

# PR *update*

News journal of the Public Relations Division of AEJMC -- March 1995

## “Doing Right”

Infusing a responsible anti-drinking message into a PR campaigns course

By Jason Berger  
Central Missouri State University

Just before classes began in the fall 1993 semester at Central Missouri State University, Merle Charney, director of student health services, presented the mass communication department with a challenge. He asked whether our public relations students could develop a public relations campaign encouraging students over the age of 21 to engage in responsible drinking and for those under to refrain from drinking.

Charney presented us with an important challenge we could not resist. We all know that drinking on the college campus has reached epidemic proportions and who better for Charney to turn to for help than our public relations students who are clamoring for more real-time experience? Moreover, Charney promised us that if our students' suggestions made sense, he would find the support to implement them.

I would like to briefly present two campaigns designed during the spring and summer 1994 semesters. Students in my spring public relations special topics creativity seminar targeted their campaign for the period right before finals when they argued drinking literally increases. Led by Serena Weebe, group leader, they developed a campaign based on their “gut feelings,” not traditional public relations research. (Our course focused on the creative process, not on research.) When they proposed to Charney a campaign targeted towards finals, he agreed stating that the evidence supports this conclusion both on our campus and nationwide.

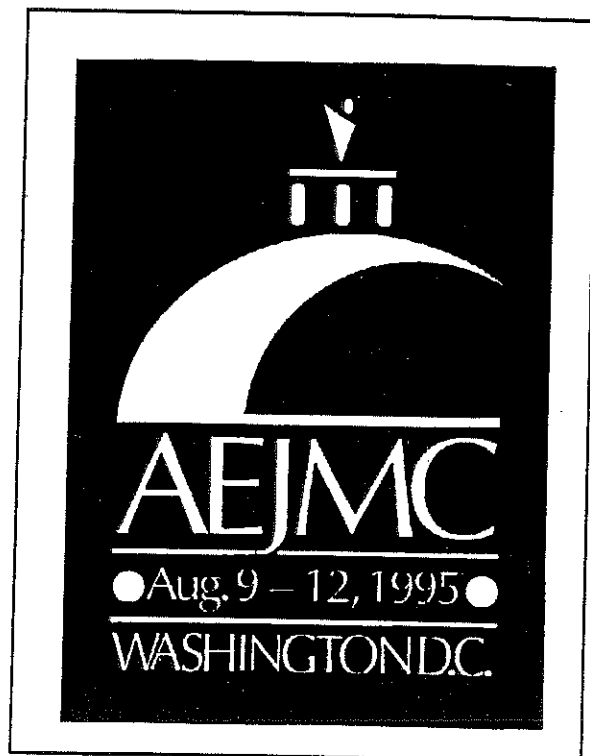
The students created two public service ads (PSAs). The PSAs appeared in our student newspaper, the *Muleskinner*, the last two Thursday's before finals began. The first PSA played on the “best bud” theme. They designed the PSA as a teaser for the PSA the following week. This PSA offered a free T-shirt entitled

“Top Ten Reasons Not to Drink Before Finals.” The ad announced that the T-shirt will be distributed at health services on Friday morning, April 29.

Charney obtained funding for the State of Missouri Department of Mental Health, Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse to fund the purchase of the T-shirts. He and his staff estimated that approximately 500 students, faculty, administration and staff, and local residents lined up to pick up the T-shirts. Within two hours, they ran out of the 250 T-shirts they ordered. Charney quickly ordered another 200 with he and his staff distributing them the following Tuesday.

Throughout this campaign, my students conducted informal research to gauge the message effectiveness.

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# Public diplomacy: Opportunities for international public relations activism

By Richard Alan Nelson  
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Public Relations Division Head

Let us assume you are a government official for a developing nation and part of your work involves influencing foreign public opinion. This is a difficult enough problem, but add to this the challenges of trying to impact on a large, diverse, culturally different and rather uncaring populace in a nation as important internationally as the United States.

