to need to believe completely in what the organisation is doing, otherwise they could not bear the discomfort. It is not acknowledged. It could be a cause of "essential dissonance" (Berger 2005) within the field. Seen this way, the discomfort in and around public relations appears to be endemic.

Critical theory is used to question the practice, drawing on the work of Foucault to interrogate the power that is inherent in public relations discourse. My approach is linguistic, drawing on Saussure and Derrida, and applying deconstruction which seeks to open up institutions to reveal what has been repressed or "forgotten". This work is "disconcerting and deliberately so" (Kamuf 1991:ix)

This paper reports on ongoing research into how the UK practice represents its work (Campbell, Herman, Noble 2006) The research problem is the apparent contradiction between the way that practitioners explain what they do, and what they actually do in their daily work. My research has challenged me to face up to my own sense of discomfort about public relations. I feel discomfort about the public perception of the practice in the UK, and I understand the frustrations of the publics. I feel unease about the claims of transparency made by the practice. In my research interviews I have found similar discomfort within the practice, although it is not always identified as such.

This is part of an ongoing inquiry based on an interpretive worldview. The methodology is influenced by the work of Stacey (2006) that sees research as "taking your own experience seriously", leading to a deep review of the researcher's own assumptions. I started to identify themes through narrative, and these insights formed the basis of questions for in-depth interviews. Although many participants initially saw my research as "just semantics", most have found it thought-provoking. I have now started to review my research and to write it up.

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Public relations in CEE countries.
Gyorgy Szondi, Leeds Metropolitan.

(In November 2009 Europe will celebrate the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, which marked the birth of market economies together with that of the public relations industry in many – but not all - Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries. As the PR profession in Eastern Europe matures and reaches adulthood, it is a good time to reflect on its childhood and adolescence years in a historical perspective.

As Jacquie L'Etang (2008), a British PR historian and critical scholar notes, PR history writing is a neglected field of research in many parts of the world. This is particularly true in Central and Eastern Europe, a region, which remains largely underrepresented in public relations scholarship (perhaps with the exception of Slovenia). L'Etang criticises the heavy dominance of American interpretations of public relations history as too simplistic and somewhat ill-advised given that so little is known about the histories of other nations. This paper's aim is to contribute to this debate by focussing on a region, which has undergone drastic political, economic and social changes during two decades. This drastic transformation accounts for public relations being examined as a societal function, which prompted Lawniczak (2001), a Polish scholar, to describe public relations in CEE countries as "transitional public relations".

Another framework that has been adopted to describe the evolution of public relations is professionalisation, by examining a number of criteria that characterises a profession. During the past few years the number of country specific publications that describe the development and the traits of the profession and the environmental factors that have shaped the profession in the region, has been on the increase. The novelty of these publications is that they are written by native scholars or practitioners, unlike the majority of the publications during the 1990s which were written by American scholars through the lenses of American public relations.

This paper adopts a historical perspective to analyse and understand the first 20 years of public relations in CEE. Besides examining artefacts and documents, emphasis is placed on oral history told by CEE public relations practitioners. Narrative approaches will be used to analyse these “stories” and to understand how practitioners make sense of a phenomenon called public relations. Oral history gathers data not available in written records about events, people, decisions, and processes. Oral history can reveal how individual values and actions shaped the past, and how the past shapes present-day values and actions. (Truesdell, 2002)

The public relations trends and professional development in post-socialist ‘new democracies’: The case of Slovenia.

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In the post-socialist countries, public relations emerged, rapidly prospered and developed in a remarkably different context of transition to open, democratic, and free-market societies commencing in Slovenia after the independence in 1991. The independence represents an epistemological cut in the social worldview which is reflected in the story of successful de-Balkanisation and “return to Europe” encompassing various areas of social life, including public relations. Public relations in Slovenia has in its short history – with well established professional bodies strongly linked with other international associations and organisations, annual conferences and symposia, awards for best practices, university courses and code of ethics – become an institutionalised profession that is compatible with the current state of the profession Europe. At least in theory. In practice, the public relations (in the public somewhat more than in private sector) tends to suffer form immaturity and identity issues, including a tactical position within organisations, one-way practice of information dissemination (to a large extent focused on media relations practices), poor understanding of the profession’s role and responsibilities, lack of expertise, education and experience of public relations professionals (public relations as a separate subject was at the University of Ljubljana only introduced in 1994), and low levels of trust. This paper examines cultural and socio-historical perspective of the development of public relations in Slovenia from propagandistic Yugoslav beginnings to current practice and education and concludes that public relations can be compared to a “poor girl” married into a rich family – she might appear like a rich girl, yet her behaviour will give her away that she was not born and raised in the world of rich. As such, it offers valuable insights into an emerging practice that has learnt from the West in theory, while the area of implementation might (perhaps forever) stay behind the imagined “iron curtain”.

