

**JOUR 3421 Public Relations Writing**  
**Extra Credit Opportunities (up to 10 points each)**  
**Due: the last day of class**

**Opportunity One**

Read the following stories on the Washington Post about the use of social media in putting forth false stories about the impact of Hurricane Sandy.

1. Fake storm reports: [http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/twitter-rumor-of-flooded-stock-exchange-among-a-surge-of-fake-storm-reports/2012/10/30/c03acc2c-22ce-11e2-8448-81b1ce7d6978\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/twitter-rumor-of-flooded-stock-exchange-among-a-surge-of-fake-storm-reports/2012/10/30/c03acc2c-22ce-11e2-8448-81b1ce7d6978_story.html)
2. Eric Wemple blog post: [http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/erik-wemple/post/hurricane-sandy-nyse-not-flooded/2012/10/30/37532512-223d-11e2-ac85-e669876c6a24\\_blog.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/erik-wemple/post/hurricane-sandy-nyse-not-flooded/2012/10/30/37532512-223d-11e2-ac85-e669876c6a24_blog.html)

Write a short response paper (at least one full page but no more than two pages, double spaced), answering the following questions. Make sure to include concepts or discussions from class to support your answers.

1. Is this a problem for public relations? Why/why not? If yes, what are your proposed solutions to the problem?
2. What do you think of the idea that social media is “one globally linked game of telephone”? How does this impact how you might interact with others via social media? What might this mean for public relations practitioners?
3. The article notes that there is a desire for criminal charges to be pressed against the tweeter. Is this appropriate? What sort of precedence might this set, and would it be enforceable? Were charges ever pressed, and if so, what were they, and to what result?

**Opportunity Two**

Read the following Washington Post story about a high school student who tried to combat bullying through a combination of Facebook posts and real life action.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/she-the-people/wp/2012/10/30/maisie-kate-millers-passive-resistance-pigtail-style-tames-a-bully-and-shows-us-how/>

Write a short response paper (at least one full page but no more than two pages, double spaced), answering the following questions. Make sure to include concepts or discussions from class to support your answers.

1. Think about how the blogger for the Post talked about finding this story. How does this relate to the idea from the Hurricane Sandy story (above) that social media is “one globally linked game of telephone”? What do you think of that idea in relation to the context here?
2. If you were someone professionally interested in keeping this story going (a guidance counselor at the school, a PR professional for an anti-bullying organization, etc), how might you do so? What other social media outlets might you use to get your message across? Provide specific detail.
3. How might you use this story to help support or detract from your own personal definition of social media and its potential uses? What does this story tell us about the power of social media and how it can be used?

### **Opportunity Three**

Facebook has a Pages feature for global brands: Global Pages, a service that will provide unique/translated/directed information and features to publics that are country of origin-specific.

<http://www.facebook-studio.com/news/item/announcing-a-new-pages-structure-for-global-brands>

Write a short response paper (at least one full page but no more than two pages, double spaced), answering the following questions. Make sure to include concepts or discussions from class to support your answers.

1. Is this a good or effective idea for Facebook? Why/why not?
2. What are the potential problems that Facebook might face here? Please go beyond the problems listed in the comments section, and while you might want to include them, offer your own ideas and insights as well.
3. Why might it be important for global brands to offer this opportunity to their publics? What sorts of things might they want to consider as they create pages for publics in different countries? What can they include/improve/change from the general Global Page?

### **Opportunity Four**

Read this McSweeney’s article about mommy bloggers, and think about their potential for balancing exploiting and protecting their children.

<http://www.mcsweeneys.net/articles/a-mommy-bloggers-lament>

Write a short response paper (at least one full page but no more than two pages, double spaced), answering the following questions. Make sure to include concepts or discussions from class to support your answers.

1. How does this relate to the discussion we had in class about bloggers and the ways in which they might create content?
2. Is this a problem for public relations? Why or why not? If it is, how might you solve it? If not, why isn't it, and is there a point at which that answer might change?
3. How is it possible to use satire to help bring voice to an issue? What is the real message behind this essay, and why was satire the best choice? How does a platform like McSweeney's help promote issues within social media?

### **Option Five**

New York magazine ran an article about couples who have hired a hashtag enforcer for their wedding.

<http://nymag.com/thecut/2014/03/w-hotel-has-a-hashtag-enforcer-for-your-wedding.html>

Write a short response paper (at least one full page but no more than two pages, double spaced), answering the following questions. Make sure to include concepts or discussions from class to support your answers.

1. Do you think this is a good or bad idea? Why? Think about all of the hashtag uses we've seen in class this semester, and how they can be used to build community, or to make it harder for community to form.
2. How could a corporation utilize this idea? How do you think people would respond to a hashtag enforcer for the general public, being used on platforms like Twitter or Instagram? Would it be successful? Why or why not?
3. Do you think this general idea (of having someone 'police' social media content to ensure connection) has the potential to be the future of social media? Why or why not? If so, how do you see it being utilized? If not, what else might take its place?