Historically, this is what you would do. First, you would use your diplomatic corps to lobby the American political leadership. Your representatives probably would have some schooling in the U.S., speak fairly fluent English, and be cosmopolitan by your culture's standards. They would attempt to



use formal and informal interpersonal contacts to ingratiate themselves with powerbrokers in Congress, the White House, and the major national media. Staff would conduct socio-political intelligence activities to monitor developments, keep track of potential supporters and opponents, and attempt to build support through brochures, booklets, videos and other communications. The overall effectiveness of this effort is probably questionable. So you turn to former administration officials, now working in highly respected Washington, D.C. and New York-based law firms, and public relations consultants to assist you. They target key issues to work and prove helpful, particularly in navigating government and media. They monitor proposed bills which could help or hurt your interests. Executives in corporations doing business in your country are enlisted to provide testimony, second party endorsements, and backdoor contacts for your positions. Employees of state agencies operating in the country

(such as the national airline) also may be part of this effort, supplemented by more traditional commercial advertising.

Despite some successes, however, you feel dissatisfied by the cultural double standards, widespread disinformation, media distortion, racist/religious prejudice, and continuing ignorance of your culture that you still encounter. And you would have a right to complain. The ideological playing field is not an even one and developing nations have historically suffered from (largely successful) attempts to ignore and marginalize them by the big powers except where their commercial or political interests are involved. Media often represent the social power interests they supposedly monitor, reinforcing the disenfranchisement of interests and organizations outside the mainstream.

Foreign governments seeking to influence American press relations have managed to improve news coverage of their regimes through public relations and lobbying

Unfortunately, only limited research involving the use of issues management techniques by developing nations to influence foreign opinion has been publicly reported. We do know that by the 1980s over 100 countries had hired public relations firms to promote tourism, industrial development/investment, trade, and public image, with studies finding that these nations are portrayed more positively and presented as being more cooperative with U.S. policy interests in the New York Times as a result.

Ironically, when countries have become more successful in influencing American policy by using traditional communication strategies, they have left themselves vulnerable to the vagaries of whether those in power like them or not.

Radical viewpoints by definition are other. In America, propaganda has an especially negative meaning a form of swear word. Legitimate information efforts can easily be transformed into dangerous propaganda under infrequently observed and vague legal provisions applied

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# PR, advertising working closely together

By Tommy Smith  
University of Southern Mississippi

During the past couple of years, many of us who teach both public relations and advertising have been purporting the idea that the two disciplines would work closely together to help facilitate communication to consumers. The areas have even been fused together to form the idea of "Integrated Marketing Communications." Professors Don Schultz, Stan Tannenbaum, and Bob Lauterform have co-authored a book appropriately entitled "Integrated Marketing Communications, Pulling It Together & Making It Work" (NTC Business Books, Lincolnwood, IL, 1993). In the book, the authors believe that the idea of "IMC" is a tool that can be used by today's business planners to help confront a basic problem in marketing, "that mass media advertising, by itself, *no longer works.*"

The name is new, but the idea is old. For example, my first job after graduating from Georgia in 1978 with a bachelor's degree in advertising was with an in-house agency. During my tenure, I not only worked on advertising projects I also wrote press releases, made media lists, wrote speeches, produced a distributor newsletter, produced a dealer newsletter, and produced an employee newsletter. I became very familiar with terms "internal and external publics" even though as an undergraduate advertising major I was only briefly exposed to them in my Intro. to Public Relations class. I can remember many times wishing that I had taken more public relations courses while at Georgia. My limited knowledge of public relations was also helpful when I became an account executive for a full-service agency that had both advertising and public relations divisions.

In response to this "IMC" wave-of-thought, graduate schools around the country like Northwestern and Colorado are now offering integrated programs to help students become astute mass communicators while learning about both advertising and public relations. Not to be left out, undergraduate students who major in both advertising and public relations are encouraged to cross pollinate by taking courses in each field so they will have at least a basic background in both. And for those of you who are familiar with the American Advertising Federations College World Series of Advertising annual

undergraduate student competition, are very aware of the fact that an integrated communications plan is now required. No longer can plans be just advertising.

Starting with last year's Kodak case, the "Integrated Communications Plan" which had to be included within a competing school's plans book accounted for a maximum of 25 percent of the total points. Under that general heading, the Integrated Communications Analysis" accounted for 5 percent of the total points. Judges were asked to evaluate entries in the 1994 Kodak case according to the following working under "Integrated Communications Analysis" on the plans book score sheet, "How well have students articulated a clear understanding of the roles of public relations, advertising, sales promotion, direct response, sponsorship activities, and/or other methods in the communications mix?"

The sponsoring company in 1994, Kodak was so impressed with quality of the integrated entries that a suggestion was made to the 1995 sponsor, Chrysler, and to the National Academic Committee of the AAF (the body that coordinates and oversees the competition) to keep "IMC" in the criteria. Again in 1995, 25 percent of the total points available are designated for "IMC."