Terrorism, peace-building and critical pedagogy in post-conflict societies: Teaching and studying public relations in Northern Ireland.

Ian Somerville, University of Ulster.

Terrorism, peace-building and critical pedagogy in post-conflict societies: Teaching and studying public relations in Northern Ireland.

The public relations (PR) industry in Northern Ireland has emerged in a unique context when compared with rest of the UK and indeed most of Western Europe. This paper presents the results of a project which explored the process of teaching and learning about the role and function of PR in this post-conflict context.

The Northern Ireland context

PR in Northern Ireland from the 1960's to the 1990's was practiced in a society divided along politico-religious lines and fractured by sectarian conflict. Since the mid-1990's and particularly after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 armed conflict and sectarian violence has largely ended. Local accountable political structures have been reestablished and control over policy has been devolved to the Northern Ireland Assembly in all but a few areas which are 'reserved' (i.e. still under the control of the UK parliament at Westminster). The long period of conflict and sectarian tension still impacts upon the current post-conflict period. We define Northern Ireland as a post-conflict society for the following reasons: 1. there has been a cessation of hostilities; 2. the different parties involved in and affected by the conflict (Republican and Unionist political groupings and their armed wings, the British and Irish governments) have signed peace agreements; 3. the society has been significantly demilitarized; 4. the society remains polarized.[i]

Public Relations, terrorism and peace-building

Recent academic scholarly activity in PR and (albeit for a considerably longer period) media studies and political communication has turned its attention to analyzing issues such as the relationship between PR and terrorism (Richards, 2004), government PR in response to terrorism (Heibert, 2005; Zhang, 2007) and the uses of PR tactics by armed state and non-state actors (Loew, 2003). This is a significant body of work which is important in helping to develop a critical understanding of the role and function of PR in contemporary society. Certain issues arise however in teaching and studying this work in a post-conflict society where definitions of concepts such as 'terrorism' and 'peace' are, at least, partially defined and determined by the personal experience of students and teachers and are therefore perhaps understood in ways different to those who study and teach about these issues in societies which can be viewed as 'normal'.

The researchers used questionnaires to gather data from first year students studying a core PR module. The questionnaire was piloted with a small group of students to test for suitability of language and coherence as well as reliability and validity. An initial questionnaire was administered to 121 first year students one week before the topics of PR and Terrorism and PR and peace-building were discussed and analysed using a traditional lecture/seminar format. A second questionnaire was administered to the same students one week after the topics had been studied.

This project focused on four specific research questions;

1. How students studying PR in Northern Ireland define and understand terrorism and its relationship to PR and whether studying these issues produces changes in these definitions and understandings.
2. How students studying PR in Northern Ireland define and understand peace-building and the role of PR in this process and whether studying these issues produces changes in these definitions and understandings.
3. How living in a conflict/post-conflict society impacts on the day-to-day practice of PR (media relations, lobbying, etc.).
4. The pedagogic challenges and strategies that emerge when teaching about issues surrounding terrorism and PR in Northern Ireland.

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For definitions of armed conflict see Uppsala Conflict Data Program http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/UCDP/data_and_publications/definitions_all.htm and see also www.correlatesofwar.org

Assessing graduate-ness: individual readiness to embrace values and skills of the PR profession.

Mandy Atkinson, University of Greenwich

Sarah Roberts, London College of Communication.

The public relations profession continues to experience rapid growth. The PR industry has expanded at a rate of 20 per cent per annum over the last 5 years. In the UK alone there are over 48,000 people who work in the public relations profession. The PR industry makes a significant economic contribution, having a turnover of £6.5 billion. The PR profession contributes £3.4 billion to United Kingdom economic activity as well as generating £1.1 billion in corporate profits. Continuous expansion is predicted and long-term growth is expected in PR as employers increasingly regard PR as a graduate entry career. Meanwhile public relations remains the third choice for graduates leaving University. However, there have been a number of criticisms of public relations degrees and questions raised as to how equipped graduates are for employment in PR .

Although little has been written about individual readiness, much has been written about organisational readiness especially in the field of change management (Lewin 1951, Kotter, 1995, Armenakis, A and Harris, S 1993 and 2002) and in the UK recent organisational readiness studies have focused on the health service and its ability to embrace innovation and technology transfer. Within this arena the concept of individual readiness to accept change is also discussed and explored. In his 1975 paper, Robert Menges talks of how readiness to enter a profession can be evaluated looking at four criteria: personality characteristics, knowledge of subject matter, application of subject matter and performance on the job. Little subsequent work has been done to build to examine this in the context of specific professional disciplines.

Developments in UK based PR education to date as explored, for example by L'Etang (2002) and the exploration of professionalism of the PR industry (Pieczka and L'Etang, 2002) are areas which can contribute significantly to the debate. It will also be significant to draw on the employer research carried out previously by Fawkes and Tench (2003) which identified the specific skills that employers needed from PR graduates when they entered employment.

Through an exploratory qualitative study involving employers, academics and recent graduates, this work-in-progress aims to identify what constitutes individual readiness, appropriate pedagogical approaches to teaching the values and skills for PR and identify possible criteria for measuring individual readiness. The study would examine whether a model of student readiness for work in the PR profession can be developed and whether this would be welcomed by universities and employees. The model would seek to incorporate psychological and skills-based metrics that could be used as both an educational and career development tool.

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Interdisciplinary perspectives: Do employers hiring PR graduates look for business or communications skills – or both?

Kathleen Dixon Donnelly & Peter Wilby, (not attending) Birmingham City University School

Interdisciplinary Perspectives: Do Employers Hiring PR graduates Look for Business or Communications Skills—or Both?

Kathleen Dixon Donnelly, Ph.D.
Senior Lecturer, Public Relations, in the
Business and Marketing, School of Business

And

Peter Wilby,
Course Leader, Public Relations,
School of Media in the Faculty of Performance, Media and English

In 2008 Birmingham City University embarked on a project to re-structure all of its faculties and courses. As part of this effort, the researchers, Dr. Kathleen Dixon Donnelly, PR lecturer in the Business School, and Peter Wilby, the PR course leader in the faculty of Performance, Media and English, were awarded a grant to develop an interdisciplinary PR course that would bridge both fields.

As part of the re-structuring, one of the seven goals of the university's Learning and Teaching Strategy is to 'Develop highly employable students who are aware of their responsibilities to their profession and to society.' Therefore, the process required input from employers regarding their expectations of graduates. As a result, the recent one-day on-campus conference, 'Public Relations: Current Issues and Future Directions,' organized by Mr. Wilby for his students, was used as an opportunity to survey the PR professionals who attended. The purpose of the research was to determine what mix of business, marketing, media and communications skills employers are looking for in entry-level public relations employees.

A questionnaire was developed, including questions about preferred skills, course degree titles, module titles and elements to be included in a student's portfolio, as well as information on the respondents' qualifications background. At the conference, 16 surveys were completed. Questionnaires were also sent by e-mail to those who had expressed an interest but could not attend, as well as the current cohort studying for the CIPR diploma in the Business School. Some diploma students were also given questionnaires at a class meeting.

Although the sample size was small, there were definite patterns in the stated preferences of the respondents. Preliminary analysis of the surveys reveals that employers are looking for a mix of business and communications background, with a slight tilt towards communications and media skills, and an emphasis on practical experience.

Incubating professionalism in public relations – a study of industry partnerships, impacts on student learning and preparedness for practice.

Ingrid Larkin & Amisha Mehta, Queensland University of Technology, Australia

Fiona Sperou, Rowland (not attending).

The public relations education literature has long emphasised the importance of teaching and assessing technical skills and theoretical frameworks (see Aldoory and Wrigley, 2000; Anderson, 1999; Benigni, Lariscy & Tinkham, 2002; Hon, Fitzpatrick & Hall, 2004; Turk, 1989).

Managers and employers in the new creative workforce (McWilliam, 2008) assume graduates come equipped with these skills and frameworks, but also expect students to possess attributes such as problem solving, critical and creative thinking, reflective practice and self reliance (see Barrie, 2006). These attributes are central to the professionalisation of public relations practice (see David, 2004). Enabling students to develop these attributes requires a collaborative and creative approach to pedagogy manifested in innovative, engaging and entertaining learning activities that go beyond didactic delivery by teaching creatively and teaching for creativity (see Jeffrey & Craft, 2001, 2008).

In Australia, public relations educators, industry practitioners and professional bodies, including the Public Relations Institute of Australia, maintain strong and close links. Coming from this base, the authors developed a model for the next generation of public relations education that uses industry partnership as a way to bridge pedagogy and professional practice. The model suggests that industry partnerships be embedded in learning activities and assessment items; be considered on a continuum and delivered incrementally across a course of study; and connections between classroom and workplace activities are clearly signposted for students.

In this study, the industry partnership learning model is articulated through internships, client based projects, podcast interviews with public relations professionals, case studies, and panel sessions embedded in an eight unit public relations major in an undergraduate business degree. The model is analysed and evaluated in two stages. First, student perceptions of how real-world industry partnerships contribute to learning outcomes and preparedness for practice are collected. Second, these data are interpreted by industry and academic representatives in the partnership. These interpretations will be used to refine the model as part of curriculum renewal.

The paper is significant to contemporary public relations education and practice. It contributes strongly to professionalisation by improving learning partnerships and outcomes, and equipping students with the reference points to interpret and apply knowledge and skills gained in classrooms to practice settings. The authors hope this industry partnership learning model provides a way to initiate and continue conversations around the bridge joining pedagogy and practice.