We as public relations and advertising educators should realize that employers today want more bang for their buck. So, let's encourage our students to be prepared for position in marketing communications by studying both public relations and advertising.

**PRupdate** is a news journal published by the Public Relations Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. Public Relations Division members examine and analyze scholarly, pedagogical and other issues relating to public relations practice and education. We serve educators, practitioners and others who recognize the important contributions made by public relations to an informed society.

Although the newsletter's editor works diligently to maintain a low profile, he welcomes and encourages articles, reviews and opinion pieces from newsletter readers. The editor requests that submissions be sent on a DOS readable disk; Macintosh disks, however, also are acceptable.

Edited at Murray State University.

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# PRD Convention Schedule

Following is the tentative schedule for the PR Division's sessions and meetings during the AEJMC National Convention, Washington, D.C., Aug. 8-13:

## Tuesday, Aug. 8

- 1:00-6:00 "Keeping up with new technology"  
6:15-7:45 Roundtable discussions (with advertising)

## Wednesday, Aug. 9

- 8:45-10:15 Competitive research papers  
10:30-Noon Joint research session with advertising  
Noon-2:30 Luncheon followed by session on women in public relations management, with CCJA & PF&R  
2:45-4:15 "The shape of things to come: Financial public relations and investor relations"  
7:00-8:30 Competitive research papers

## -- "Doing Right" . . .

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They learned that there was a high percentage of recall of the PSAs and the give-away. In addition, many students, mostly female, enjoyed the PSAs' humor and many indicated that they learned a bit more about the dangers of drinking before and during finals. The students who criticized the campaign focused on the difficulty of understanding the PSAs and T-shirts' graphics and many students, particularly juniors and seniors, resented being lectured to. In the testing some students actually believed that the humor in the campaign was designed to encourage them to drink. Others, particularly males, promised that they would wear the T-shirt to go out and get drunk.

Even with this criticism by a small percent of the respondents, we were pleased with the results. I then presented this research data to a group of students who took my public relations campaigns course during the summer. I instructed them to treat the campaign as a pre-

test because the creativity and execution was not grounded in research because of the nature of the course. Led by Lisa Eickhoff, these students performed brilliantly in developing a new campaign. They surveyed incoming freshmen, performed one-on-one interviews with campus influentials, stake-holders, and local law enforcement officials. They further conducted an extensive literature search to learn more about the issue.

All this research pointed the group to two key facts. The first is that first year students are the most vulnerable to drink. In fact, according to national surveys, they drink more than their upper class peers.

The second focused on the "expense" of drinking whether it is failure in school, fines for underage drinking, DWI/DUI convictions, or the impact on one's physical and emotional health.

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## Call for Papers

# TEACHING PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Teaching Standards Committee of the Public Relations Division invites both faculty and students to submit competitive papers related to the teaching of public relations for AEJMC's 1995 Washington, DC, convention.

Papers should test, refine, or expand applied public relations principles or practices as related to the teaching of public relations; critically review issues relevant to public relations education; or explore methods of effective public relations education. Papers should include appropriate literature reviews, methodology, and pedagogy; they should not have been presented in other forums.

The "top 3" papers will receive cash awards from the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) as recognition of a commitment to teaching excellence in public relations.

All papers must include a cover page identifying the author(s), mailing address(es), telephone number(s), and, if available, the e-mail address of the principle author. The paper's body should include a title and 75 word single-spaced abstract, the only identification should be a running header. Student authors should indicate their student status on the first page of the paper.

Six (6) copies of each paper must be **postmarked** no later than April 1, 1995 (NO E-Mail or fax submissions will be considered). For format requirements, see the January 1995 edition of *AEJMC NEWS*.

Send copies or correspondence to:

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**Thursday, Aug. 10**

- 8:45-10:15 Competitive research papers
- 1:00-2:30 "Covering politics visually: Perspectives from both sides of the camera"
- 2:45-4:15 "Public relations in Washington"
- 2:45-6:00 "The Pentagon meets the media"

**Saturday, Aug. 12**

- 7:00-8:30 Incoming PRD executive board
- 8:45-10:15 Competitive research papers
- 10:30-noon "The environment of environmental journalism: Policymakers, scientists, activists and journalists"
- 1:00-2:30 "Changing the curriculum: What new courses should you be teaching and why"

**Sunday, Aug. 13**

- 8:45-11:30 Post-convention working papers and/or graduate student paper session

**-- Public Diplomacy . . .**

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against unfriendly states. In this instance, unfriendly refers to nations that once were perceived to be in harmony with big power administrations but now are outlaw states because they have the audacity to pursue independent policies. A case in point is the successful 1987 effort by the State Department close down the Palestinian Information Office in Washington, D.C., precisely because the PIO was effectively challenging Reagan administration disinformation.