Which way is up? Triangulating best practice during a time of organizational change: A toolkit for public sector communicators.

Anne Gregory, Centre for Public Relations Studies, Leeds Business School.

Communication in the United Kingdom's public sector is being conducted in an increasingly challenging environment driven by external factors such as information technology impacts, boundary-less organisations and empowered stakeholders (Arthur Page Society, 2007), as well as a change management agenda driven by central government that requires organisational processes and projects to be co-designed, co-produced and co-delivered (as evidenced by the World Class Commissioning programme in the NHS). This context requires a profound shift in the structure, working practices and culture of public institutions and necessitates that communication should play a more strategic and central role within these organisations.

Faced with such an array of challenges, how can senior communication professionals in the public sector ensure that they are operating effectively? This paper proposes that three factors are crucial to their performance: a thorough understanding of the strategic role that communication should play within their organisation; an ability to plan strategically; and an awareness of the key competencies and behaviours they need to exhibit in the role. The research contextualises and develops these mutually reinforcing elements for the public sector and creates a diagnostic toolkit that can be used to orientate and inform practitioners, particularly during a period of organisational change.

In addition to academic insights (Steyn, 2004; Choi and Choi, 2008; Werder and Holtzhausen, 2008; Laurati, 2008 and 2009) the paper is also informed by research undertaken by the Centre for Public Relations Studies (CPRS), working with practitioners in the public sector. In particular, during the last two years the CPRS has undertaken research for the Department of Health and NHS, The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and LG Communication, a national body made up of associations that work to raise the standard of communication in local government. The research that has been carried out for these organisations has covered issues such as the nature and scope of best practice in communication management (NHS), internal communication (DWP) and the desired competencies of senior communicators (LG Communication and the Department of Health).

The research involved in these projects has required a range of qualitative and quantitative techniques, including literature reviews, questionnaires, interviews and discussion groups with public sector CEOs and practitioners operating at national, regional and local level. It is this work that has led to the development of a conceptual approach and practical toolkit that seeks to synthesise and contextualise best practice for the public sector, providing a methodology comprising a way of thinking and a practical blue print for communicators. It comprises of three elements that each address a mutually reinforcing aspect of operational effectiveness:

- *a conceptualisation of strategic communication in the public sector*. This develops the work of Steyn (2004) and concludes with a schematic that articulates the four levels at which the communication function provides organisational input, as well as the specific role it undertakes in each (Centre for Public Relations Studies, 2009).

- *a communication planning model for the public sector* that extends and refines the *Engage* methodology developed by the Government Communication Network (Centre for Public Relations Studies, 2009).

- *a checklist of key competencies for senior communicators*. This builds on research funded by the Department of Health (Centre for Public Relations Studies, 2008) and also incorporates the latest insights on leadership behaviours in public relations (Choi & Choi, 2007; Gregory, 2008; Holtzhausen & Werder, 2008).

By referring to this methodology and using it as framework against which they can benchmark their own activities, it is proposed that senior communicators will be able to diagnose and address areas of strength and weakness during a period of flux, from both an organisational and individual perspective.

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Professionalisation, education and the cultural PR sector.

Mandy Atkinson, University of Greenwich
Mike Findlay, Wellcome Trust.

Arts and cultural PR professionals provide a crucial function for museums, galleries and arts organisations throughout the UK in contributing to the overall success of their business, from raising their media profile, managing their relationships with stakeholders, to attracting new audiences and regular attendees. Professional status within PR generally has been sought in an effort to establish social legitimacy and credibility for the profession (Pieczka and L'Etang, 2001). With increased economic pressures within the cultural sector (traditionally an already under resourced industry) leading to increased demand for successful PR, how can professional practice be maintained and professional development sustained, particularly when education is considered the crucial plank in PR's quest for professional status (L'Etang, 2002)?

Little has been written about education or professionalisation in the cultural PR sector and yet expectations of professional practice are high. Tensions exist between PR and marketing disciplines by the very functionality in practice, reflecting on the partnership or rivalry argument historically or the need to define the PR intellectual and practical domain (Hutton, 1996a). Lessons can be learnt from what has been explored in terms of professionalisation and educational development in PR more generally and that the way that the PR industry has developed historically both in terms of its professionalisation and education (L'Etang, 2002) and (Pieczka and L'Etang, 2002) respectively. Educational research can contribute here significantly, for example with developments in areas such as Communities of Practice, with regard to principles of cultivating such learning environments; Wenger (2002) and thinking and reflecting on professional practice(Schon 1983, 1987) .

In January 2009 the Wellcome Trust hosted the first Cultural Venues Press Officers' Conference in conjunction with museums and galleries from throughout the UK. Attended by 120 delegates from across the country, the conference looked at improving PR best practice from within the cultural sector, and explored developments within the media industry through lively panel discussions with print, broadcast and online journalists. The positive feedback from conference delegates highlighted the need for similar events and forums on a more regular occasion providing the chance to share ideas and network in a more structured way.

Having established a PR forum of practitioners for this sector, this exploratory qualitative study will consider the needs and functions of PR within the cultural industries, how arts and cultural press officers learn and develop their skills. It will also consider their professional development needs and how those needs are met, and the feasibility of a Community of Practice as pedagogy for professional support and development through sharing reflective PR practice.

The paper is a synergy between academia and industry, the authors coming from each perspective.

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Beyond symmetry.

Tom Bowden-Green, Trimedia

Introduction

The industry has a reputation issue, which stems from the fact that we can't define our profession in a way which actually reflects current PR practice.

The biggest barrier to our reputation is lack of a credible model for PR. In the business world the industry has become synonymous with one-way approaches to persuade, but academic courses still present Grunig's two-way symmetry as a model of excellence. In practice, neither model truly represents the modern profession.

We urgently therefore need consensus on a model for PR that firstly represents current PR practice and secondly aids the credibility of the industry.

Why do we need a new model?

One concern with a symmetrical model is that it creates a sense of opposition between an organisation and a public, an 'us' and 'them' mentality which is outdated. Murphy has since asserted (2007) that in a complex adaptive system power is actually 'inescapably shared' among many individual actors.

As Danny Rogers (PR Week, July 2008) claimed last year, we are reaching a 'tipping point' in the *'Age of Dialogue'*. A change is occurring and it is being driven by social media. There is no longer a clear boundary between an organisation and a 'public'. Practitioners are now experiencing relationship models beyond even the 'complex' and individuals are no longer limited to local interaction as described by Murphy (2001). Writing has always been empowering, but the ability to distribute messages to a large audience with the click of a mouse is democracy at its most raw.

Academia needs to keep up with this rapidly-changing communication medium. We cannot continue to hold up as best practice a model that was first introduced 25 years ago. The rules of engagement have altered along with the media landscape and society's expectations. Grunig (1992) claimed that organisations have no choice but to acknowledge relationships with outside stakeholders. We now need to recognise that these relationships are between individuals and then understand the role of these individuals as active participants. Organisations cannot choose between linear one-way or two-way means of communication but must acknowledge a third more fluid way of communicating.

What are the practical implications for PR?

The fear for the PR industry in admitting that models of communication have changed is finding a role for PR practitioners within this. If individuals now hold more power than ever before, PR practitioners need to find a way of helping organisations to communicate on a personal level, using human language and behaviour. This will be an uncomfortable shift however from the controlled means of mass communication that have come to characterise the profession.

My approach

I will provide a brief summary of the advance from models of symmetry to theories of complexity before proposing a further step in this evolutionary process with reference to examples (that I've had experience of) of current practice, particularly focusing on the role of social media.

Most importantly, I will conclude with suggestions for adapting PR practice which I hope will begin a new direction of debate and academic discussion.

What role does public relations play in German communication agencies? How do they understand and apply public relations concepts?

Martin Duch, doctoral student SMRI

In the course of globalisation this includes global trade and the quick penetrance of new media technology, the public, in view of the secondary and tertiary business sector, is increasingly fragmented in stakeholder groups. In order to meet communicational needs of these groups, an increasing demand of PR services can be recognised. Till now the acceptance of the field Public Relations in Germany can still be improved a lot in comparison to other parts of the world where Public Relations is already accepted as an inherent part of the field of communication.

Amongst others this PhD research will evaluate from practitioners' point of view in how far the general lack of PR acceptance in German society is linked to historical backgrounds of the 20^{th} century.

Nevertheless Public Relations is a field of communication which becomes increasingly important for German communication agencies today. Nowadays global markets are faced with keener competition which forces companies to communicate beyond the classical marketing mix. The current global financial crisis evidently demonstrates how important professional PR-communication is for healthy markets. In a more and more fragmented portfolio of stakeholder groups, companies have to communicate preselected and tailored information to each group to ensure a balanced as well as high quality level of exchange. Consequently the question arises whether fast changing communicational environments are influencing Public Relations in Germany and have an impact on communication agencies concerning their daily business. This research will therefore ask if Public Relations services are able to serve as a strategic function in order to generate competitive advantages and prevent crises for clients of the agencies. Taking these points into account PR can or should be observed as a useful future investment.

In order to prove the significance of Public Relations my PhD project will rely on the analysis of Anglophone as well as German literature in the field of Public Relations/ Öffentlichkeitsarbeit. This analysis will be combined with a qualitative sample of semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted with experts from German communication agencies. The interviewed experts are representatives of German communication agencies which are market leaders and they are mainly members of the management. In addition this part of the research will be supplemented by consulting individual academics and practitioners who can provide essential data concerning the structure of the German communication market.