Despite a unique and valuable First Amendment constitutional protection for free speech in the United States, Congress has stated that organizations receiving funding from overseas are supposed to register as a foreign agent under the provisions of the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) of 1938 as amended (22 USC 611-618). This imposes burdensome restrictions on the dissemination of foreign media in the U.S. Under the

federal government's current reading of FARA, virtually any book, film, radio report or television program produced abroad is a potential candidate for federal dissemination controls involving labeling and monitoring, so long as it has the capacity to rouse its American audience to political action. Although the history of the statute has been largely applied to print or film materials, this distinction is blurring particularly for pre-packaged audio and video news releases prepared by public relations firms for foreign clients. Increased use of direct mail, fax, toll-free 800 telephone numbers, on-line computer services, optic two-way capacity, international direct satellite-to-home transmission, and other new technological breakthroughs may well open additional doors and opportunities for information disseminators, including developing nations. Such direct-access media offer a relatively unregulated open platform for airing political views and proposals without challenge from a questioning press.

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## -- Public Diplomacy . . .

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The facts are that the revolution in information technology is outpacing the ability of the political community to control internal and external direct people-to-people communication. In contrast with the not-so-distant past, when members of Congress identified hot issues from a handful of constituent letters, numerous interest groups now have built sophisticated grassroots electronic networks that can generate an astonishing volume of calls, letters, and e-mail from folks back home. Millions of new activists are being organized to call lawmakers and talk shows, make speeches and write to local newspaper editors. All over Capitol Hill, Senate and House offices are receiving as many as 1,000 phone calls and voice mail messages a month, automatically sorted by aides in terms of issue, printed out and placed daily on congressional desks, up to 4.2 million phone calls a month. Accompanying the phone calls are an avalanche of letters, postcards, faxes, Mailgrams, e-mail, and other communiqués to lawmakers running to more than 400 million pieces a year.

New applications of technologies, such as Internet, are providing a particularly impressive vehicle for unfiltered and uncensored mass interactive political conversation via computer that is opening up alternative opportunities to influence the public policy process. This community interaction in cyberspace deserves more attention from political scientists and public opinion analysts and has significant implications for democratic theory. Just as radio and television altered the nature of democratic politics in the twentieth century, CMC (computer-mediated communication) is already altering the nature of the politics of the twenty-first. Activists are using the net in five key ways, to:

1. Provide targeted audiences with objective information, such as
  - a. announcements of archival listserv sites for downloading of documents, journals etc.
  - b. fact sheets
  - c. historical data
  - d. redistribution of items appearing in mainstream and specialized news media
  - e. uploading of reports, documents, software etc. for retrieval by interested users
2. Use information to mobilize others via
  - a. alternative news and information sources

- b. interpretive commentary on events
- c. action alerts to special events, urgent issues
- d. requests to respond to others with messages/flames/boycotts legislators government agencies (domestic and foreign) corporate sponsors news media people
- e. membership recruitment
- f. job notices

3. Engage in fundraising through
  - a. sales of socially-acceptable materials (books, videos etc.)
  - b. requests for donations to specific activist causes/funds
4. Conduct research, such as
  - a. interactive research collaboration with shared files
  - b. answers to problems/requests for help
  - c. ftp/telnet/wais/gopher/mosaic searches
  - d. on-line surveys
  - e. calls for papers/conferences
  - f. educational/teaching aids, case studies, syllabi, finding guides, and handy tips
5. Partake in general discussion (chat e-mail) with friends/colleagues/those with shared interests

These technologies in turn are making classical closed door diplomacy less viable, as nations begin responding to internal and external challenges by counteracting propaganda from outsider groups and expanding their own initiatives directed at various publics in other countries. As former United States Information Agency Director Charles Wick pointed out, Today the success or failure of foreign policy undertakings is frequently affected more profoundly by what people think and say than by the workings of judicial diplomacy. Some recent examples include the training of Afghan rebels to use minicams to document for Western newscasts the armed struggle during the 1980s against the Soviet occupation, improvements in broadcast technology which make it possible for American USIA satellite television as well as radio to reach around the world, and the largely private distribution of cassette tapes which can result in a revolution such as the one that originally brought Ayatollah Khomeini to power in Iran.