The PhD project will examine whether there are specific communicational and economical parameters which are responsible for the current reputation and appliance of Public Relations in Germany. Therefore this research investigates: "How do German communication agencies understand and apply Public Relations concepts?"

The presentation of my research will highlight some key findings, trends and problems regarding German communication agencies.

Key words: *Public Relations, Öffentlichkeitsarbeit, communication, agency, Germany*

Litigation Public Relations in Britain: the evolution of a specialist practice

Thomas Beke, doctoral student, SMRI

This research reflects on the demand of the academic scholars who argued that history-writing and particularly public relations history needs more detailed academic works because it adds value to the discipline itself (Atwood, 1978; Hoy, et al., 2007; Lamme, 2008; L`Etang, 2008; Miller & Dinan, 2000; Olasky, 1984, 1987; Pearson, 1990).

The complexity of lawsuits and more litigious cultural and media environment opened up the potential for a new and distinct specialist practice, called Litigation Public Relations (LPR). This area of practice is growing particularly in the US, however, the new field of knowledge has been considered one of the most highly specialized areas of PR occupation in Britain as well.

This research makes a new contribution to the field of public relations historiography when focusing on the emergence of a new specialist practice within the occupation. Based on my assumptions we can talk about an independent historical evolution of the new speciality not only in the U.S. but in Britain. The thesis presents a different cultural historical context from the mainly US dominated publications, focusing on the British LPR development. The concepts reviewed in this thesis represent historiography, sociology of the professions and public relations occupation and historical sociology. The topic will be explored in-depth with different qualitative methods. With its distinct sociological approach (historical sociology) it intends to go on the scientific research tradition of the British PR historian, Dr. Jacquie L'Etang (see e.g. L'Etang, 2004). The investigation of the evolution of litigation public relations from a different point of view could be – on the one hand - a socio-demographic study of the leading experts and developing stages of LPR practice. On the other side, it is going to be a sociographic study and an analysis of the social effects of the different PR and LPR activities and techniques in regard to that writing about the historical evolution of Litigation Public Relations is not simply a factual and chronological review of the events (merely a positivist collection of stories) but rather using these historical data to explain a social process and changes in society.

At the end of the investigation we will be able to answer questions like: how and why did Litigation Public Relations emerge from PR and how have the sociological principles –

influenced PR and LPR theory and practice – changed for decades.

A comprehensive investigation to behavioural changes in response to ‘Avian flu’ in Egypt.

Soha Elbatrawy, post-doctoral student, SMRI.

Study Scope and Sample:

Data used for this study were from baseline questionnaire responses collected in March and April 2009 that explored knowledge levels concerning dealing with birds and avian flu signs. Habits, behaviours, beliefs and obstacles in relation to this pandemic were investigated among 413 female respondents picked from six different villages in Egypt in response to all communication efforts exerted in dealing with this pandemic.

Methodology:

The Transtheoretical Model of Behaviour Change (TTM,the ‘stage model’)was deployed in order to assess the effectiveness of campaigns aimed raising awareness among villages’ residents who dealt with breeding birds(usually females)

Relations tested between study variables:

The study tested the different reacting relations between various variables focusing on demographics and exposure levels to avian flu campaigns in their relation to stages of change.

Results:

This study presents a comprehensive understanding to reasons of willingness /unwillingness to change among female bird breeders through photographing the Egyptian culture in response to efforts exerted for raising awareness towards dealing with Avian Flu Pandemic.

NB: There is an attempt to add responses to Swine Flu campaign in Egypt.

Keywords: Transtheoretical model of health behaviour change, health promotion, Avian Flu, Egyptian culture, bird breeders, raising awareness.

The role and scope of public relations and sport in promotional culture.
Jacquie L'Etang, SMRI

Based on more than 60 interviews and the detailed study of sports business, public relations and sports magazines this paper presents the results of empirical research that indicates the scope of public relations practice in a variety of sports environments in the UK. The paper also explores the links between sports business and promotional culture, and the role of sport as a communications tool. Empirical data is contextualized with concepts drawn from literature in public relations, communications, media studies and sports studies

Public Relations in Cricket: Twenty20 cricket six years on and the Indian Premier League

Maria Hopwood, Leeds Business School.

It's hard to believe that the Twenty20 cricket concept is only 5 years old. The short format of the game was born during the English county cricket season of 2003 to a typically English mixed reception of dire forebodings and great excitement and anticipation. A product of extensive market research by English cricket's governing body the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), Twenty20 cricket was launched with relatively little fanfare yet played out with the glitz, glamour and hype usually only reserved for football (the round ball version of the game). That first euphoric season concluded with unimaginable success and a previously unseen support for cricket together with a typically English response of "well, we always knew it was a brilliant idea, didn't we?!" For a sport which is often saddled with adjectives such as "outdated" and "out of touch" overnight, cricket became the spectator sport of choice attracting and appealing to a range of unfamiliar audiences – namely children, families and females. Having fun at the cricket and playing to sell out crowds on balmy English summer evenings was a match made in heaven for a sport which had come to be seen generally as boring, irrelevant and having limited appeal. Since then the publics'(and the players') appetite for the short form of the game has gathered momentum to the extent that Twenty20 has become arguably the dominant force in the world game of cricket - "The Peoples' Game" - whose undeniable attractions have, in 2008, created another potential dominant force in world cricket, the Indian Premier League (IPL).

Following the IPL's recent undeniable impact, those dissenting voices around the world originally reluctant to embrace the change heralded by Twenty20, are gradually becoming silenced or rethinking their words. Previously dismissing Twenty20 cricket as something of a joke, Adam Gilchrist, as a member of the Deccan Chargers, now admits that the IPL has "changed cricket forever". 2008 and the birth of the IPL is an example of how excellent public relations and sound product diversification can inject new life into an old sport. This paper takes the view that sports PR has more profound cultural implications than that of mere promotions and publicity and suggests that the resounding success of the IPL provides an excellent example of the role of public relations in building national identity. It further argues that public engagement and relationship management form the heart of contemporary sport management. The IPL provides a fascinating example of product diversification and public relations engagement. It has significantly added to the success of Twenty20 cricket in terms of attracting new publics to become cricket fans and the full effect of its influence is yet to emerge. Gilchrist is right, cricket will, indeed, never be the same again.

‘It’s all gone quiet over there’: communicating with a hostile sports public".

Huw Evans, University of Central Lancashire.

Purpose

The purpose of this case study was to explore a communication campaign intended to ensure a respectful observation of the commemoration of an air crash in which twenty three passengers and crew were killed including seven Manchester United players. As in many cities throughout the world, the presence of two opposing teams within the same conurbation results in the most emotionally charged rivalry, and that between Manchester City and Manchester United is a well established antagonistic relationship.

Unfortunately the Manchester derby football match was scheduled to be held on February 10^{th} , 2008 - fifty years after the Munich tragedy.

Strong emotional loyalties needed to be resolved in order to meet corporate needs. This was an unexpected and unprecedented challenge.

Design/methods/approach

The research objectives were achieved using a research case study approach to evaluate a comprehensive communication campaign used to suspend the entrenched attitudes and behaviours and re-contextualised the traditional rivalry between fans.

The research strategy involved capturing qualitative data using an inductive approach to the relationship between theory and the research. Semi structured face-to-face interviews were conducted.

Findings

Sports fandom could be described as the ultimate brand loyalty, and creates an extreme communications paradigm. Individual and cultural identity coincide with the corporate, the branded and even the tribal, and consumer behaviours frequently thwart expectations and conventions. Emotional attachments to a team or player create an environment that demands a nuanced understanding and use of the techniques, strategy and perspectives of public relations practice.

The findings contribute to a body of evidence which establishes how strategic communication is an integral part of conflict resolution between two extremely hostile publics. Primarily, it explores the role of source credibility when communicating with hostile publics,

It also examines the use of role models and how they can be used to influence behaviour as opinion formers. Finally, aspects of a traditional fear campaign (as used in public health communication) can be clearly seen.

Research Limitations

The case study explores the campaign and its outcomes, and the conclusions drawn are based upon theory that is connected with these aspects of communication.

Though the author is reasonably dispassionate regarding football and has no affiliation to these teams, the interviewees were employees of the clubs who had managed the campaign and were predisposed to be overly positive regarding the results.

Though the fans' response to the campaign can be demonstrated by their behaviour, the next step will be to approach the fans to discuss their response to the campaign in greater detail. It is also proposed to conduct similar research into the campaign by Liverpool Football Club into the commemoration of the anniversary of the 'Hillsborough' tragedy.

Practical implications
This was the first campaign at a major football club in the UK where a communication campaign was able to construct a suspension of disrespectful behaviour during the match and to establish and maintain a sombre ambience in keeping with the solemnity of the occasion.

However, the beyond the sports context in which it is set, the case study explores the concept of communication with an extremely hostile public both directly and using intervening and moderating agents, providing data which cold be useful in a range of conflict-resolution situations.

Originality/value
No such research has been conducted. Many of the findings have been discussed with the clubs and personnel involved which have already adjusted some of their approaches to building relationships with various stakeholders as a result of this study.

It’s football but not as you know it: the challenge to win hearts and minds in Queensland.

Maria Hopwood, Leeds Business School.

Public relations is arguably the least understood and most under-utilised of all the tools available to contemporary sports business. L’Etang (2006)[1] observes that though public relations concerns and activities are touched upon by authors from sports management, sports marketing, sports journalism, events management and sports media sociology, scant reference is made to public relations concepts. For a variety of reasons, mainly concerned with ignorance and lack of understanding, public relations is also the marketing communications discipline which attracts the greatest criticism and negative opinion. However, because of its unique characteristics, public relations, when it is implemented knowledgeably and strategically, can exert a significant influence in sports marketing communications.