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## -- "Doing Right" . . .

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The group then designed their "Can Your Afford" campaign. They targeted it towards in-coming first year students through the distribution in the residence halls of a plastic bag containing anti-drinking messages and a flyer (with a coupon) offering another free T-shirt.

The group improved the design of the T-shirt. They cited their own research arguing that the "Top Ten" message was too preachy, too complicated, the T-shirt quality was poor, and many first year students missed the David Letterman "Top-Ten" relationship. The group proposed a T-shirt with the Ying Yang logo which they argued vehemently is very, very popular among the 16 to 18 year olds and the target would understand the relationship with "keeping a balance" the Ying Yang message, and don't drink.

The students' proposal impressed Charney and Central's administration. Charney obtained funding again for the campaign. Unfortunately, the campaign did not have the impact that the "Top Ten" did. We distributed a little over 100 T-shirts. The students in the group were obviously disappointed. Even though they fine tuned the campaign's message and segmented their target public, the weakness was in depending on a direct mail distribution for message transmission. They learned that the best vehicle to reach students on our campus was the student newspaper and future efforts should focus on this medium.

In conclusion, I would like to focus on a number of lessons my department and I learned from the two campaigns. The first is that our students enjoyed the "hands on experience" and they appreciated the fact that they actually witnessed the implementation of a campaign. Second, I struggled with my students to persuade them to perform the actual research. They wanted to jump in and focus their activity on the execution. Yet, some students learned the value of research.

In fact, Lisa Eickhoff, the group leader of the "Can You Afford" campaign presented the campaign at the 1994 Bacchus and Gamma General Assembly in St. Louis. Bacchus is the national student run organization that combats substance abuse. In a room of almost 50 student leaders and faculty advisers, Eickhoff proudly presented

the research and cited it readily during the question and answer period. Lisa just graduated. She's on her way to achieving greatness in public relations.

The final lesson is probably the most lasting and is why I selected the title for this article. A significant number of students in both classes informed me that by researching the problem of alcohol abuse, they began to question their own behavior and they appeared quite proud to "do right" on campus.

Public relations instructors should listen to this message. We have students who can help "do right." Contact the Student Health Services, the counseling centers and other units of your colleges and universities who work to help students function better on campus. I'm certain you'll find many Merle Charneys who would like to hear from you.

## -- Public Diplomacy . . .

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The electronic highway of literally thousands of bulletin boards, E-mail, and other services already in existence means developing nations no longer need to shift funds into countries such as the U.S. to establish direct communication with key audiences.

Restrictions by the U.S. government on distribution of information from foreign sources, for example, can be intelligently bypassed since they are largely built around legal controls linked to the concept of limiting the influence of direct payments made to surrogate sources in America.

Nevertheless, many problems with mainstream media and the political system will remain, requiring continued efforts to overcome unfortunate stereotypes. Developing nations at least now have a cornucopia of new public diplomacy opportunities to creatively reach out to a growing number of trans-national groups. Building understanding through peaceful cooperation between the peoples of different countries will require the development of a long-term program of communication and the application of strategic management principles if those efforts are to succeed.





## Cutlip, Kelly win SCA PRIDE Awards

Scott M. Cutlip, dean emeritus of the Henry W. Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Georgia and Kathleen S. Kelly of the University of Southwestern Louisiana won the 1994 PRIDE Awards from the Public Relations Division of the Speech Communication Association.

Dr. Cutlip won the award for "Outstanding Contribution in Public Relations Education" for his 1994 book, *The Unseen Power: Public Relations. A History*. Dr. Kelly won the award for "Best Article" for her work, "Public Relations and Fund-Raising Encroachment: Losing Control in the Non-Profit Sector," which appeared in the winter 1993 issue of *Public Relations Review*.

The category for "Outstanding Contribution to Public Relations Education" is a new awards category which is intended especially for textbooks and for other published works targeted primarily for instructional purposes. The "Article" category is the centerpiece of the PRIDE Award competition. Automatically entered in this category were all articles published in the 1994 issues of *Journal of Public Relations Research* and in the 1994 and the winter 1993 issues of *Public Relations Review*. Articles appearing in other journals that were published in 1994 also were nominated for the "Article" category.

### Teaching Public Relations

## Call for papers issued by teaching standards

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