For a sport trying to establish its credibility and create support and interest in an already intensely competitive and sometimes hostile environment, the challenge to engage hearts and minds can be great. This is exactly the situation in which Australian professional soccer and Queensland Roar Football Club have found themselves since the regeneration of the round ball version of football started in Australia 2005. This paper explores, making reference to live project consultancy work undertaken by undergraduate and postgraduate public relations students with Queensland Roar Football Club, how developing a thorough understanding and appreciation of the public relations function can bring enormous benefits to sports organizations in terms of relationship management and return on engagement.

Teaching and Practicing International Public Relations in Virtual Teams

Averill Gordon, University of Gloucestershire, UK and Dr. Gaelle Picherit-Duthler, Zayed University, UAE

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There is an increasing demand for students to partake in international public relations. However, it is rare that students have the opportunity to truly experience and practice international public relations. Most of the times, they tend to work on case studies, listen to guest speakers who have traveled the world, and when possible, they can participate in a study abroad program. So how can we prepare them to be part of a global account for a top PR firm?

One current project provides students with the opportunity to develop PR professional skills by working on a global strategy. GlobCom is an international project run by ten universities in ten countries on five continents. The students are grouped into seven global virtual teams. Each virtual team works on the same public relations brief and has to develop and submit a public relations strategy. The students communicate and co-operate with each other in chat rooms, e-mail, and by Internet phone. At the end the project, the educators and students meet in a symposium where the top teams present their strategy.

This research paper will discuss the implications of the GlobCom project in terms of International Public Relations principles, such as research, media relations, and audience, and will describe how students apply the concept of "Think globally, act locally." This case study will provide factual insight in how teams of international students collaborate to create a strategic plan for a global audience.

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Better use of rhetorical theory in public relations

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Some of the most important reflections on rhetorical theory associated with public relations appear in: L'Etang (1996); Toth (1999); and various Robert Heath contributions. This paper will reflect on the importance of that work by briefly scouring the origin of rhetoric among the ancient founders of persuasive communication: the pre-Socratic sophists. The paper will then relate the approaches of the above theorists, as well as Kevin Moloney and James Grunig, to the original meaning of sophistry. The last part of the paper will discuss the confluence of rhetorical and semiotic approaches. The rhetoric-semiotics link has been present since the semiotics of St Augustine of Hippo (354-430 CE). Augustine was a professor of rhetoric in his earlier career. The last part of the paper summarises how rhetorical theory, Peircean semiotics and post modern approaches can avoid accusations of relativism and infinite semiosis when they are fitted into a theory of public relations.

THE IMPLICATION OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICTS) TO PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE IN THAILAND

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Public relations (PR) practice is undergoing a revolution as a result of the emergence of information and communication technologies (ICTs). The emergence of ICTs is changing the way PR practitioners, individuals and institutions communicate which has consequences for PR practice. However, the changes in PR practice, due to the emergence of ICTs, vary across countries. Culture plays a crucial role in the changes. Thai PR is an interesting example to examine. Never having been colonised in its 800 year history, and being a homogenous society with the majority of Thai ethnics having a strong faith in Buddhism, a common language (Thai) and a regard for the institution of monarchy, Thailand is a distinction among Southeast Asian countries.

My PhD project attempts to examine the evolution of PR in Thailand. In addition, it intends to study the development of ICTs and the implication of ICTs on PR practice in Thailand. Cultural value systems are explained to account for the characteristics of Thai PR practice and the changes, due to ICTs in PR practice.

The thesis consists of 6 chapters. The first three chapters are an introduction, a literature review, and a research methodology. The fourth chapter focuses on the evolution of Thai PR occupations in 3 sectors: government and state enterprise; private sector; and PR consultancy. It presents the historical background and describes key events, organisations and people, which are then drawn together in a way which offers a convincing explanation for the expansion of the PR occupations in the different periods of Thai history before the modern era.

The fifth chapter presents PR practice in Thailand in the modern era. The roles and types of Thai PR activities - as well as Thai PR characteristics nowadays - are discussed. The sixth chapter examines the linkage between Thai PR practice and ICTs. How Thai PR practitioners use ICTs in their work will be discussed. Cultural value systems are described to help explain Thai practitioners' behaviour in both chapters: how and why Thai PR has been practiced in the way it has been.

Two main research methods – documentary sources and in-depth interviews - are employed in the project. Documentary sources are employed to explain the evolution of Thai PR. Thai senior PR managers who have a crucial role on companies' policies and long experience in the PR field are interviewed to examine the practice of PR together with the use of ICTs.